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POLITICAL AND LEGAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT IN UZBEKISTAN: COMPARATIVE MODELS AND REFORM PRIORITIES

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ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: parliamentary oversight, Legislative Chamber, constitutional reform, checks and balances, parliamentary inquiry, Accounts Chamber, comparative law, Uzbekistan.

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Abstract: The article analyses the political and legal institutionalization of parliamentary oversight in Uzbekistan in the context of the 2023 constitutional reform. Using comparative legal, institutional and systemic methods, the author distinguishes three stages in the development of the legal framework: the systematization of oversight forms by the 2016 Law “On Parliamentary Oversight”, the practical expansion of instruments and of external audit through the Accounts Chamber, and the constitutional strengthening of the Legislative Chamber in 2023. A typology of national oversight instruments by purpose, initiator and expected outcome is proposed, and the concept of a complete oversight cycle – from agenda-setting and verified information to concrete decisions, government response and follow-up monitoring – is introduced as a criterion of institutional maturity. The models of the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Germany and France are examined descriptively to identify adaptable lessons. Five reform priorities are formulated: strengthening the legal force of oversight decisions, developing analytical infrastructure, specifying the procedure of parliamentary investigation, institutionalizing factional co-reporting and creating an open digital register of oversight.

O‘ZBEKISTONDA PARLAMENT NAZORATINING SIYOSIY-HUQUQIY INSTITUTSIONALLASHUVI: QIYOSIY MODELLAR VA ISLOHOT USTUVORLIKLARI

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MAQOLA HAQIDA

Kalit so‘zlar: parlament nazorati, Qonunchilik palatasi, konstitutsiyaviy islohot, tiyib turish va muvozanat tizimi, parlament so‘rovi, Hisob palatasi, qiyosiy huquq, O‘zbekiston.

Annotatsiya: Maqolada O‘zbekistonda parlament nazoratining siyosiy-huquqiy institutsionallashuvi 2023-yilgi konstitutsiyaviy islohot sharoitida tahlil qilinadi. Qiyosiy-huquqiy, institutsional va tizimli metodlar asosida muallif huquqiy bazaning rivojlanishidagi uch bosqichni ajratadi: 2016-yilgi “Parlament nazorati to‘g‘risida”gi Qonun bilan nazorat shakllarining tizimlashtirilishi, nazorat vositalarining amaliy kengayishi va Hisob palatasi orqali tashqi auditning mustahkamlanishi hamda 2023-yilda Qonunchilik palatasi vakolatlarining konstitutsiyaviy kuchaytirilishi. Milliy nazorat vositalarining maqsadi, tashabbuskori va kutilayotgan natijasiga ko‘ra tipologiyasi taklif etiladi, institutsional yetuklik mezoni sifatida kun tartibini shakllantirishdan tekshirilgan axborot, aniq qaror, hukumat javobi va takroriy monitoringgacha bo‘lgan to‘liq nazorat sikli konsepsiyasi ilgari suriladi. Buyuk Britaniya, AQSh, Kanada, Germaniya va Fransiya modellari moslashtirish mumkin bo‘lgan saboqlarni aniqlash maqsadida tavsifiy jihatdan ko‘rib chiqiladi. Beshta islohot ustuvorligi asoslanadi: nazorat qarorlarining huquqiy kuchini oshirish, tahliliy infratuzilmani rivojlantirish, parlament tekshiruvi tartibini aniqlashtirish, fraksiyalarning qo‘shimcha ma’ruzachilik amaliyotini institutsionallashtirish va ochiq raqamli nazorat reyestrini yaratish.

ПОЛИТИКО-ПРАВОВАЯ ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛИЗАЦИЯ ПАРЛАМЕНТСКОГО КОНТРОЛЯ В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЕ МОДЕЛИ И ПРИОРИТЕТЫ РЕФОРМ

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О СТАТЬЕ

Ключевые слова: парламентский контроль, Законодательная палата, конституционная реформа, система сдержек и противовесов, парламентский запрос, Счётная палата, сравнительное право, Узбекистан.

Аннотация: В статье анализируется политико-правовая институционализация парламентского контроля в Узбекистане в условиях конституционной реформы 2023 года. На основе сравнительно-правового, институционального и системного методов автор выделяет три этапа развития правовой базы: систематизацию форм контроля Законом «О парламентском контроле» 2016 года, практическое расширение инструментов и укрепление внешнего аудита через Счётную палату, а также конституционное усиление Законодательной палаты в 2023 году. Предложена типология национальных инструментов контроля по цели, инициатору и ожидаемому результату; в качестве критерия институциональной зрелости вводится понятие полного цикла контроля – от формирования повестки и проверенной информации до конкретного решения, ответа правительства и повторного мониторинга. Модели Великобритании, США, Канады, Германии и Франции рассматриваются описательно с целью выявления адаптируемых решений. Обоснованы пять приоритетов реформ: усиление юридической силы решений по итогам контроля, развитие аналитической инфраструктуры, конкретизация процедуры парламентского расследования, институционализация фракционного содокладчика и создание открытого цифрового реестра парламентского контроля.

Introduction. The institutionalization of parliamentary oversight is one of the clearest indicators of the maturity of a constitutional system. It shows how the principle of separation of powers operates as a working mechanism of mutual checks, accountability and responsible governance. In this sense, parliamentary oversight is not an auxiliary procedure but a political and

legal form of ensuring that the executive remains accountable to the representative body and, through it, to the people [1; 2].

The constitutional reform of 2023 opened a new stage in the development of Uzbekistan's parliamentarism. The renewed Constitution strengthened the role of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, made the consideration and approval of the Prime Minister's candidacy its exclusive competence and expanded the accountability of members of the Government to parliament [3; 4]. Together with the Law "On Parliamentary Oversight" adopted in 2016 [5], these provisions form a broad legal basis for scrutinizing the implementation of laws, state programmes and budget obligations.

The legal toolkit of oversight in Uzbekistan is already diverse: it includes parliamentary and deputy inquiries, hearings of government reports, the "government hour", committee hearings, parliamentary investigation and budget control. The scientific task, therefore, is not to justify the existence of these instruments but to analyse how their legal framework can be made more coherent: who initiates them, how information is obtained and verified, what decisions are adopted and how their implementation is monitored. This is the focus of the present article. The socio-political dimension of oversight – its connection with public trust and civic participation – is deliberately left outside its scope; the article concentrates on the legal design and institutional architecture of oversight.

The purpose of the study is to analyse the political and legal institutionalization of parliamentary oversight in Uzbekistan and to formulate reform priorities on the basis of comparative models. The research questions are: 1) which stages has the legal framework of parliamentary oversight in Uzbekistan passed through; 2) how should the instruments of oversight be differentiated by purpose and legal consequence; 3) which elements of foreign models can be adapted to the national constitutional framework. The novelty of the study lies in a typology of national oversight instruments by purpose, initiator and expected outcome, and in the formulation of a complete "oversight cycle" as a criterion of institutional maturity.

Literature review. Classical political science distinguishes two logics of oversight. M. McCubbins and T. Schwartz contrasted "police-patrol" oversight, in which the legislature systematically examines executive activity on its own initiative, with "fire-alarm" oversight, in which parliament reacts to signals from citizens and interest groups [6]. K. Strøm interpreted parliamentary democracy as a chain of delegation and accountability from voters to parliament, from parliament to the government and from the government to the administration, and showed that oversight instruments are the means by which each principal monitors its agent [2]. These approaches make it possible to treat oversight not as a set of isolated procedures but as a system of institutional relations.

The comparative literature emphasizes the institutional capacity of parliaments. The Global Parliamentary Report prepared by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and UNDP concluded that the effectiveness of oversight depends on the combination of legal powers, political will, resources and a culture of cooperation between parliament and government [1]. The World Bank volume edited by R. Stapenhurst, R. Pelizzo, D. Olson and L. von Trapp showed the growing role of budget oversight and of specialized analytical units [7]. P. Norton's collection on Western European parliaments traced how committee systems and procedures of questioning shape the relationship between legislature and executive [8], while S. Rose-Ackerman compared mechanisms of policymaking accountability in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and France [9]. Together these works suggest that the quality of oversight is determined by procedural design, analytical support and follow-up rather than by the formal list of powers alone.

Methodology. The study applies comparative legal, institutional and systemic methods. The comparative legal method identifies similarities and differences between Uzbekistan and other constitutional systems in the regulation of oversight powers. The United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Germany and France were selected because they represent the parliamentary (Westminster), presidential, semi-presidential and continental-parliamentary models and different ways of combining parliamentary autonomy with executive accountability. The comparison relies on official parliamentary sources and constitutional texts and is descriptive in character.

The institutional method examines the internal architecture of oversight: committees, factions, analytical services, audit institutions and documentation systems. It proceeds from the assumption that legal powers produce results only when supported by organizational capacity. The systemic method views oversight as a cycle of six stages: agenda-setting, collection and verification of information, public hearing or inquiry, adoption of a decision, response of the executive and repeated monitoring. The source base consists of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Law "On Parliamentary Oversight", the Law "On the Accounts Chamber", official publications on parliamentary practice and scholarly literature. The study is theoretical and documentary; it does not use survey data.

Results. *Stages of institutionalization.* The analysis allows three stages in the development of the legal framework of parliamentary oversight in Uzbekistan to be distinguished. The first stage was marked by the adoption of the Law "On Parliamentary Oversight" of 11 April 2016, which for the first time systematized the forms of oversight, including hearings of reports of members of the Government, parliamentary and deputy inquiries and parliamentary investigation [5]. The second stage was associated with the practical expansion of these instruments: in May 2018 the first "government hour" was held in the Legislative Chamber [10], and in 2019 the Law "On the Accounts Chamber" strengthened the institutional basis of external audit of public

finances [11]. The third stage began with the constitutional reform of 2023, which expanded the powers of the Legislative Chamber in forming and overseeing the Government [3; 4]; subsequent amendments empowered committees of the Legislative Chamber to initiate hearings of reports of members of the Government and information from heads of state bodies [12]. The 2024 elections to the Legislative Chamber held for the first time under the mixed electoral system established by the Election Code [13] create additional prerequisites for party and factional participation in oversight.

Differentiation of instruments. The second finding is that the national oversight instruments require clear differentiation according to purpose, initiator and expected legal outcome. A deputy inquiry addresses an individual or local issue; a parliamentary inquiry deals with a broader institutional problem; a committee hearing examines a sector or policy field; the "government hour" provides public political questioning; budget control assesses the allocation and use of public resources; parliamentary investigation is reserved for issues of exceptional public and state significance [5]. Table 1 summarizes this typology.

Table 1. Typology of parliamentary oversight instruments in Uzbekistan (author's classification)

Instrument	Main purpose	Typical initiator	Recommended outcome
Deputy inquiry	Individual or local problem	Individual deputy	Written answer within a set period; registration of the result
Parliamentary inquiry	Systemic institutional problem	Chamber or committee	Answer with an action plan, deadlines and responsible persons
Committee hearing	Sectoral policy and implementation of laws	Committee	Decision with concrete tasks and repeated hearing
"Government hour"	Public political questioning of ministers	Chamber, factions	Published record and follow-up questions
Budget control	Use of public funds, efficiency of programmes	Chamber, committee on budget; Accounts Chamber	Conclusions based on audit findings
Parliamentary investigation	Issues of exceptional significance	Chamber (special commission)	Final report with legal and political consequences

Legal consequence as a condition of effectiveness. The third finding is that the effectiveness of each instrument depends on the clarity of its procedural framework. Every instrument should answer five questions: who may initiate it, who must respond and within what period, in what form the answer is given, how the answer is verified and what follows if a decision is not implemented. Where these elements are fixed in law and parliamentary regulations, oversight produces a

verifiable result; where they are left to practice, the outcome depends largely on the initiative of individual deputies.

Analytical support. The fourth finding concerns independent analytical support. Comparative experience shows that parliaments increasingly rely on specialized services to analyse executive information: the Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office in the United States [14; 15], the Parliamentary Budget Officer in Canada [16] and the select committee system supported by the National Audit Office in the United Kingdom [17]. For Uzbekistan, the cooperation of the Legislative Chamber with the Accounts Chamber [11] is a natural basis for developing a similar evidence base.

Comparative models. The fifth finding is that each foreign model offers a specific lesson rather than a ready-made template (Table 2). In the United Kingdom, departmental select committees examine government policy and the Government is expected to respond to their reports within a set period [17; 18]. In the United States, congressional committees combine hearings with the analytical work of the CBO and GAO [14; 15]. Canada established a non-partisan Parliamentary Budget Officer serving parliamentarians and committees [16]. In Germany, written questions, minor and major interpellations and an open documentation system provide a regulated and transparent trace of parliamentary scrutiny [19]. In France, the 2008 constitutional revision entrusted Parliament with the evaluation of public policies and provided for the assistance of the Court of Audit [20].

Table 2. Comparative models of parliamentary oversight and lessons for Uzbekistan

Country / model	Core instruments	Lesson for Uzbekistan
United Kingdom (parliamentary)	Departmental select committees, Public Accounts Committee, government responses to reports	Systematic written response of the Government to committee conclusions
United States (presidential)	Committee hearings, CBO and GAO analysis	Independent expert verification of executive information
Canada (parliamentary)	Parliamentary Budget Officer, committee review	Non-partisan fiscal analysis available to deputies
Germany (parliamentary, federal)	Written questions, interpellations, documentation system	Time-regulated answers and open documentary trace
France (semi-presidential)	Evaluation of public policies, inquiry commissions, Court of Audit support	Shift from legality control to evaluation of policy results
Uzbekistan	Inquiries, hearings, “government hour”, budget control, parliamentary investigation	Complete oversight cycle: verified information, concrete decision, follow-up monitoring

Discussion. The comparison shows that there is no single universal model of parliamentary oversight. In parliamentary systems the key task is to ensure meaningful scrutiny when the

government relies on a parliamentary majority; in presidential systems, to balance strong investigative powers with legal limits; in semi-presidential systems, to evaluate public policy without turning parliament into an administrative body [8; 9]. Uzbekistan's task is related but distinct: to develop the constitutionally recognized powers of the Legislative Chamber into a coherent system that consistently produces practical results. On this basis, five reform priorities can be formulated.

The first priority is to strengthen the legal force of oversight decisions. Decisions adopted after a government report, committee hearing or parliamentary inquiry should identify the problem, the responsible body, the deadline, the expected result and the form of reporting back. This does not mean that parliament takes over executive functions; it means that the dialogue between the two branches becomes structured and verifiable [1; 5].

The second priority is the development of professional analytical infrastructure. A budget analysis unit within the Legislative Chamber, working in close cooperation with the Accounts Chamber, would allow deputies to examine fiscal data, indicators of state programmes and regulatory effects on an evidence basis. Such a unit should be methodologically non-partisan: it should not recommend political decisions but explain the cost, risks and alternatives of policy options [7; 14; 16].

The third priority is to specify the procedure of parliamentary investigation: grounds for initiation, composition of the commission, the right to request documents, participation of experts, protection of confidential information, time limits and the form of the final report. Used selectively, this instrument can establish facts in cases of exceptional public importance [5].

The fourth priority is the institutionalization of factional pluralism in oversight. In hearings on government reports and state programmes, factions could nominate co-rapporteurs, submit additional questions and publish reasoned positions. This would raise the quality of parliamentary debate and connect oversight with party programmes, which is especially relevant after the introduction of the mixed electoral system [2; 13].

The fifth priority is an open digital register of oversight. An electronic register linking each inquiry, hearing and decision with the official answer and the status of implementation would create a continuous documentary trace of oversight, similar to the documentation systems of European parliaments [19], and would facilitate repeated monitoring. Taken together, these priorities preserve the constitutional balance between parliament and government: oversight becomes assertive but procedural, political but evidence-based.

The study has limitations. It is based on legal and documentary analysis and does not measure the frequency or outcomes of individual oversight procedures. Further research could

analyse the practice of inquiries, hearings and government hours on the basis of official parliamentary records.

Conclusion. The political and legal institutionalization of parliamentary oversight in Uzbekistan has passed through three stages: the systematization of oversight forms by the 2016 Law, the practical expansion of instruments and of external audit, and the constitutional strengthening of the Legislative Chamber in 2023. The next stage requires completing the oversight cycle – from agenda-setting and verified information to concrete decisions, government response and follow-up monitoring.

Comparative analysis shows that effective parliaments combine legal powers with professional analytical support, factional participation, audit-based evidence and transparency. The article proposes a typology of national oversight instruments and five reform priorities: strengthening the legal force of oversight decisions, developing analytical infrastructure in cooperation with the Accounts Chamber, specifying the procedure of parliamentary investigation, institutionalizing factional co-reporting and creating an open digital register of oversight. Their consistent implementation will contribute to the further development of parliamentary oversight as a system of political responsibility, legal consequence and institutional continuity in line with the constitutional reforms of New Uzbekistan.

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