

**RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE STATES-GENERAL**

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CHAPTER I. DEFINITIONS

Article 1. Definitions

Where reference is made in the Rules to:

- (a) the President, this means the President of the House;
- (b) the Ministers, this includes the State Secretaries.
- (c) documents, this means papers within the meaning of the Public Records Act 1995;
- (d) printing, this includes publication on the Internet.

CHAPTER II. BEGINNING AND END OF MEMBERSHIP

Article 2. Admission of members

1. Each newly appointed member shall provide evidence of his election by submission of the documents prescribed by law.
2. The credentials and the documents relating to them shall be deposited at the office of the Secretary General of the House for inspection by the members.
3. The House in its old composition shall decide on the admission of members who have been declared appointed after a periodic retirement or dissolution.

Article 3. Loss of membership

1. If a member refers to the decision of the House the opinion of the President that this member has ceased to be a member because he does not fulfil the requirements for membership or holds an office incompatible with membership, the House shall not give a ruling until a Committee of Inquiry appointed for this purpose from among its members has published its report. The Committee shall hear the relevant member if the member expresses a wish to this effect.
2. The first paragraph shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to a member of the European Parliament.

CHAPTER III. THE PRESIDENT, THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND THE PRESIDUM

Article 4. Appointment of a President

1. When sitting for the last time in its old session, the House shall adopt a profile of the new President to be appointed. The House shall decide on this subject at the first sitting of the new session. The acting President shall then provide an opportunity for the nomination of candidates to fill the vacancy and the House shall appoint a President.
2. Until such time as a President has been appointed in a new session a former President shall serve as acting President, the last one to have retired having precedence. In the absence of any former President, the last Deputy President to have retired shall act temporarily as President; if two or more former Deputy Presidents who retired simultaneously are present, their order of ranking in the Presidium, of which they were members simultaneously, shall be taken into account. In the absence of any former Deputy President, the member who has sat the longest in the House shall act as temporary President; where members have sat for the

- same length of time, the eldest in age shall take precedence.
3. If a casual vacancy arises for the office of President, the House shall adopt a candidate profile as quickly as possible. The acting President shall then provide an opportunity for the nomination of candidates to fill the vacancy and the House shall appoint a President.
 4. In the second meeting of a new session or after the presidentship has fallen vacant, the acting President shall provide an opportunity for the nomination of candidates to fill the vacancy. The House shall then proceed to the appointment of a President.

Article 5. Appointment of Deputy Presidents

After each appointment of a President, the House shall appoint such number of Deputy Presidents as it may determine, their order of ranking being determined by the order of their appointment.

Article 6. Duties of the President

The duties of the President shall consist mainly of:

- (a) presiding over the business of the House and of the Presidium;
- (b) ensuring that the Rules of Procedure are observed;
- (c) implementing any decisions taken by the House;
- (d) representing the House.

Article 7. President's attendance at Committee meetings

The President shall be entitled to attend meetings of every Committee.

Article 8. Deputisation for the President

1. If the President is not available, one of the Deputy Presidents, designated in accordance with the order specified in article 5, shall act for the President.
2. If neither the President nor any of the Deputy Presidents are available, the President shall be replaced in accordance with the arrangement referred to in article 4, paragraph 2.
3. An acting President shall have the same duties and powers as the President.

Article 9. Presidium

1. The President and the Deputy Presidents together constitute the Presidium. For each member of the Presidium, the President shall appoint a deputy who will attend the meeting of the Presidium in place of the relevant member in his absence. The House may reserve to itself the right to make this appointment.
2. The Presidium may not take decisions if not more than half of its members or their deputies are present; in the event of a tied vote, the President shall decide.
3. Other members may be invited by the President to attend meetings of the Presidium; they shall be present in an advisory capacity.
4. The Presidium shall appoint one or more advisory Committees which must be heard with regard to matters within their terms of reference before decisions are taken on such matters, except in very urgent cases.
5. The Presidium shall be assisted by the Secretary General.

CHAPTER IV. THE ESTIMATES

Article 10. Estimates; management of financial resources

1. The Presidium shall, each year, prepare the estimates of the expenditure required for the House in the next year and shall send them in good time to the House for adoption and to

- the Minister concerned.
2. The Secretary General is responsible, on behalf of the President, for managing the budget of the House. Some or all of the powers resulting from this management may be delegated.
 3. Rules for the allocation of financial resources to the parliamentary parties and for the management of such resources by the parliamentary parties shall be adopted by the House in a separate set of Rules on the proposal of the Presidium.

CHAPTER V. THE PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES

Article 11. Composition of the parliamentary parties

1. The members who have been declared elected by the central electoral committee on the same list shall be regarded as a single parliamentary party at the start of the session. If only one member has been elected under a list number, such member shall be deemed to be a separate parliamentary party.
2. If changes subsequently occur in the composition of a parliamentary party, such party shall inform the President of this.
3. Each parliamentary party shall inform the President of the composition of its executive.

Article 12. Formation of new parliamentary parties

1. If a split occurs in a parliamentary party and leads to the formation of one or more new parliamentary parties, the funds of the parliamentary parties involved shall be fixed at the amounts to which the undivided parliamentary party would have been entitled, divided in proportion to the number of members involved in the split.
2. If a new parliamentary party is formed by merger, the funds of the newly formed parliamentary party may not exceed the amount to which a parliamentary party of the same size as referred to in article 11, paragraph 1, would be entitled.
3. To enable obligations to staff of the original parliamentary party to be met, the Presidium may make a temporary arrangement, notwithstanding paragraphs 1 and 2.

CHAPTER VI. PERSONNEL

Article 13. The Secretary General and the other personnel

1. The House appoints and dismisses the Secretary General.
2. The Presidium is responsible for exercising the other powers relating to the legal status of the Secretary General.
3. The Presidium appoints and dismisses the Directors and the Deputy Secretaries General, the special adviser to the Presidium and the head of the Research and Verification Office.
4. The Secretary General is responsible for exercising the other powers in relation to the legal status of the Directors and the Deputy Secretaries General.
5. The other civil servants are designated and dismissed by the Secretary General.
6. The Secretary General may delegate his powers under paragraphs 4 and 5.

Article 14. Control of administrative staff; archive management

1. The Secretary General is in charge of the administrative staff. The Presidium shall supervise this.
2. The Secretary General is charged, on behalf of the House, with the management of the archives of the House.

3. The Secretary General may delegate his powers under paragraphs 1 and 2.

CHAPTER VII. THE COMMITTEES

Part 1. General provisions

Article 15. Appointment of Committees; assistance

1. The House shall appoint the Committees prescribed by the provisions of these Rules.
2. Each Committee shall be assisted by the Secretary General or by a Deputy Secretary General (clerk) designated by the Secretary General, and by one or more other officials of the House designated by the Secretary General.

Part 2. Standing Committees, General Committees and Temporary Committees

Article 16. Standing Committees

The House has a Standing Committee for each Ministry, with the exception of the Ministry of General Affairs. The House also has a Standing Committee for European Affairs and for Netherlands Antilles and Aruban Affairs.

Article 17. General Committees

1. The House may appoint General Committees for subjects which are of special importance to the exercise of its duties or which concern virtually all Ministries.
2. A General Committee is appointed for the duration of a session.
3. The House may also charge other committees with responsibility for dealing with such subjects.

Article 17a. Theme Committees

1. The House may appoint Theme Committees for topics of great social importance which do not specifically concern a single Ministry.
2. A Theme Committee shall be appointed for not more than the duration of one session.

Article 18. Temporary Committees

1. The House may appoint Temporary Committees for specific subjects.
2. The appointment decree of a Temporary Committee shall in any event:
 - (a) contain an accurate description of the subject on which the Committee is to report to the House;
 - (b) specify the period for which the Committee is appointed.
3. The period referred to in paragraph 2 (b) may be extended by the House at the request of the Committee.

Part 3. Other Committees

Article 19. The Credentials Committee

1. There shall be a Committee for the examination of credentials. It shall report to the House in writing or orally on the admission of the members and, if necessary, on the course of the elections and the adoption of the result.
2. The first paragraph shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to persons declared to have been appointed member of the European Parliament.

Article 20. The Petitions Committee

1. There shall be a Petitions Committee the procedure of which is regulated in a set of rules to be adopted separately by the House.
2. It is charged with reporting on all petitions passed to it by the House or a Committee of the House. It is also charged with matters relating to the National Ombudsman.
3. Each report on a petition shall contain a clear conclusion. These reports shall be printed and distributed.
4. The Committee is competent to consult orally or in writing with the National Ombudsman. It may report to the House on reports of the National Ombudsman which are referred to it.
5. The Committee may request a Standing or General Committee to advise it or to institute an inquiry on its behalf and to report to it on this, after which it will itself report to the House.

Article 21. The Procedure Committee

There shall be a Procedure Committee, which advises the House, either on request or on its own initiative, on the procedure of the House and these Rules.

Article 21a. The Public Expenditure Committee

1. There shall be a Public Expenditure Committee. It is charged with dealing with matters concerning the legitimacy en efficiency of the disbursement of public funds and with informing, advising and supporting the House and the committees in the practice of budgetary estimates law and financial scrutiny. The information, advice and support shall extend not only to the budgetary items but also to major projects designated by the House and to the budgetary and accounting aspects of policy proposals and decisions of the Government.
2. Reports of the Court of Audit (*Algemene Rekenkamer*) and government documents relating to accounting matters shall be submitted directly to the Committee. The Presidium may decide to submit such a document to another committee too: article 119, paragraph 4, shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.
3. No decisions shall be taken on a proposal to the House to request the Court of Audit to initiate an investigation until the Committee has given an opinion.

Article 22. The Intelligence and Security Services Committee

There shall be an Intelligence and Security Services Committee.

Article 23. Joint Committee for the supervision of the Office of the Clerk for Inter-Parliamentary Relations

1. The establishment of an Office of the Clerk for Inter-Parliamentary Relations shall be regulated by separate Rules to be adopted by the two Houses of the States General.
2. The supervision of the Office of the Clerk for Inter-Parliamentary Relations shall be carried out by the Joint Committee to be appointed in the said Rules.

Article 24. Parliamentary Reporting Office

1. The responsibility for the Parliamentary Reporting Office, for the performing of its tasks, the publication of its reports on the proceedings of the meetings of the States General as well as for the period during which the records are to be kept, shall be laid down in a separate Regulation to be adopted by both Chambers of the States General.
2. The competence to make corrections in the reports produced by the Office or to undo adjustments made therein lies with the Joint Commission of Appeal for the Parliamentary

Reporting Office.

Part 4. The members and the chairman

Article 25. The Committee members

1. The President shall determine how many members a Committee is to have. The House may decide otherwise.
2. The President shall appoint the members and, in so far as he considers this desirable, deputy members.
3. Discharge from membership or deputy membership may be granted by the President on request. The President shall fill any vacancies which arise as a result as well as any other vacancies.
4. The members and deputy members of Committees, with the exception of General Committees, shall be appointed anew at the start of every session. Until these appointments have been made, the Committees in office in the previous session shall continue to exist in their old composition.

Article 26. The Committee chairman

1. The first meeting of a newly appointed Committee shall take place at the invitation and under the chairmanship of the President. At this meeting the Committee shall appoint from among its members a chairman, who is charged with the control of the further business, and a deputy chairman.
2. The appointment to the office of chairman or deputy chairman shall be made anew at a meeting called for this purpose after a committee has been reconstituted in a new composition as referred to in article 25, paragraph 4, and when the office of chairman or deputy chairman falls vacant during a term of office.
3. The names of the chairman and deputy chairman shall be communicated to the House.
4. If there is no chairman or the chairman is unable to attend, he shall be replaced by the deputy chairman or the longest sitting member of the House. Where members have sat for the same length of time, the eldest in age shall take precedence.

Part 5. Powers

Article 27. Powers of Committees

For the proper discharge of its duties, a Committee is in any event empowered to:

- (a) apply to a Minister in order to obtain all documents of which it considers it has to take cognizance;
- (b) enter into oral or written consultation with a Minister;
- (c) hold hearings;
- (d) make working visits;
- (e) obtain information from an advisory body;
- (f) call in external experts;
- (g) propose the designation of major project to the House.

Article 28. Forms of oral consultation

Oral consultation with a Minister may:

- (a) relate to a bill referred to a Committee (legislative consultations);

- (b) relate to another document referred to a Committee (document consultations)¹;
- (c) be intended for the regular exchange of views on general policy (general consultations).

Article 29. Hearings

1. Notice of the holding of a hearing shall be given to the members of the House and on the Internet.
2. If a Committee wishes to hear civil servants, it shall invite them through the intermediary of the relevant Minister.

Article 30. Advisory Bodies

1. The members may make proposals to request advice from external advisory bodies as referred to in Article 17 of the Advisory Bodies Framework Act. Such a proposal is addressed to a Committee of the House.
2. The Committee shall send the proposal and its advice to the Presidium. The Presidium shall submit the proposal, together with the advice of the Committee and its own advice, to the House.
3. The House shall decide on the proposal.

Article 31. Major projects

1. The Committees may at any time make proposals to the House for the designation of a major project.
2. A decision of the House to designate a major project shall be immediately communicated by the President to the relevant Minister. This communication shall also state which Committee is responsible for implementation.
3. The House shall adopt rules of procedure for major projects.

Part 6. Reports

Article 32. Reports

1. A Committee shall report to the House on the documents referred to it. These reports shall deal as concisely as possible with the matters relating to the document. The Committee is entitled to omit that which it considers irrelevant.
2. The House may decide that a Committee need not publish a report on documents referred to it, if the Committee considers that such documents cannot be dealt with in public.
3. A Committee shall in any event report on its public, oral consultations with a Minister.
4. All reports to be published by a Committee shall be drawn up under the responsibility of the Secretary General.

Part 7. Committee meetings

Article 33. Times of meetings

1. The Committee shall meet at such times as it itself determines. If it has not taken a decision on this, its chairman shall determine these times.
2. The chairman shall in any event call a meeting of the Committee within a reasonable period whenever the Government so requests or a quarter of the members of the Committee

¹ See articles 119–125 for examples of documents that may form the subject of such consultation.

express a wish for a meeting, stating reasons.

Article 34. Attendance at meetings

1. Members and deputy members of a Committee shall have access to all its meetings.
2. All members of the House shall have access to legislative consultations and document consultations at which motions may be moved. They have the right to take part in the deliberations.
3. A Committee may, at their request, grant one or more members of the House who are neither a member nor a deputy member of the Committee permission to attend an other Committee meeting than referred to in paragraph 2; in such a case, the relevant member shall be competent to take part in the deliberations.

Article 35. Chairmanship

1. The chairman of a Committee meeting shall have the same powers as those to which the person presiding over an assembly of the House is entitled, provided always that an exclusion pursuant to article 60 applies only to the public meetings of the Committee on the day on which the exclusion occurs.
2. A joint meeting of two or more Committees shall be presided over by the Committee chairman who is the longest sitting member of the House. Where members have sat for the same length of time, the eldest in age shall take precedence.

Article 36. Decision-making

1. Decisions may be taken only by the members of the Committee, provided always that if a member is not in office or is unable to attend his deputy may exercise his powers.
2. Decisions at a joint meeting of two or more Committees shall be taken by each of the Committees separately. If the decisions are not identical, the matter shall if necessary be decided by the House.
3. The Petitions Committee may not take a decision if not more than half of its members of their deputies are present.

Article 37. Public nature of Committee meetings

1. The meetings of Committees shall be public. The House may decide that meetings of a particular Committee may be held in private.
2. A Committee may decide to hold its procedural meetings in private.
3. A Committee may decide to hold a private meeting at the proposal of a member of the Committee or a Minister. If the proposal is made during a public meeting, the meeting shall be conducted in camera until a decision has been taken on the proposal

Article 38. Breach of confidentiality

1. Secrecy shall be observed with regard to the content of confidential documents and the exchange of views in a private Committee meeting, with the exception of what the Committee states in its report.
2. The Committee may permit the members and the Ministers to disclose what they themselves have said in a private meeting, provided that the confidentiality of statements made by other persons is not thereby breached.
3. The Presidium may propose to the House that a member who has breached the confidentiality of a Committee meeting or of a document be excluded from all meetings of one or more Committees and/or be barred from receiving confidential documents for a maximum of one month.

4. The proposal may not be made until after the member to be excluded and the chairman of the Committee meeting whose confidentiality has been breached have been heard or in any event properly summoned to attend.
5. The proposal shall be put to the vote at the start of the first meeting after the day on which the Presidium decides to make the proposal. No debate shall be held on this proposal.
6. A decision to exclude a member shall be immediately communicated in writing by the President to the members of the House.

Part 8. Forms of oral consultation

Article 39. Legislative consultation

1. In order to hold legislative consultations a Committee requires the consent of the House. The House shall decide on a proposal of the Presidium.
2. A stenographic report shall be made of legislative consultations.

Article 40. Document consultation

1. A Committee may hold document consultations on a document referred to it.
2. A concise report shall be made of document consultations.
3. The Committee may request the House to have a stenographic report made of a document consultation. The House shall decide on a proposal of the Presidium.

Article 41. General consultation

1. A Committee may hold general consultations on matters relating to its policy area.
2. A concise report shall be made of general consultations.

Article 42. Oral consultations with civil servants

With the consent of the relevant Minister, information may be provided during oral consultations by civil servants designated by the Minister for this purpose.

Article 43. Motions in legislative consultations and document consultations

1. During legislative consultations and document consultations of which a stenographic report is made, each member of the House who addresses the meeting may move motions on the draft proposals under consideration. Article 66 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.
2. Motions which have been moved in legislative consultations or document consultations shall be put to the vote in the House after the report on the consultations has been published. The House may decide otherwise.

Article 44. Plenary procedure after document consultations of which a stenographic report has been made

If a stenographic report has been made of a document consultation, the debate on the document dealt with in such consultations shall be opened only if a member wishes to alter or withdraw a motion previously moved or wishes to move a new motion. In such cases the debate shall relate solely to the altered or new motion. The House may decide otherwise.

Article 44a. Plenary procedure after document consultation of which a concise report has been prepared and after general consultation(2-minute debate)

1. A debate on a concise report of a document consultation or on a report of a general consultation shall be opened only if a member wishes to move a motion following such consultation.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of article 63, paragraph 1, each member shall address the House only once.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of article 64, paragraph 2, the House shall fix an equal maximum speaking time for each parliamentary party.

Article 45. Concurrent meetings

1. The days and hours when legislative consultations or document consultations of which a stenographic report is made shall be held shall be determined by the President.
2. No more than two meetings for consultations as referred to in paragraph 1 shall be held at the same time. At times when the House is sitting, only one consultation meeting as referred to in paragraph 1 may be held.

CHAPTER VIII. PLENARY MEETINGS

Part 1. General provisions

Article 46. Convocation

1. The Speaker shall call a meeting as often as he considers this to be necessary or has been requested in writing to do so by fifteen members, who state their reasons.
2. If the Presidium has adopted general guidelines for the days and hours when the House generally meets, the President shall take as much account of these as possible.
3. The House may also decide itself on what day and at what hour it will meet again, but the President shall then be free, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, to convene the meeting at an earlier or later time.
4. The members shall be given timely written notice of the meeting. If this is not possible, the notice can be given in some other way. The notice calling the meeting shall list the items to be dealt with.

Article 47. Suspension or closure of the meeting

1. The President may suspend or close the meeting if he considers this desirable in view of the course of the business or in order to maintain order.
2. A decision of the House is needed in order to continue a meeting after 11 p.m.

Article 48. Attendance list

Each member present shall sign the attendance list before the start of the meeting. The list shall remain on the table of the Secretary General for signature by members arriving later.

Article 49. Quorum

The President shall open the meeting if the attendance list has been signed by over half of the number of sitting members.

Article 50. Lack of quorum

1. If the requisite number of members is not present on or shortly after the hour for which the meeting has been called, the President shall open the gathering and have the names of the absent members read out. He may give notice of any documents received. Afterwards he shall adjourn the meeting to a later time.
2. The names of both the present and the absent members shall be recorded in the official report of the Proceedings of the House; in the case of the absent members, the reasons

given for their absence shall also be recorded.

Article 51. Seating arrangement

1. Each member shall be allocated a seat in the assembly room. The Presidium may also allocate a particular group of seats to a parliamentary party and leave the division thereof to the parliamentary party.
2. If the President so requests, the members shall take their seats.
3. The Presidium shall arrange for seats to be available for the special delegates of the Parliaments of the Netherlands Antilles and of Aruba.
4. The Presidium shall also arrange for seats to be available for the Ministers and persons designated by them to assist them at an assembly.
5. The Presidium may allocate seats to other persons invited by the House.

Article 52. Rostrum

Each member shall speak standing up, unless the President grants him leave to speak seated, and at the rostrum, unless the President allows him to speak from another place.

Article 53. Received documents

1. All documents received since the last assembly shall be included in a list which will be available for inspection on the Secretary General's table during the meeting. In this list, the President shall make proposals about how they should be dealt with. The proposals shall be deemed to have been adopted at the end of the meeting, unless an objection to a proposal has previously been made by a member; in such a case the House shall decide on the relevant proposal. The list and the proposals shall be included in the official report.
2. The President shall remain competent to give notice in the meeting of any documents which he considers to be sufficiently important.
3. The President may set aside unsigned, incomprehensible and offensive documents without further notice.

Part 2. Arrangement of business

Article 54. Arrangement of business

1. The House shall arrange its business either on a proposal by the President or on a proposal by a member.
2. The business shall generally be arranged at the start of the meeting. The President may refuse to raise the subject of the arrangement of business at other times. If the President intends to propose an arrangement of business, he shall mention this in the notice calling the meeting, unless there is no opportunity to do so because of the urgency of the matter.

Part 3. The debate

Article 55. Addressing the House

1. No member shall address the House until after he has asked the President and been given permission by him to have the floor. The President shall give permission to have the floor in the order in which permission is requested, unless the House decides otherwise. The members may have their names entered on the appropriate list of speakers as soon as the President has announced his intention of raising the subject or the House has decided, whether or not subject to reservation, to raise the subject.
2. If Ministers, persons whom they have designated to assist them in the meeting, Ministers

- Plenipotentiary or special delegates request the floor, the President shall not give permission for them to have the floor until the person who has the floor has finished his speech.
3. If the President wishes to speak on the subject that is under discussion, he shall leave the President's chair, unless what he has to say is necessary for the performance of the duties with which he is charged. He shall not take this seat again while the subject is under discussion.

Article 56. Personal business; proposal on a matter of order

1. The order of speakers may be interrupted if a member requests the floor for personal business or raises a point of order.
2. The President shall give permission for a member to have the floor for personal business only after a provisional indication of the business. The decision whether something constitutes personal business shall be taken by the President.
3. A proposal on a matter of order may be made either by the President or by a member.

Article 57. Interruptions

1. A person who has the floor may not be interrupted during his speech unless the President has occasion to remind him to observe these Rules or bear in mind the need for brevity.
2. The President of the House may permit interruptions which are made through the microphones intended for this purpose.

Article 58. Warning; withdrawal of words

1. If a person who has the floor strays from the subject of debate, the President shall call on him to return to the subject in hand.
2. If a member or a Minister uses offensive language, causes a disturbance, violates his duty of secrecy or signifies his approval of or incites the commission of unlawful acts, he shall be reprimanded by the President and given the opportunity to withdraw the words that have given rise to the warning.

Article 59. Order to yield the floor

1. If a person who has the floor makes no use of the opportunity referred to in article 58, paragraph 2, or continues to stray from the subject of debate, use offensive language, cause a disturbance, violate his duty of secrecy or signify his approval or incite the commission of unlawful acts, the President may order him to yield the floor.
2. A member who has been ordered to yield the floor may no longer take part in the debate on the subject under discussion at that meeting.

Article 60. Exclusion from a meeting

The President may exclude a member addressing the meeting to whom article 59 has been applied and any other member who has been guilty of acts of the kind referred to in that article from further attendance at the meeting on the day on which the exclusion occurs.

Article 61. Non-inclusion of words in the report

Deleted .

Article 62. No appeal to the House

No appeal to the House shall lie against decisions taken by the President pursuant to articles 58 to 61.

Article 63. Number of times that a member addresses the House

1. No member shall address the House more than twice on the same subject or address the House on the same subject after the end of the second stage, unless the House has given him leave to do so.
2. Speaking on personal business or on a proposal on a matter of order shall not be counted when determining how many times a member has spoken on the same subject.

Article 64. Maximum speaking time

1. On a proposal of the President or a member present in the assembly room, the House may, before the start or in the course of the debate on a subject, draw up rules on the length of the speeches of the members. It may also be stipulated in this connection that each member may address the assembly only once.
2. The House may also fix a maximum speaking time for each parliamentary party, preferably taking into account the size of the parliamentary parties.

Article 65. Finishing speaking

As soon as the maximum period prescribed for the speeches or for the explanations of votes has expired, the President shall request the person who has the floor to stop speaking. He shall then immediately comply with this request.

Article 66. Moving motions

1. Each member who has the floor may move motions on the subject under discussion. Such a motion shall be formulated briefly and clearly, be in writing and be signed by the person making it. It may be dealt with only if it has been countersigned or seconded by at least four other members.
2. Unless the House has given leave for this, a motion shall not be moved during the first stage. Presentation during the first stage shall in any event be possible if the debate relates to a report of oral consultations.
3. The text of a motion shall be read out by the person moving it.
4. Motions shall be dealt with at the same time as the debate on the subject in question, unless the House decides that this should be done later.

Article 67. Closure of the debate

1. If no one else wishes to speak, the President shall close the debate.
2. If the President considers that the subject has been adequately elucidated from different sides, he may propose to the House, notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, to close the debate of the House earlier. No debate shall be held on such a proposal.
3. The closure of the debate of the House may also be proposed on the same ground by a member present in the assembly room. The proposal may not be explained and shall not be the subject of debate.

Article 68. Closure of the debate at a fixed time

On a proposal of the President or of a member present in the assembly room, the House may also decide that its debate on a subject will be closed at a time to be stated in the proposal. No debate shall be held on such a proposal. If it is carried, the President shall have the power to divide the available time on a fair basis.

Part 4. Voting on business not relating to persons

Article 69. Taking a decision; voting

1. After the debate has been closed, the House shall, if necessary, proceed to take a decision.
2. Voting on motions may be postponed; if a vote is not held at the first meeting held within two months of the decision to postpone (not including recesses), the motion shall be deemed to have lapsed. The House may decide otherwise.
3. Voting shall be by a show of hands.
4. A vote need not be held if none of the members requests one. In such a case, the President proposes that the decision be taken without a vote. However, members present in the assembly room may request that it be noted that they wish to be deemed to have voted against; in such a case, the decision shall be deemed to have been taken by the votes of the other members.

Article 70. Roll-call vote

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of article 69, paragraph 3, a roll-call vote shall be held if a member so requests.
2. A roll-call vote shall also be held if, in the opinion of a member, the proportions of votes on a show of hands are not clear. A roll-call vote may not be held if the result of a vote on a show of hands has been adopted.
3. In the case of a roll-call vote, the question of the attendance list number at which the vote will start shall be decided by lot.
4. In the case of a roll-call vote, each member shall cast his vote by uttering the word "Yea" ("*voor*") or the word "Nay" ("*tegen*").
5. If it is found in the case of a roll-call vote that the number of members required for a quorum is no longer present, the President may either suspend the meeting for some time and continue it if sufficient members are present at the time of reopening or adjourn the meeting and call a new meeting at a later time.

Article 71. Mistake in casting a vote

If a member makes a mistake in casting his vote, he may rectify this mistake before the next member has voted. If he does not notice his mistake until later, he may ask after the end of the vote for a note to be made of his mistake; however, this shall not alter the result of the vote.

Article 72. Tied vote

1. In the event of a tied vote, the proposal shall be deemed not to have been adopted if all the members are present.
2. If not all the members are present, the taking of a decision shall be postponed until a subsequent meeting. If there is again a tied vote, the proposal shall be deemed not to have been adopted.

Article 73. Explanation of vote

1. After the vote, explanations of votes may be made.
2. The President may allow explanations of votes to be made after the closure of the debate, but in that case immediately before the vote. In such cases, the debate may not be reopened after an explanation of vote has been made.
3. An explanation of vote may not last longer than two minutes.

Part 5. Voting on persons

Article 74. Counting of votes in voting on persons

Voting on persons for appointments, nominations or elections shall be by ballot papers placed in a box. In the case of such a ballot, the President shall appoint four members as tellers. After the first appointed teller has stated the number of ballot papers found in the box and the President has stated the number of members present, the first appointed teller shall announce the result.

Article 75. Completion of the ballot papers

A ballot paper shall be filled in for each candidate separately and shall contain a clear indication of the person. The House shall decide in cases of doubt.

Article 76. Fewer ballot papers than quorum

If the number of ballot papers found in the box is fewer than the number of members required to form a quorum at the meeting, article 70, paragraph 5, shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 77. Invalid votes

Ballot papers that are not filled in or not properly filled in shall not count for the purpose of determining a majority.

Article 78. Void ballot

The voting shall be void:

- (a) if the number of ballot papers found in the box exceeds that of the members who have signed the attendance list and this difference may have influenced the result;
- (b) if the number of properly completed ballot papers is fewer than the number of members required to form a quorum at the meeting.

Article 79. Free ballot

The first vote shall be "free". If no one obtains an absolute majority in this first ballot, a second ballot shall be held and shall once again be free.

Article 80. Third ballot

If no one obtains an absolute majority in the second ballot either, a third ballot shall be held, on this occasion between the four persons who obtained the most votes in the second ballot. If votes were cast only for three or four persons in the second ballot, the third ballot shall be between the two persons who obtained the largest number of votes.

Article 81. Fourth ballot

If no absolute majority is obtained in the third ballot, a fourth ballot shall be held between the two persons who obtained the most votes in the third ballot.

Article 82. Interim ballot

If it is not clear from the result of the second or third ballot between whom the further ballot must be held, an interim ballot shall be held to decide this.

Article 83. Tied vote

1. If there is a tied vote in an interim ballot or in a ballot between two persons, the matter shall be decided by lot.
2. In order to arrive at this decision, the requisite slips containing the names shall be put, properly folded, into the box by one of the tellers and then taken out and read out one by one by another teller. The person whose name is on the slip of paper first taken out shall be

the elected person.

Article 84. Elections not mentioned in the Constitution

If it concerns appointments, nominations or elections not mentioned in the Constitution, the House may determine in a special case that other rules shall apply.

Article 85. Election of persons by the Committees

The election of persons by the Committees shall take place in the same way as those by the House, provided always that in the case of the third ballot the election shall be between the two persons who obtained the most votes in the second ballot.

Article 86. Presentation to the King

The President shall arrange for the nominations of persons whose appointment is made by Royal Decree to be presented orally or in writing to the King.

Part 6. Final provisions

Article 87. Official Report and Proceedings

1. The Secretary General shall arrange for a stenographic report of the debate (proceedings) to be made of each meeting and of each gathering referred to in article 50. The Rules referred to in article 24, paragraph 1, shall apply to this report.
2. The Secretary General shall arrange for an official report to be drawn up of each meeting and of each gathering referred to in article 50. This report shall in any event include the names of the members who were present and of those vote 'Yea' or 'Nay', a brief statement of the contents of all documents received, and all decisions taken by the House or by the President. The official report shall be approved by the President and the Secretary General, in confirmation of which it will be signed by them, and shall be kept in the Record Office of the House of Representatives.
3. If, in response to questions put during the public debate, Ministers or the persons who assist them at a meeting answer such questions partly in writing and partly orally before the end of the debate, the written answers shall be included in an annexe to the report of the meeting at which the other questions were answered orally.

Article 88. Secrecy

1. The House, meeting in camera, may impose a duty of secrecy in respect of matters dealt with there.
2. The secrecy shall be observed by all members, including those who learn later of the matters dealt with. The duty of secrecy may be lifted by the House meeting in camera.

Article 89. Report or minutes of a meeting held in camera

1. The House may decide that stenographers may be present at a meeting held in camera. In such a case, a stenographic report of the proceedings shall be made in accordance with the appropriate rules; unless the House decides otherwise either immediately or at a later date, however, such a report shall not be printed but shall be kept locked up in the Record Office of the House of Representatives .
2. If the House has not decided that stenographers may be present, minutes shall be kept by the Secretary General. These shall be read and proposed for approval immediately or at a subsequent meeting in camera. In addition to what is stated in article 87, paragraph 2, second sentence, such minutes shall contain a concise report of the debate. They shall be

kept locked up in the Record Office of the House of Representatives unless the House decides otherwise.

CHAPTER IX. PROCEDURE ON BILLS, KINGDOM BILLS, PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS, OTHER DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO A COMMITTEE AND TREATIES

Part 1. Bills

Article 90. Referral

1. Bills shall be referred by the Presidium to a Standing or General Committee.
2. The decision shall be communicated in writing to the members as soon as possible. If the decision has not been taken unanimously, it shall not be implemented before notice has been given of it at a public meeting of the House. When this notice is given, the House may decide otherwise. A proposal to this effect may be made by each member.

Article 91. Debate on broad outlines

On the proposal of the Committee, the House may decide that a general debate should be held on a bill before the Committee starts to consider it.

Article 92. Legislative report

1. Before the Committee starts to consider a bill, the clerk of the Committee shall advise on whether it is desirable that a legislative report is published on the bill.
2. A legislative report shall be drawn up by the clerk of the Committee.

Article 93. Submission of comments

1. The members of the House shall be entitled to submit their written comments on a bill to the Committee within such period as the Committee decides. Notice of the said period shall be given to the members of the House.
2. The Committee shall determine the period referred to in the first paragraph within fourteen days of the date on which the bill is referred to it.
3. The Committee may decide that the comments of the members of the House shall be submitted not only in writing in the manner provided for in paragraph 1 but also at a meeting open to all members of the House. Each member of the House shall be entitled to take part in a meeting as referred to in the first sentence.

Article 94. Report

1. The Committee shall publish a report showing, whether or not subject to reservations, that it considers that the bill has been sufficiently prepared to be dealt with in a public meeting of the House.
2. A report shall be immediately printed, distributed to the members and sent to the Government. Annexes to reports shall also be printed and distributed, unless the Committee determines that they should be deposited for inspection. If the annexes are of a confidential nature, they shall be deposited for confidential inspection by the members.
3. After receipt of the memorandum drawn up in respect of the report, the Committee may decide to publish a further report.

Article 95. Time limits

1. After a bill has been referred to a Committee, the Presidium may set a time limit within which

- the Committee must adopt its report.
2. If the Committee cannot be ready within the prescribed period, it shall ask for an extension of the time limit. The decision on this shall be taken by the Presidium. This decision shall be communicated in writing to the members of the House as quickly as possible. Notice of it shall also be given in a public meeting of the House. If the decision has not been taken unanimously, the House may decide otherwise when the notice is given. A proposal to this effect may be made by every member. If a time limit has been extended once by the Presidium, a further extension may be granted only by the House, unless the House has been prorogued until further notice, in which case the Presidium may grant a further extension.
 3. If the Committee fails to publish a report within the prescribed period, the House may open the debate without a report having been published.

Article 96. Proposal of amendments

1. From the time when a bill has been referred to a Committee, each member shall be entitled to propose amendments, accompanied by a brief explanation.
2. An amendment shall be duplicated and distributed with the utmost speed.

Article 97. Admissibility of amendments

1. An amendment is not admissible if its tenor is contrary to that of the bill or if there is no direct connection between the subject matter of the amendment and that of the bill.
2. An amendment shall be deemed to be admissible as long as the House has not declared it inadmissible. A proposal to this effect may be made, if necessary by an interruption of the order of the day, either by the President or by one of the members.

Article 98. Alteration and withdrawal of amendments

The first signatory shall be entitled to make changes to the amendment. The first signatory shall also be entitled to withdraw the amendment, but only with the consent of the House if the debate has closed.

Article 99. Sub-amendments

The rules governing amendments shall also apply to proposals to alter amendments proposed by another member.

Article 100. Adoption of amendments

1. The President shall announce during the debate on a bill that an amendment has been adopted² if:
 - (a) the Minister indicates that he can assent to the content of a proposed amendment;
 - (b) the President has assured himself that none of the members present in the assembly room object to the adoption of the amendment.
2. An adopted amendment shall be part of the bill from the time of the announcement referred to in paragraph 1; it shall no longer constitute a separate subject of debate.
3. An amendment may not be adopted during legislative consultations.

Article 101. General debate in two stages; article-by-article consideration

1. The general debate on a bill shall take place in two stages.
2. The House may decide after the general debate to deal one by one with the separate articles

² By the Government.

- and the amendments proposed to them and finally to deal with the preamble to the bill.
3. The House may decide to adopt a different procedure.

Article 102. Consideration of bill and article-by-article consideration in legislative consultations

1. On the proposal of the Presidium made after hearing the Committee, the House may decide:
 - (a) that, without prejudice to the provisions of article 91, legislative consultations will be held about a bill before it is considered in an assembly of the House;
 - (b) that, after the general debate on a bill, the debate on the separate articles and the preamble to the bill will take place in legislative consultations.
2. In legislative consultations as referred to in paragraph 1 (b), the articles of a bill and the amendments proposed to it shall be considered in the same way as is prescribed for the consideration of articles and amendments in the meeting of the House.

Article 103. Order of voting; lapsing of amendments

1. The following order shall be observed when voting on an article or its preamble and on the amendments proposed to it: voting shall take place first on the sub-amendments, then on the amendments and finally on the article or the preamble.
2. Where there are several amendments to the same part of a bill, the most far-reaching amendment shall be put to the vote first. In the event of a dispute on this, the House shall decide.
3. The House may decide that parts of an amendment, of an article or of the preamble shall be put to the vote separately.
4. The House may decide that amendments must be deemed to have lapsed as a result of the making of other alterations.

Article 104. Final vote on a bill

After all the articles and the preamble have been put to the vote, the final vote on the bill as a whole shall be taken.

Article 105. Second reading

1. If the bill has been altered in the course of the debate or as a result of the voting, the House may decide to postpone the final vote until a following sitting.
2. Alterations may be proposed in the meantime which have become necessary as a result of alterations made before the voting or as a result of the voting; these proposals may also serve to rectify manifest errors. The proposals referred to in the first sentence may be made by the Government and by the relevant committee.
3. Alterations proposed in this way shall be immediately put to the vote, unless they constitute a reason for the House to reopen the debate.

Article 106. Change of serial numbers, references etc.

1. Changes in the serial numbers of articles, paragraphs of articles or parts thereof which have become necessary as a result of alterations made to a bill and changes in the references to articles, paragraphs of articles or parts thereof which are a consequence thereof shall be made by the President.
2. The House may decide to drop all or part of the changes referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 107. Sending of bill to the Senate

The President shall send a bill passed by the House to the President of the Senate, together with the

following message: "The House of Representatives of the States-General of the States General hereby sends the bill passed by it to the Senate".

Article 108. Return of defeated bill

Where a defeated bill was presented by or on behalf of the King, the President shall return the bill to the King, together with the following message: "The House of Representatives of the States General has rejected the bill returned herewith".

Part 2. Kingdom bills

Article 109. General rule

The procedure for the consideration of Kingdom bills shall be the same as that of other bills, subject to the following special rules.

Article 110. Written preparation

The preparation of the public debate in the House on a Kingdom bill shall be conducted in writing.

Article 111. Setting of a time limit

Proposals for the setting of a time limit within which the representative assembly of the Netherlands Antilles or of Aruba is entitled to publish a written report on a Kingdom bill and proposals that the Government be requested to set such a time limit must be made in a meeting of the House either by the President or by one of the members.

Article 112. Report of the representative assembly

The written report of the representative assembly shall be printed, distributed to the members and sent to the Government.

Article 113. Passing by less than three fifths of the votes

If, after the Minister Plenipotentiary or the special delegate has stated that he is against the bill, the House passes the bill by a majority of less than three fifths of the votes cast, the President shall not send the bill to the Senate but shall give notice of such passing of the bill to the Prime Minister. If the latter states that the bill is maintained, the President shall send it to the Senate after all.

Part 3. Private members' bills

Article 114. Lodging of private members' bills/Kingdom bills

1. Bills or Kingdom bills initiated by one or more members and all bills to be introduced pursuant to article 15 of the Charter for the Kingdom (*Statuut voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*) by the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba shall be lodged with the President in writing and signed.
2. Kingdom bills initiated by private members or by the Minister Plenipotentiary shall be immediately sent by the President, after receipt thereof, to the representative assembly of the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, as the case may be.

Article 115. Hearing the Council of State

1. Before a bill or Kingdom bill initiated by members is considered by the House, the House shall hear the Council of State (*Raad van State*).
2. The House may also hear the Council of State on the subject of the bills referred to in paragraph 1 after the procedure of consideration has started. A proposal to this effect may

be made by a member, if necessary by interrupting the order of the day, at any time before the final vote on the bill as a whole.

Article 116. Procedure for considering private members' bills

1. The procedure for consideration of bills or Kingdom bills initiated by members shall be the same as that for bills or Kingdom bills introduced by or on behalf of the King, provided always that where reference is made to action by a Minister the private member or private members initiating the bill shall act in his place and that the private members concerned cannot take part in the examination of the bill.
2. One or more private members initiating a bill may arrange to be assisted in the meetings of the committees and of the House by a maximum of two persons designated by them for this purpose.
3. If Ministers wish to address the House during its consideration of the bill, they shall be allowed to do so after the private members initiating the bill, unless the House decides otherwise.

Article 117. Sending of private members' bill to the Senate

Where a bill initiated by one or more members is passed, the President shall send the bill to the President of the Senate, together with the following message: "The House of Representatives of the States General hereby sends the bill passed by it to the Senate. It has instructed ... to defend the bill in that House".

Article 118. Defence in the Senate

Unless the House decides otherwise, the member(s) initiating the bill shall be charged with the defence referred to in article 85 of the Constitution.

Part 4. Other documents referred to a Committee

Article 119. Referral

1. The Presidium may decide to refer to a Committee documents other than a bill.
2. Before the Presidium decides to refer a document as referred to in paragraph 1 to a Committee, it shall examine whether the document is preceded by a separate section listing points for decision.
3. The Presidium may propose to the House that a document be returned to the Government in order that the points for decision referred to in paragraph 2 be appended.
4. A decision to refer a document shall be brought to the attention of the members in writing as quickly as possible. If the decision is not taken unanimously, it shall not be implemented before notice thereof has been given in a public meeting of the House. The House may decide otherwise at the time of such notice. A proposal to this effect may be made by every member.
5. If a decision of the Presidium is not forthcoming, each member may make a proposal in a public meeting of the House for the document to be referred to a Committee.

Article 120. General debate on referred documents

1. The House may decide, on the proposal of the Presidium and having heard the Committee, that the general debate on a document referred to a Committee shall occur before the committee starts its examination.

Article 121. Submission of comments

1. The members of the House shall be entitled to submit their written comments on a document referred to a Committee within such period as the Committee decides. Notice of the said period shall be given to the members of the House.
2. The Committee shall determine the period referred to in the first paragraph within fourteen days of the date on which the document is referred to it.
3. The Committee may decide that the comments of the members of the House shall be submitted not only in accordance with the written procedure referred to in paragraph 1 but also at a meeting open to all members of the House. Each member of the House shall be entitled to take part in a meeting as referred to in the first sentence.

Article 122. Time limits

1. After a document has been referred to a Committee, the Presidium may set a time limit within which the Committee must adopt its report or its list of questions.
2. If the Committee cannot be ready within the prescribed period, it shall ask for an extension of the time limit. The decision on this shall be taken by the Presidium. This decision shall be communicated in writing to the members of the House as quickly as possible. Notice of it shall also be given in a public meeting of the House. If the decision has not been taken unanimously, the House may decide otherwise when the notice is given. A proposal to this effect may be made by every member. If a time limit has been extended once by the Presidium, a further extension may be granted only by the House, unless the House has been prorogued until further notice, in which case the Presidium may grant a further extension.
3. If the Committee fails to publish a report or list of questions within the prescribed period, the House may open the debate without a report or list of questions having been published.

Article 123. Document consultation

Document consultations may be held in respect of a document referred to a Committee.

Part 5. Treaties

Article 124. Treaty lodged for tacit approval

1. As soon as a treaty is presented to the House for tacit approval, the Secretary General shall note the date of receipt on the accompanying letter and the date on which the wish that the treaty be submitted to the States General for its express approval may be expressed at the latest. He shall ensure that the accompanying letter, with the said note, is distributed in printed form to the members without delay and, if it concerns a treaty that affects the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, is sent to the relevant Minister Plenipotentiary. The first day of the period referred to in article 61 of the 1972 text of the Constitution or the Act referred to in paragraph 2 of article 91 of the Constitution shall be deemed to be the day following that of the receipt of the treaty presented for approval.
2. The wish may be expressed by or on behalf of the House or by at least thirty members. If it is a treaty which affects the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, it may also be expressed by the relevant Minister Plenipotentiary.

Article 125. Expression of the wish by the House itself

1. If the House decides to express the wish, the President shall give immediate notice hereof to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and to the President of the Senate. If it is a treaty that affects the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, the President shall give notice hereof to the relevant Minister Plenipotentiary.
2. A proposal to express such a wish must be made in a meeting of the House either by the

- President or by one of the members.
3. If such a proposal does not obtain a majority but at least thirty members vote in favour of it, article 127 shall apply.

Article 126. Expression of the wish on behalf of the House by the President

The wish that the treaty be submitted to the States General for its express approval may be expressed on behalf of the House by the President. Before taking such a decision, he shall if possible consult the appropriate Committee or Committees. He shall express this wish to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and shall immediately inform the House and the President of the Senate when he has done this. If it is a treaty that affects the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, the President shall also give notice hereof to the relevant Minister Plenipotentiary.

Article 127. Expression of the wish by thirty members

If thirty or more members express the said wish, they shall do this by written notice to the President, who will in turn give immediate notice hereof to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The President shall immediately inform the House, the President of the Senate and, if it is a treaty that affects the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, the relevant Minister Plenipotentiary too, which members have expressed the wish and when he informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs hereof.

Article 128. Expression of the wish by the Minister Plenipotentiary

1. If the Minister Plenipotentiary expresses the said wish through the intermediary of the President, the latter shall give immediate notice to the House, the President of the Senate and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. In the event of notification to the House and the President of the Senate, he shall also state when he gave notice to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. If the Minister Plenipotentiary expresses the said wish, the President shall, as soon as he learns this, give immediate notice to the House.
2. If a proposal as referred to in article 125 relates to a treaty that affects the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, the relevant Minister Plenipotentiary shall be given the opportunity to attend the oral proceedings relating to such proposal and to supply such information to the House as he considers desirable.

Article 129. Accession to and denunciation of a treaty

If the States General is informed of the proposal to accede to or denounce a treaty, the provisions of articles 124- 128 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Part 6. Notification of a wish to present a bill etc.

Article 130. Prohibition of withdrawal of notification

A notification of the exercise of a power granted by law to the House, to the President or to a given number of members to require the presentation of a bill, to receive information or to give notice that a notification procedure may be deviated from or that consultation is desired may not be withdrawn.

CHAPTER X. PETITIONS

Article 131. Procedure for dealing with the conclusions of the Petitions Committee

1. When conclusions proposed by the Petitions Committee are considered publicly, each member may propose amendments to these conclusions. The provisions concerning amendments to bills shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to such proposals, provided always that

amendments whose tenor is contrary to that of the conclusions of the Committee are permissible.

2. If the House rejects the proposed conclusions without replacing them with other conclusions, the documents shall be referred to a temporary committee or, if the conclusions were already proposed by a temporary committee, to a new temporary committee, which will present a further report on this to the House.

Article 132. Minister decides not to act on a decision; referral

If the House has accepted the conclusions contained in a report of the Petitions Committee in which a Minister is invited to take some sort of action or not to take any action and the Minister states in a letter that he does not intend to act on such decision, this letter shall be referred to the Petitions Committee, which may propose to the House that this document, together with any other documents in its possession, be referred to a Standing Committee or a General Committee in order that it may present a further report on this to the House.

CHAPTER XI. REQUESTS TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR INFORMATION

Part 1. The interpellation

Article 133. The interpellation

1. If a member requires information from one or more Ministers about a subject that is not part of the business of the day, he may, by specifying the main points on which he wishes to ask questions, ask the leave of the House to hold an interpellation. Such leave may be requested orally when the business of the House is being arranged. The President may also permit a request for an interpellation at another time.
2. If the House grants the requested leave, it shall decide either immediately or later on what day the interpellation will be held. The Minister concerned shall be invited to be present at the meeting on the specified day. If the matter is very urgent and the Minister is present, the House may decide that the interpellation will be held immediately. The Minister shall then provide the requested information immediately, if this is possible for him; if it is not possible, the House shall adjourn the interpellation procedure to a later time.
3. Unless the interpellation is held immediately, the interpellant shall inform the President as quickly as possible what questions he will put during the interpellation. Unless the President has a serious objection to the questions on account of their form or content, he shall forward them to the Minister concerned. The President shall inform the members of any questions that have been forwarded.
4. During an interpellation, the interpellant shall not speak more than twice and another member more than once, unless the House grants leave for this.

Part 2. Written questions

Article 134. Lodging of written questions

1. A member who wishes to put written questions to one or more Ministers shall lodge these questions with the President. The questions should be brief and clearly worded.
2. The President shall forward the questions to the relevant Minister, unless the President has a serious objection to them on account of their form or content. The President shall inform the members of questions that have been forwarded and shall publish them.

Article 135. Answering written questions

1. If the Minister is not able to answer the questions within three weeks, he shall inform the President accordingly and state the reasons.
2. If the questions are not answered within six weeks, they shall be put at the start of the next question time. The questioner may allow a derogation from this rule.
3. The Minister may inform the President that he wishes to answer a question orally and not in writing. The question shall then be answered during the next question time.
4. The questions with the written answers shall be included in the Appendix to the Proceedings.

Part 3. Question time

Article 136. Question time

1. Question time shall take place on Tuesday at the start of the meeting. The President shall determine for each meeting the time at which the question time will end.
2. The member who wishes to put questions during question time shall inform the President in writing, stating the subject, by 12 noon on Tuesday at the latest.
3. In a special case the House may set a different time for question time. The President shall then decide the time at which the subject of the questions should be notified to him.
4. The President shall invite the relevant Ministers to question time and shall inform them of the subject of the questions. Subsequently, the President shall publish the subject of the questions.

Article 137. Refusal of questions

The President may refuse to raise a subject during question time if he considers that the subject is not described sufficiently accurately.

Article 138. Order of questioners and speaking times

1. The President shall determine the order in which the subjects are raised during question time.
2. The questioner shall be allowed to address the meeting for a maximum of two minutes in order to put questions to one or more Ministers and to give an explanation. The Minister shall be allowed to address the meeting for a maximum of five minutes in order to answer the questions.
3. After the answer, the questioner shall be given two minutes in which to put supplementary questions either to the Minister or to members. Anyone to whom such questions are addressed shall be granted a maximum of three minutes in which to answer the questions.
4. ??????????????
5. No interruptions shall be allowed during question time.

Article 139. No motions; end of question time

1. During question time no leave may be requested to hold an interpellation, nor may motions be moved.
2. Subjects which have not yet been dealt with at the end of the question time shall lapse.

CHAPTER XIA. QUESTIONS SEEKING INFORMATION FROM THOSE INVOLVED IN THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT

Article 139a. Questions seeking information from those involved in the formation of a new government

After the work of a person or persons instructed to form a new government or take soundings about the possibility of forming a new government has been completed, the House may invite one or more of such persons to provide information about the course of the formation of the government.

CHAPTER XII. INQUIRY

Article 140. Proposal for the institution of an inquiry

A proposal for the institution of an inquiry shall be lodged in writing either by a Committee of the House in relation to a subject under consideration by it or by one or more members.

Article 141. Description and information

The proposal shall contain a description of the subject of the inquiry and, if possible, the names of the witnesses and experts. Unless it is made by a Committee which has already provided a sufficient explanation in its report on the subject under consideration by it, the proposal shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum. The proposal and explanatory memorandum shall be published in the manner prescribed in article 151.

Article 142. Preparatory inquiry and public debate

1. If the proposal is made by one or more members, a temporary Committee shall carry out the preparatory examination.
2. If the proposal is made by a Committee of the House, it shall be dealt with at a public debate without a preparatory inquiry. The Presidium may, however, decide that the debate should be prepared by a report of the Committee which has made the proposal. In such a case, the report shall contain all written questions and comments sent by one or more members to the Committee within a period of at least fourteen days to be set by the Presidium as well as the answers of the Committee.
3. The public debate shall take place in the manner prescribed for a bill presented by a member of the House.

Article 143. Committee of Inquiry

1. If the House has decided to institute an inquiry, it shall instruct either an existing Committee of the House or a Committee of Inquiry instituted for the purpose to carry out the inquiry. In the latter case, the Committee shall be composed in the manner provided for committees in article 25.
2. The President shall arrange for publication in the Government Gazette of the decision to institute the inquiry and the composition of the Committee instructed to carry out the inquiry. In the same way he shall give notice of alterations to the description of the subject of the inquiry.

Article 144. Duration of the inquiry

When deciding to institute an inquiry, the House shall determine the period within which the inquiry must be concluded. The period may be extended by the House on the proposal of the Committee carrying out the inquiry.

Article 145. Questioning of witnesses and experts

1. The witnesses and experts shall be questioned by the chairman of the Committee. After having been given leave by the chairman, the members and staff of the Committee may also ask questions.

2. The clerk shall arrange for a written note to be kept of the statements or communications that are made.

Article 146. Suspicion of false statement

1. If the Committee suspects a witness of having intentionally made a false statement under oath or affirmation, a separate official record of this shall be prepared, containing the statement made by the witness and an indication of the grounds on which the suspicion of falsity is based.
2. The Committee shall forward a copy of the official record signed by the clerk to the office of the Public Prosecutor at the court of the district in which the interrogation has taken place.

Article 147. Signature of official records and of other documents

The official records of the hearing of witnesses or experts and the separate official record referred to in article 146 shall be signed by the members of the Committee who are present and by the clerk. All other documents emanating from the Committee, except those in respect of which the Parliamentary Inquiry Act requires the signature of the members of the Committee who are present, shall be signed by its chairman and the clerk.

Article 148. Report

1. After the conclusion of the inquiry or as often as the Committee considers necessary or the House so decides, the Committee shall report on its activities to the House.
2. The official records of the hearings held and the other papers pertaining to the inquiry shall be kept at the office of the Secretary General.
3. The House may also order the publication of documents not made public by the Committee, with the exception of papers and notes which should be kept secret pursuant to a decision of the Committee taken in accordance with the power conferred on it by sections 18a and 18b of the Parliamentary Inquiry Act.

Article 149. Dissolution of the Committee

If the House has instructed a Committee of Inquiry instituted for the purpose to carry out the inquiry, the Committee shall continue to exist until the House has decided to dissolve it.

Article 150. Termination of inquiry

The President shall arrange for notice of termination of the inquiry to be given in the Government Gazette. The documents of the inquiry shall be kept at the office of the Secretary General. The House may, however, decide that the documents will be transferred to the Government Archives.

CHAPTER XIIA. REGISTERS

Article 150a. Registers

1. A register of interests shall be kept at the office of the Secretary General in which the members report their outside posts no later than one week after accepting them, the register being divided into remunerated and unremunerated posts.
2. A register shall be kept at the office of the Secretary General in which the members report their foreign trips made at the invitation of third parties no later than one week after their return to the Netherlands.
3. A register shall be kept at the office of the Secretary General in which the members report

gifts received by them, which have a value in excess of 50 euros, no later than one week after receipt of the gift.

4. The three registers shall be available for public inspection.

5. The Secretary General is charged with publishing, twice a year, the statements in the register of outside posts.

CHAPTER XIII. THE PRINTING OF DOCUMENTS

Article 151. Printing of documents

1. All documents sent between the Government and the House shall be published digitally, wherever possible immediately.

2. These documents shall also be reproduced in another way as soon as the House considers this necessary.

CHAPTER XIV. VISITORS TO THE BUILDING AND THE GALLERIES

Article 152. Visitors to the building and the galleries

1. The Presidium may lay down rules for the admission of visitors to the building of the House and in particular to the galleries. These rules may not prejudice the principle that meetings of the House are public, with the exception of those which are held in camera in accordance with these Rules.

2. All signs of approval or disapproval by visitors are prohibited. The President shall ensure that this prohibition is enforced and that visitors keep properly quiet. He may direct that in the event of infringement any person who causes or has caused a disturbance is to leave and, if necessary, may cause all visitors and persons who are in a particular gallery to be removed.

3. The visitors in a gallery shall be obliged to follow the instructions of the personnel of the House and of the supervisory personnel of the police. In the event of an infringement of this provision, the President shall have the powers referred to in paragraph 2.

CHAPTER XV. FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 153. Review of the Rules

1. Any member may propose in writing that one or more provisions of the Rules be reviewed.

2. A Committee too may make such a proposal, provided that this represents the view of the majority of its members. Such a proposal shall be signed by the members of the Committee who have stated that they are in favour of it.

3. The provisions relating to bills introduced by members shall apply to the proposals referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2. If they are of a simple nature, however, the House may provide that they will be dealt with at a public sitting without a prior examination.

4. The debate on a proposal of the Procedure Committee of the House which the Presidium considers is not of a simple nature shall be prepared by a report of the Committee. This report shall contain all written comments and questions submitted to the Committee by one or more members within a period of at least fourteen days to be set by the Presidium as well as the answers of the Committee.

5. If the House carries a proposal for review, this shall take immediate effect unless the House

decides otherwise.

Article 154. Derogation from the Rules

The House may at all times decide to derogate from the provisions of these Rules if none of the members objects to this and if the derogation is not contrary to the Charter for the Kingdom, the Constitution or any other statute.

Article 155. Entry into effect

These Rules shall take effect from the day on which the newly elected House meets for the first time after the next elections.³

³ Took effect on 17 May 1994.