

**ON THE ACTIVITY
OF THE SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY
COMMITTEE
AND DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING
THE GOOD GOVERNANCE, ANTI-CORRUPTION
AND RULE OF LAW REFORM**



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**SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE
“FOR DEEPENING REFORMS IN GOOD GOVERNANCE,
RULE OF LAW AND ANTI-CORRUPTION FOR ALBANIA 2030
IN THE EUROPEAN UNION”**

The Parliament of Albania, based on the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and the Rules of the Procedure of the Parliament, implementing the recommendations of the EU Progress Report and the 2023 European Commission's *Screening* Report, as well as statements/resolutions of the US Democracy Summit on 27.5.2024, approved the Parliament Resolution "For deepening reforms in good governance, rule of law, and anti-corruption for Albania 2030 in the European Union", ("Parliament Resolution").

On enforcement to this Resolution, the Parliament, through the Decision no. 50, dated 30.5.2024, decided to establish the Special Parliamentary Committee "For deepening reforms in good governance, rule of law, and anti-corruption for Albania 2030 in the European Union" ("Decision no.50/2024" - hereinafter "Special Parliamentary Committee") and with Decision no.53 dated 6.6.2024, the Parliament decided on the composition of the members of the Special Parliamentary Committee ("Decision no. 53/2024"). According to the approved formula, the majority is represented by 6 members (E.Gjonaj, E.Shalsi, E.Kushi, F.Xhafaj K.Ferhati and T.Gogu) while the opposition by 5 members (Dh.Cupi, F.Acka, J.Tabaku, S.Koti, ...). According to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament the Chairman is Mr. Fatmir Xhafaj, while the vice-Chairman belongs to the opposition.

Under these conditions, based on articles 7, 77 point 1, 78 and 80 point 3 of the Constitution, and articles 24 and following of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, in support of the Parliament Resolution dated 27.5.2024 and in function of the implementation of Decision no. 50/2024 and Decision 53/2024, the first meeting of the constitution of this Special Parliamentary Committee ("Special Committee") was held on 14.6.2024. According to the regulations, all members of the majority and opposition were notified by the staff of the Parliament. The meeting was led by the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Fatmir Xhafaj.

The establishment of the Special Committee was greeted by the Speaker of the Parliament, Ms. Lindita Nikolla, who emphasized full institutional support of the Parliament and herself for the Committee 's activity. Speaker Nikolla emphasized that it is our duty to carefully read the experience of implementing reforms over the last decade and propose legal institutional changes to the Parliament and Albanian citizens, so that all sectors of governance moved forward with the pace required by the Euro-Atlantic-Albania, citizens, and our strategic partners. She expressed her belief that the opposition will participate and contribute to this Committee assuming its responsibility in front of the citizens, voters and Albania.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Fatmir Xhafaj, stated that the Parliament's Decision on the functioning of the special Committee has clearly defined its object, field of action, instruments, and functioning mechanisms, highlighting the obligation to address several important challenges in the high interest of citizens, in the function of the country's European integration process and the major goal of becoming a EU Member State by 2030. Mr. Xhafaj expressed his conviction that the Committee's activity will be built based on an inclusive process of the political, institutional, and social level. In this context, the role of the opposition is very important for the objectives that this reform will address. Mr. Xhafaj also emphasized that the process must move forward by being inclusive, transparent, professional, and in accordance with the best international standards, involving all political and social actors, civil society, the academic world, business, interest groups, and supported by the best domestic and international expertise, also building on the successful experience with the Justice Reform.

The Minister of State for Relations with the Parliament, Ms. Elisa Spiropali, who was invited to this meeting on behalf of the government, emphasized the readiness to support the Committee's activity with human resources, documents, and various data, respecting the principle of separation and balance between powers. She valued the role of the Committee, also as a very important additional contribution in support of the will of the Albanian state, the interest of the citizens, and the ambitious objectives of the governments' agenda towards the European integration process.

Subsequently, the Special Committee made five preparatory and organizational decisions aimed at preparing the process and further steps to be followed. The decisions were unanimously approved by the members present at the meeting.

The Special Committee in the five approved decisions has decided as follows:

- 1.** Ensure the highest possible effectiveness of the Special Committee's activity in fulfilling its mission, considering the broad object and the time available for the Committee's mandate, its members, especially the Group of Experts (GE) and the Technical Secretariat (TS), will be organized into three sub-groups that will engage in the three main fields of the Committee's activity. The main sub-groups are: i) Good Governance; ii) Anti-Corruption; and iii) Rule of Law.
- 2.** Address through a cooperation invitation, the Civil Society Organizations, Business Organizations, the Academia (public and non-public universities), as well as relevant stakeholders to express their interest in involvement at expert level in the composition of the Groups of Experts and in the Technical Secretariat, in order to engage in public roundtable debates, and contributing with documents and various data created in the last 5 years for the relevant areas to the purpose and object of the Committee's activity.
- 3.** Address independent institutions created by the Parliament (such as the Ombudsman, the Supreme State Audit, the Public Procurement Committee , the High Inspectorate of Declaration and Audit of Assets and Conflict of Interests, the Financial Supervisory Authority, the Competition Authority, the Institute of Statistics, etc.) and Executive Law Enforcement Agencies (such as the Financial Intelligence Agency, the Directorate of Public Financial Inspection at the Ministry of Finance, the Internal Audit Directorate at the Ministry of Finance, the Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Professional Standards, the Internal Investigation Directorate (Anti-Corruption), the State Police (Economic Crime Directorate, investigation departments for money laundering, etc.), the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption, the Central Inspectorate (CI), the Audit Directorate (AD), the Public Procurement Agency, etc.) to propose the names of representatives/experts to cooperate and contribute with their expertise to the working groups of the Special Committee .
- 4.** Request to the Assembly, the Minister of State for Relation with the Parliament, the Minister of State and Chief Negotiator, the Minister of State for Public Administration and Anti-Corruption, the Minister of State for Local Governance, the Ministry of Justice, and other state institutions to enable experts from their institutions, suitable for the purpose and object of this Committee's work, to be able to become part of the Technical Secretariat, which will function in support of the Group of Experts (GE) of the Special Committee .

5. Request to the Assembly, the Minister of State and Chief Negotiator, the Minister of Public Administration and Anti-Corruption, the Minister of State for Local Governance, the Ministry of Justice, and other state institutions to provide to the Group of Experts (GE) working documents and various data at their disposal and that can serve to fulfill the purpose of this Committee 's activity.

On 21.06.2024, the Special Parliamentary Committee held its second meeting, taking several important organizational decisions in preparation of the process. The decisions of the meeting were the following:

- 1.** Public invitation for cooperation to international organizations operating inside and outside the country, as well as to local and international experts and Albanian experts from the diaspora with experience in the respective fields to contribute with their expertise as consultants to the GE in fulfilling the purpose and object of the Special Parliamentary Committee 's activity;
- 2.** Sending requests addressed to several institutions operating in sectors at risk of corruption (public procurement, concessions, property, taxes, customs, health, education, etc.) to be represented by representatives/experts at the Anti-Corruption Working Sub-group established in the Special Parliamentary Committee;
- 3.** Approval of the Technical Secretariat's organizational chart;
- 4.** Approval of the Concept for the establishment of the Online Site and Public Communication Platform.

In total, in the first two meetings, 9 decisions were made entirely of an organizational and technical nature, part of the preparatory phase of the process. Work continued to implement the decisions of the Special Parliamentary Committee, preparation, and distribution of cooperation invitations for the above-mentioned institutions, as well as preparation of working conditions for the Group of Experts (GE) and the Technical Secretariat (TS).

Immediately after the establishment of the Special Committee, at the request of the Speaker of the Parliament, the Secretary-General determined the group of advisors and experts from the Parliament staff who will be actively engaged as members of the Technical Secretariat, as well as the Support Unit that will handle public communication, media, the web page of the Committee, parliamentary research, logistics, infrastructure, etc.

What is expected to happen during July with the Committee's agenda?

The Committee will make preparatory and organizational decisions related to the organization and management of the process according to appropriate standards, such as: i) Disseminating an invitation to all parliamentary groups that are part of the parliamentary opposition to propose their experts to the three GE sub-groups and the Technical Secretariat; ii) approval of the composition and leadership of the Technical Secretariat (based on the Parliament staff and the proposals brought by the institutions); iii) approval of the experts to be proposed by universities, civil society, and their distribution into three sub-groups; iv) approval of the content of the online page and the public communication platform, as well as the call for citizen involvement in the public debate with comments and proposals; v) approval of the concept and structure of the analysis document to be prepared by the experts and the sources of data and documents to be utilized for this purpose; vi) approval of the invitation for cooperation and representation with experts from institutions and organizations operating in the field of justice; vii) invitation for cooperation for representatives of critical media engaged in these areas (such as BIRN MONITOR, etc).

Throughout July, the expectation is that the High-Level Expert Group (GE) and the Technical Secretariat in support of it will be fully operational and prepared for the next steps in accordance with the goals set by the Parliament Resolution, the object, and methodology defined by the Parliament for the Special Parliamentary Committee. We also expect to receive expressions of interest from various international organizations or their representatives in Tirana, as well as from Albanian and international experts invited to contribute with their valuable consultancy in this process, i.e., the Albanian High-Level Expert Group.

Special Parliamentary Committee



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