

Handbook on  
Transparency and  
Accountability of  
Parliament

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# Handbook on Transparency and Accountability of Parliament

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Prof. Dr. Eko Prasajo

## FOREWORD

# Secretary General of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia

The members of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) of the 2009-2014 period are the people's representatives elected by the third general election after the Democratic Reform, the advent of democracy in Indonesia. Compared to previous post-Reform elections, we may say that the 2009 election has gone through a more mature democratization process.

The positive development of democracy in Indonesia intensifies the people's demand on their representatives in the DPR to improve their work performance and quality compared to previous periods. In truth the demand must also take account of the fact that the majority of the people's representatives of this period is new to the DPR. They would need relatively more time to study and comprehend their tasks and authorities in performing their functions as the people's representatives.

In addition, it is necessary to immediately familiarize DPR members of this current period with their role, function, tasks, and authorities, because the recently issued Law No. 27/2009 on the People's Consultative Assembly, House of Representatives, House of Regional Representatives, and Regional House of Representatives has changed several regulations on the system and procedures of representative institutions in Indonesia.

We understand that in order to improve work performance, DPR members need to increase their knowledge and understanding of their main tasks and functions according to new developments, including new adjustments to existing laws. To help increase such knowledge and understanding, the General Secretariat of DPR is cooperating with Parliamentary Support Programme of UNDP to compose eight handbooks for DPR members.

To optimally realize the hopes and intentions of this book, we have composed this book: (1) based on regulations according to Law No. 27/2009 on the People's Consultative Assembly, House of Representatives, House of Regional Representatives, and Regional House of Representatives, which is currently the main foundation for the system and procedures of representative institutions in Indonesia; (2) with the goal to fill practical needs; (3) complete with best practices in Indonesia or in other countries.

It is our hope this book will have significant positive impact on the work performance of the DPR.

Secretary General DPR RI,

**Dra. Hj. Nining Indra Shaleh, M.Si.**

## PREFACE

# UNDP Parliamentary Support Programme

On this occasion, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would like to congratulate the new members of the House of Representatives (DPR) and the House of Regional Representatives (DPD) of the Republic of Indonesia, 2009-2014. We wish you success in your public endeavours. We would like to take this moment to express our gratitude to the Secretariat General of the DPR and the DPD RI, the Australian Agency for International Development, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, and The Asia Foundation for their unwavering support in the development of these handbooks. Finally, we also would like to thank the authors themselves for generously sharing their expertise and experience.

Becoming a member of parliament is a great honor, but it also entails great responsibility. Certainly, the House Members are expected to not only listen to the people, but also represent them and respond to their needs in a timely and effective manner. The UNDP Parliamentary Support Programme gives its full support to the Secretariat of both Houses and all the House Members in the representation of their constituents.

The Handbooks on Transparency and Accountability is written to support the member's work in creating a more open and accessible parliament. The importance of transparency and accountability of the parliament is the main discussion on this book. The need for providing public information is also discussed, including the importance of easy access to committee hearings, the utilisation of the parliamentary budget, and the reporting of parliamentary activities. Furthermore, the parliamentary auditing system is also explained in this book by explaining the role of the Indonesian Supreme Audit Agency and its contribution to transparency.

The success of parliamentary democracy in Indonesia depends much on the work of its members. For that reason, the public will have a great interest in overseeing the members' work in parliament. To support the effectiveness of the members' work, this handbook describes best practices from various democratic countries. The UNDP Parliamentary Support Programme is also continuously supporting the work of members with the necessary knowledge and technical assistance.

We hope that members will find this handbook useful, and will refer to it regularly as a source of information in carrying out their duties. We have compiled complicated and complex issues into a simple and easy-to-read format. We wish all the members the best of luck in all their future work.

Yours sincerely,

**UNDP Parliamentary Support Programme**

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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

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APBN	: <i>Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Negara</i> /National Budget
Baleg	: <i>Badan Legislasi</i> /Legislation Council
BAKN	: <i>Badan Akuntabilitas Keuangan Negara</i> /State Finance Accountability Body
BPK	: <i>Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan</i> /Supreme Audit Agency
BURT	: <i>Badan Urusan Rumah Tangga</i> /Household Affairs Committee
DIM	: <i>Daftar Inventarisasi Masalah</i> /Inventory List of Issues
DPD	: <i>Dewan Perwakilan Daerah</i> /House of Regional Representatives
DPR	: <i>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat</i> /House of Representatives
DPRD	: <i>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah</i> /Regional House of Representatives
LAKIP	: <i>Laporan Akuntabilitas Kinerja Instansi Pemerintah</i> / Report on Performance Accountability of Government Institutions
MPR	: <i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat</i> /People's Consultative Assembly
Panja	: <i>Panitia Kerja</i> /Working Committee
Pansus	: <i>Panitia Khusus</i> /Special Committee
RAPBN	: <i>Rancangan Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Negara</i> /Draft National Budget
Renstra	: <i>Rencana Strategis</i> /Strategic Plan
UU	: <i>Undang-Undang</i> /Law
UU KIP	: <i>UU Keterbukaan Informasi Publik</i> /Freedom of Public Information Law

# Glossary

**Political accountability:**

The obligation for every person or institution to account for every political decision they make.

**Financial accountability:**

The obligation for every person or institution to account for and report the use of public resources in exercising the public authority they hold.

**Administrative accountability:**

The obligation for every person or institution that exercises public authority to create internal oversight in carrying out or implementing policies that have been established .

**Accountability:**

The obligation for public officials and entities to account for all use of public finances or authority, whether in terms of input, process, output or impact.

**DPR/DPD Code of Ethics:**

A set of rules and standards that stipulates the limits of what the DPR/DPD members may and may not do.

**The DPR/DPD Code of Conduct:**

A set of rules and standards for performing functions and resolving problems that arise in the DPR/DPD.

**Democratic governance:**

A manner of governing that supports democracy or its principles as manifested in good governmental management.

**Disclosure:**

Revealing and providing information to the public.

**Public information:**

Information that is produced, stored, managed, sent, and/or received by a public agency in connection with state officials and operations and/or the officials and operations of other public agencies, as well as other information relating to the public interest.

**Conflict of interest:**

A situation experienced by a state official involving both personal interests and the interests of his or her official position that could influence the decisions and actions that are taken.

**Transcription system:**

A system for recording all utterances and events that occur in a meeting/session.

**Transparency:**

Efforts and systems that provide information, access, and legal protection for the public to obtain public information.

The background of the entire page is a repeating geometric pattern of interlocking lines forming stars and polygons, rendered in a light green color against a darker green background. A dark green horizontal bar is positioned at the top, containing the chapter title. A thin white horizontal line is located just below the 'CHAPTER I' text.

CHAPTER I

# The Importance of the Law on Freedom of Public Information

Every citizen, regardless of his or her social, political, economic or educational background, ethnic group, gender, and/or religion, has the right to obtain information. This right is guaranteed by law, as stipulated in Law No. 14 Year 2008 on Freedom of Public Information (*UU Keterbukaan Informasi Publik*/UU KIP). This Law is a manifestation of citizens' constitutional right as set forth in Article 28F of the 1945 Constitution: every person has the right to communicate and obtain information in order to develop themselves and their social environment. They also have the right to seek out, obtain, possess, store, process, and transmit information using all means available.

Thus, the right to obtain information is  
a basic human right, and a manifestation of  
the democratic life of the nation and the state.

The constitutional guarantee of citizens' right to obtain public information is a fundamental element for creation of transparency and accountability. Only with freedom of information can the public be actively involved, both in the process of making decisions relating to the operations of the state and in the implementation of those decisions. Public participation is impossible without legal support for the freedom of public information. Public information is defined as any information that is produced, stored, managed, sent, and/or received by a public agency in connection with state officials and operations and/or the officials and operations of other public agencies, as well as other information relating to the public interest.

The elucidation of Law No. 14 Year 2008 states that the creation of the Law is intended to serve as a legal basis for:

- (1) the right of every Person to obtain Information;
- (2) the obligation for Public Agencies to provide and to accommodate requests for information quickly, timely, at low/proportionate cost, and through simple means;



- (3) exceptions, of a strict and limited nature; and
- (4) the obligation for Public Agencies to upgrade their documentation and information service systems.

Thus, the Law not only grants the public the right to obtain public information, but also guarantees the availability and provision of information in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations.

Essentially, all public information must be accessible to the public. Only strict and limited restrictions, as stipulated in the Law, may be imposed on information, taking into consideration propriety and the people's interest by measuring the consequences that would arise from the disclosure of certain public information.

The information that is required to be disclosed/presented to the public by all public agencies pursuant to Article 9 of the Freedom of Public Information Law is information regarding *the public agencies concerned and the activities and performance of said public agencies; information regarding financial statements; and/or other information as stipulated in laws and regulations.* This obligation to disclose public information must be implemented periodically, at least once every six months.

The Law also requires all public agencies – executive, legislative, and judicial institutions, and other agencies whose duties and functions relate to the operations of the state – to improve their documentation and information service systems. Due to this obligation, every public agency must create and maintain a proper information system management, thereby enabling the public to quickly, easily, and uncomplicatedly obtain the public information they need. There is no longer any excuse for public agencies not to have public information systems. Public information system management includes the systems and mechanisms for the public to obtain public information.

The Freedom of Public Information Law has the following objectives:

- to guarantee citizens' right to know about plans to produce public policy, public policy programs, and the process of making public decisions, as well as the reasons for making certain political decisions;

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- to encourage public participation in the public policy formulation process;
  - to enhance the public's active role in public policy formulation and proper management of public agencies;
  - to realize good governance that is transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable;
  - to disclose the arguments behind public policies that affect the lives of the people;
  - to develop knowledge, educate the people, and advance the intellectual life of the people; and/or
  - to upgrade information management and services within public agencies to produce high-quality information services.

To ensure the implementation of citizens' rights to public information, the Freedom of Public Information Law mandates the establishment of an Information Commission: an independent institution whose functions are to execute the Freedom of Public Information Law and its associated implementation regulations, to establish technical instructions on public information service standards, and to resolve disputes regarding public information through mediation and/or non-litigation adjudication. Information Commissions shall be established at the central and provincial levels, and if necessary may also be established in regencies/cities. In the event of disputes between public agencies and the people, the Information Commission shall settle such disputes either through mediation or through non-litigation adjudication.

For the House of Representatives (DPR), the Freedom of Public Information Law poses a special challenge, particularly for legislative members of the 2009-2014 term. In accordance with its Transitional Provisions, the Law will come into force two years after its adoption, and therefore becomes effective starting in April 2010. Many changes need to be made: not only changes in information system management, but also changes in the culture, patterns of thinking, and mental attitudes of elected legislators and the staff of the General Secretariat as the support institution.

**As the public agency that produced and legitimized the Freedom of Public Information Law, the DPR/DPD must set a good example for the public and for other public agencies.  
Best practices must start with the DPR/DPD.**

Various preparations need to be made so that the DPR/DPD can comply with its obligation to provide information to the public. The foremost improvement must start with the members, by fully grasping that the DPR/DPD exists, and they were elected as Members of Parliament, to struggle for the public's best interests. Basically, every public agency's obligations to the public regarding public information include three aspects:

- (1) Information that must be disclosed to the public,
- (2) Information that must be provided, and
- (3) Promulgation of the public information service itself.

This year 2009 is when the DPR/DPD must prepare and upgrade its information system management in order to meet these three obligations. The main objective of the information system management created by the DPR/DPD is to release to the public periodically (every six months) information regarding the work performance, financial management, and other information of the DPR/DPD. Likewise, the information system management must ensure provision of information that the public can access quickly and uncomplicatedly, which includes:

- (1) all information under the control of the DPR/DPD,
- (2) all the DPR/DPD decisions,
- (3) all the DPR/DPD policies, together with their supporting documents,
- (4) the DPR/DPD work plans, including annual budgets,
- (5) agreements made by the DPR/DPD,
- (6) working procedures of the DPR/DPD members, and
- (7) reports on information access services.

The DPR/DPD is also required to publicize information on the information service itself, relating to the number of requests for information received, the time needed by public agencies to comply with each request for information, the number of requests for information granted and rejected, and/or reasons for rejecting requests for information. Because of that requirement of the DPR/DPD, its public information management system must also contain information on the above matters.

Freedom of public information is therefore a special challenge for the DPR/DPD as an institution and for its members.





The political decisions of the DPR/DPD must be accountable and transparent, because the public has the right at all times to obtain information regarding the bases (facts, events, reasons) for each of the DPR/DPD's decision.

Similarly, the public can compare the programs that were planned against the results achieved by the DPR/DPD, and examine every rupiah used by the DPR/DPD to exercise their legislative, budgeting and oversight functions.

To manage the information systems in the DPR/DPD, the Freedom of Public Information Law also mandates the appointment of specific officials to manage information and documentation. The tasks of these officials are to create and develop systems for providing information services quickly, easily, and properly, in line with the technical instructions on public information service standards that apply nationwide. Therefore, a DPR/DPD Information Office needs to be established that is staffed by its own officials, and that specifically manages the information system, as required by the Freedom of Public Information Law.



CHAPTER II

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**The Importance of Transparency  
and Public Accountability of the  
Parliament**



The legislative power (parliament) plays an important role in creating a democratic state and good governance. As the state institution that functions to produce legislation, exercise oversight over executive power, set budget policy and authorize the use of public resources, and represent the public interest, the roles of the parliament are extraordinarily important. It plays a key role in establishing an environment that is conducive to promoting growth and ensuring accountability and transparency of all state and government institutions.

A democratically elected parliament represents a broad spectrum of public interests and is the most suitable place for the public to put forward its complaints, requests, and aspirations. On the other hand, the parliament is also a place where discussions take place on the public's preferences, which are then formulated into policies and programs. This articulation of the public's interests and preferences is normally set forth in legislative products that become the national policies on collective problems.

With these functions, the parliament is a crucial element of state power in a democratic political system. At the same time, the parliament can also be an obstacle to democracy if its authority and functions are abused; for example, if the parliament is dominated by certain powers, becomes part of a military coup d'état, or is controlled by a dictatorial power. Compared with the executive or judicial branches, the legislative branch is certainly the branch of state power that is closest to the public. Decision-making in the executive branch is usually done by bureaucrats behind closed doors; similarly, in judicial processes, the judges make their decisions in private.

In contrast, in the legislative branch, the decision-making process is conducted openly; the argumentation for approval or rejection of a bill or for authorization of use of budget, and the use of the right of inquiry as an instrument for oversight of the executive branch, are all done in consultation with and with the knowledge of the people.

The legislative authority, or the parliament, differs from the other branches of state power in several of its attributes. First, the parliament differs in the basic character of its attributes: the parliament is the primary representative institution in a democratic society. Second, the parliament also differs in its functions; it is the main instrument in the democracy for formulating and adopting laws and other public policies. Third, the parliament also differs from the other branches of state power in the characteristics of its procedures and organization. Because of these differences, the parliament has "constitutive attributes" that make it the representative organ in the structure of government; it is the only organ of the state whose members are elected geographically and have the same rights and obligations (David M. Olson, 1994, p. 4).

In international practice, there are four types of legislatures or parliaments, in relation to the development of their role and function as organs for public representation (Johnson and Nakamura, 1999):

- The first type is called "*rubber stamp legislatures*." This type is commonly found in authoritarian countries or those using a system of "guided democracy." In this arrangement, the legislature is simply an extension of the executive power; its only role is to provide full support for all executive policies.
- The second type is "*emerging legislatures*." A parliament of this type has experienced a significant process of change and reflects these changes in all aspects of the political system. Parliaments of this type play a greater role in creating governance processes in society.
- The third type is called "*arena legislatures*." At this stage, the parliament is functioning well to represent and articulate the people's interests, discuss public policy from differing perspectives, and conduct oversight and measurement of the government's performance using various criteria.
- The fourth type is "*transformational legislatures*." A parliament of this type functions to articulate various interests and represent various social priorities and expectations in society. The parliament independently produces policies based on such priorities. Parliaments of the transformational type are adopted in presidential systems that separate legislative authority and executive authority.

Clearly, to establish the DPR/DPD as a proper "*arena legislature*" requires adequate internal capacity so that the DPR/DPD members can optimally perform their functions as parliament members. Generally, our parliament faces a number of problems in

performing these functions: limited human resources, inadequate information, limited financial resources, and low-quality facilities and infrastructure.

*In the context of Indonesia, our parliament (the DPR/DPD) seems at present to be of the “Arena Legislature” type. It functions to represent and articulate the public’s interests and to exercise oversight over the use of executive power through the right of inquiry.*

There is great difference between the parliament's authority and that of the other branches of state power in the creation of democratic governance; the relationship between the parliament and the people it represents, unlike the relationship between the other state institutions and the people, also enables the processes of governance. Democracy and good governance provide mechanisms for consultation, interaction and exchanges of information between the government and the people to ensure that the views and aspirations of the people are always heeded and are used as the basis for making decisions. Specifically, these relations of democracy and good governance must become an inevitable reality in the execution of the legislative functions. The relationship between the people and the parliament exists continuously, and not only during the legislative election process, as that occurs only once every five years.

*Democratic governance in the parliament can only be achieved with continuous interaction between the people and the parliament during its term of exercising the functions of legislation, oversight and budgeting. (Cheema, 2005).*

Continuous relations between the people and the parliament will exist when access and opportunities are legally and formally provided to the people to obtain information on everything that takes place in the parliament.

Democratic governance in the parliament is a necessity, because the parliament is, basically, the “house of the people.” The people must know what is going on and what their representatives are doing in this house. Effective interaction between constituents and their representatives and the people's active involvement in parliamentary processes

will strengthen the relationship between the people and the government, and will provide a means for the people to participate in the oversight of government policies and programs. Interaction between the people, as the constituents, and the parliament will be mutually advantageous. On one hand, parliament members need legitimacy and trust from the people so that their position in the parliament has a genuine mandate and so that they can later be reelected. Thus, interaction with the people gives parliament members an opportunity to convince the people about the significance of the roles and functions they are performing. On the other hand, the people need a channel to convey their views and interests, which will also make sure that their views and interests were employed as bases to formulate national policies. These relations and interactions will obviously influence how a legislator performs his or her main functions – representation of the people, legislation-making, and oversight of the government; these relations and interactions will increase parliament members' work motivation and incentive; they will also provide parliament members with up-to-date information regarding the people's expectations; they will also provide ways for the people to measure not only the performance of the parliament but also the performance of the government.

Thus, democratic governance is also political governance: processes of making decisions and state policies with a strong basis of legitimacy and legal authority. These two key concepts – legitimacy and authority – are the prerequisites for the creation of a strong parliament. Legitimacy is achieved through strong trust from the people regarding the parliament's use of its powers; authority refers to the legal and formal powers that the parliament holds, which are obtained through democratic processes. To achieve legitimacy and the effective use of authority, the parliament must work transparently and accountably in performing its functions. A transparent and accountable parliament will increase the capacity of its individual members and of its institutions. This is the key to facing challenges while at the same time fulfilling the aspirations of the people.

*Transparency and accountability are the main requirements for the establishment of democratic governance. Only through transparency and accountability can the parliament, as one of the institutional pillars of democratic governance, ensure that the operations of the state and the government are responsive and accountable to the people's needs and expectations.*

In democratic governance, three factors must operate in synergy:

- (1) the institutions of democratic governance, comprising the election administrators and the electoral system, parliament, judiciary, executive, ombudsman, local governments, political parties, and the people;
- (2) the quality of institutions and processes, indicating the levels of access, participation, accountability, transparency, rule of law, equality/equity, subsidiarity, effectiveness, responsiveness, efficiency, and sustainability;
- (3) contextual factors that affect the content and quality of democratic governance, such as national culture, history, ethnicity, conflicts, civil/military relations, support from donor institutions, level of economic development, role and quality of the media, and various international policies.

**Figure 1**  
The Pillars of Democratic Governance



*Source: Cheema, Building Democratic Institution, 2005, page 11*

Thus, parliament, as one pillar of democratic governance, will be able to perform its functions properly when it has good quality processes. Among other indicators of good quality process is transparency and accountability. Obviously, this does not in itself ensure that the execution of functions will be flawless and beyond criticism, because transparency and accountability are only two of the elements that must be present in democratic governance. There are many other elements that also need to be present to achieve democratic governance, such as equality, efficiency, and effectiveness. Furthermore, contextual factors that exist and develop within a country, such as culture, religion, and history, will also influence the processes of democracy and governance.

Nevertheless, accountability and transparency are still the most essential elements and pillars of democratic governance.

Accountability means that *“those who hold and exercise public authority [are] held to account”* (Aucoin and Heintzman, 2000, p. 244).

Accountability requires each individual and organization to account for all inputs, processes, and performance that are its duties, rights, authorities, and obligations in order to achieve the objectives that have been set.

The objectives of accountability in the exercise of public authority, including parliament, are:

- (1) to monitor the use of authority in order to prevent abuses;
- (2) to ensure efficient and effective use of public resources in line with the values of the public interests;
- (3) to continuously promote and improve work performance and learning process.

In terms of its dimensions, accountability can be differentiated into three categories (Cheema, 2005, p. 51):

- (1) political accountability: the availability of methods that are used regularly and openly to impose penalties on and/or give rewards to every person or institution that holds a public position, through a system of checks and balances between the executive, legislative and judicial branches;



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- (2) financial accountability: the obligation for every person or institution to account for and report the use of public resources in exercising the public authority they hold;
- (3) administrative accountability: the obligation for every person or institution that exercises public authority to create internal oversight in carrying out or implementing the policies that have been established.

In the context of the accountability of parliament, the dimensions of legal, professional, and moral accountability also deserve attention. Legal accountability reflects the suitability of the actions and decisions taken by parliament in line with its powers and authority. Confusing authorities and abuse of authority will conflict with legal accountability. Professional accountability means that the parliament as an institution, and parliament members as individuals, must perform its functions in line with the principles of professionalism. Only with adequate competence, knowledge, and skills can a member of parliament actively carry out the functions of the parliament. Moral accountability requires all members of parliament to be morally responsible for all actions and political decisions they make. Avoiding corruption, collusion, and nepotism, and placing the interests of the nation and the state before personal or group interests, are moral demands that every member of parliament must abide by.

In terms of its types, accountability can be described in four ways: managerial accountability, program accountability, process accountability, and outcome/impact accountability (Widodo, 2001, p. 157). In the context of the parliament, managerial accountability requires that the use of public funds, assets, and resources in performing the parliament's functions be efficient and effective. For a simple example, unless it is absolutely necessary, comparative studies to other countries for the drafting of bills should be avoided. Inviting experts in the field and searching for information through the Internet can take the place of comparative studies abroad. Program accountability reflects the level of relevance of the programs selected or designated by the parliament to actual conditions and the public's expectations that need to be met. The questions that members of parliament must answer are what the problems in society actually are, and what programs can resolve those problems. Through its budgetary rights, the parliament can determine the priorities of programs in the National Budget.

Process accountability focuses on the methods and procedures of performing functions in the parliament. This requires parliamentary processes that are open, participatory, and transparent in exercising the functions of oversight, budgeting, and legislation. Finally, outcome/impact accountability stresses the importance of measuring



each program espoused by the parliament, in order to see whether the programs, policy choices, and political decisions that have been made actually result in positive development and changes. For example, parliament could measure the impact of direct elections of heads of regions on the development of democracy in that region and the increase of efficiency of local government. If there has been no improvement, perhaps revisions should be made to Law No. 32/2004 on Regional Governance, specifically the chapter on direct election of heads of regions.

**Transparency in parliament can enhance the openness of democratic processes through reports and feedback, both from the parliament and from the people.**

Furthermore, parliamentary transparency can also clarify the processes and procedures for proper and correct use of policy-making authority. This will provide clarity of information and basic access for the people to participate in the making of political decisions in the parliament. Integrity of the parliament is a continuum between accountability and transparency, which are synonymous with non-corrupt behavior and honesty. The various reasons presented above provide the justification that, to exercise its authorities legitimately, parliament must be accountable and transparent. This will increase the people's trust in and acceptance of the political decisions made by parliament. To this end, it is necessary to develop forms of accountability and transparency that address the questions "to whom, accountable for what, and how to be accountable".

**Within the parliament (DPR/DPD), transparency and accountability can be achieved at two levels: the institutional level and the level of individual members.**

At the institutional level, this relates to the mechanisms standardized in the Standing Orders that stipulate the obligations of parliament as an institution; for example, whether all meetings/sessions may be attended by the general public, whether the results of discussions and decisions in meetings/sessions can be obtained by the public, and whether the parliament's performance reports and financial statements are accessible to the public. At the individual level, transparency and accountability relate

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to the responsibility and obligation of each parliament member to provide information, absorb the public's aspirations, and carry out its mandates. This can be done, for example, through Working Visits, the media routinely produced for political communication, and of course the publicized attitudes regarding issues that emerge. As a parliament member, you have to convey to the public the matters that are being debated regarding certain issues and, of course, your own stance as a parliament member on these matters: for example, your position on the right of inquiry exercised by the DPR in the cases of rice imports, the Official Lists of Voters, and so on. Likewise, you must also inform the public about whether you have been working to fulfill the promises you made in the election campaign, what has been achieved, and what obstacles have been encountered. For this reason, periodic activity reports on the performance of the parliament's functions will help each parliament member improve his or her own personal accountability.

**Transparency is essential as the basis for creating accountability of the parliament. Transparency requires freedom of information, public access, and legal guarantees.**

Specifically, transparency must be provided in three areas:

- (1) disclosure of information on the matters that are the parliament's tasks and responsibilities, including everything from openness of sessions, proceedings, drafts of bills, the deliberation process, lobbying of members of parliament, to the decisions and conclusions reached in meetings;
- (2) availability of access and procedures for the public to obtain that information; and
- (3) legal basis for the implementation of citizens' rights to obtain such information.

Therefore, if all information relating to the parliament's functions is available to the public, then automatically there are no longer any matters that can be concealed by the parliament. In other words, if all discussions, protocols, brief reports, meeting notes, performance reports, and financial statements of the parliament can be accessed and known by the public, then automatically parliament will be required to be accountable for all decisions it makes and actions it takes.

And why should the parliament be accountable for the performance of its functions? First, politically, accountability comprises the basic capital for members and their political parties to win votes in the next election. If you, as a member, can account properly for all the decisions and actions you make on behalf of the people, they will feel that you deserve to be reelected. On the other hand, if you cannot account for your decisions and actions, most likely you will not be reelected. "Accountable" here means that you can justify all use of resources, attest to your good work in executing the parliament's functions, and prove that you have been fighting hard for the interests of your constituents. Second, legally, if you act with constant accountability, you will avoid legal problems relating to abuse of authority or corruption crimes. In practice, until recently many DPR members have been indicted in corruption cases because they could not justify or account for their actions in performing their functions as parliament members. And socially, accountability of parliament members will set an excellent example for other public officials to learn from in the efforts to realize an Indonesian nation that always treats everything in its trust responsibly. In other words, accountability on the part of parliament members will help eliminate the culture of corruption that is currently eating away at Indonesian society.





CHAPTER III

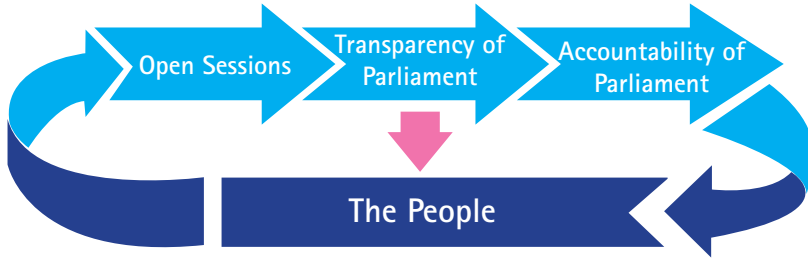
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**Sessions as Part of the Transparency  
of the DPR/DPD**

Various forms and methods can be used to increase parliamentary accountability and transparency. As explained above, one type of accountability is process accountability. In this regard, the processes that occur in the exercise of the parliament's functions must comprise methods and procedures that give the public the opportunity to access documents and to participate in the political decision-making process. Sessions/meetings are an important element in the exercise of the parliamentary functions. Because all parliamentary decisions are, basically, made formally in sessions, Standing Orders that grant the public the opportunity to access and participate in sessions are an absolute prerequisite for the creation of transparency and accountability in parliament. Therefore, the session mechanisms must be an important part of the efforts to achieve an accountable and transparent parliament.

The most crucial element in creating transparency of parliament through openness of sessions is the creation of opportunities for the people to observe the sessions taking place in parliament. The greater and broader the opportunities for the people to attend parliamentary sessions, the greater the possibility of achieving transparency in the parliament is. Conversely, if the opportunity for the people to attend parliament sessions is reduced and restricted, this in turn limits the guarantees of transparency in parliament. Transparency of sessions is, fundamentally, the basis for openness and accountability of parliament. If there is no transparency in the sessions where formal decisions are made, it will be impossible to achieve openness and accountability in parliament. Such transparency is essential to create parliamentary accountability.

**Figure 2**  
Sessions as a Basis for Transparency, Openness, and Accountability



In order to create transparency in sessions, several factors must be taken into account and addressed. The aspects that will ensure transparency in sessions are:

**Access**

Access (accessibility to decision-making) is the legal/formal guarantee stipulated in the parliament’s Standing Orders that provide the opportunity for both individuals and organizations to obtain information and data on the events and content of sessions. This includes technical papers, the Inventory List of Issues (*Daftar Inventarisasi Masalah/ DIM*) proposed by each party group, and protocols of meetings. The most important aspect of access is the legal/formal guarantee held by the people as a prerequisite for transparency of sessions. If the people lack the legal right, then automatically the people cannot obtain and/or possess the information, data, and documents they need for further participation. This concept of access is also referred to as “freedom of information legislation.”

**Disclosure**

Disclosure is the obligation for parliament to publish all information and documents relating to the process of sessions and the substance in decision-making. With this obligation, information on sessions does not belong only to the members of parliament. Obviously, however, there are limits on the extent to which information may be disclosed





to the public, as stipulated in laws and regulations. Information relating to state secrets and confidential matters of third parties is not automatically accessible to the public.

## **Integrity**

Integrity is the obligation for both parliament members and the people who attend sessions to protect the information that is discussed in parliament; they must not misuse the information they have. Parliament members must act and comport themselves to ensure that this right to information is not misused for personal or group interests. Likewise, the confidentiality of third-party information and state secrets must be upheld in line with the directives of the law.

## **Right to Attend and Observe Sessions**

The right to attend and observe sessions is another legal guarantee that is stipulated in the parliament's Standing Orders. The people's right to attend parliament sessions is ensured. Therefore, any member of society may attend parliamentary sessions, without having to obtain permission from the parliament beforehand, except for those sessions that are designated in the Standing Orders as closed sessions. Obviously, citizens who attend sessions must abide by the Standing Orders, remain polite, and not disrupt the process of the sessions.

## **Public Hearings dan Public Consultations**

Public hearings and public consultations are opportunities specifically granted to the people to participate in sessions and have their opinions heard in connection with topics that will serve as the basis for political decisions made by the parliament. A public hearing is a mechanism that enables an interactive dialogue between members of parliament and the people on a particular issue, and on the people's expectations with regard to that issue. Public hearings serve to capture public opinion in order to increase the people's acceptance of policies and political decisions made by parliament.

## **Right of Mass Media to Report**

The right of the mass media to report on the process and substance of sessions is another basis for greater transparency of parliament. The role of the mass media is widely recognized as an important element in the shaping of democratic governance. The mass media are therefore an important channel for the parliament to convey the processes

that take place and the content of the material presented by members of parliament and the party groups in the deliberation of bills and in the oversight of government performance. Basically, everything that happens in parliament sessions should be able to be presented widely to the public through the electronic and print media. Only through the mass media can citizens living in the farthest corners of the country know about the working processes of the parliament in performing its functions.

## Lobbying Standards

Every parliament member must be able to engage in lobbying, in line with agreed and stipulated ethics, morality, and integrity. The decision-making in sessions is essentially legal/formal by nature. However, it must also be acknowledged that outside the sessions, various types of lobbying do occur, by both members and party groups of the parliament. Therefore, the Standing Orders need to regulate the standards for the lobbying process through a Code of Conduct and a Code of Ethics. These standards include avoidance of conflict of interest between political decisions and personal or group interests; ensuring impartiality by providing equal opportunity for all groups to obtain information; ensuring the openness of lobbying activities; and avoiding abuses or the use of money politics in lobbying.

There are several examples of lobbying that we can study in international practice. In order to ensure transparency and accountability in parliamentary lobbying activities, in 1972 the German *Bundestag* (parliament) included standards and ethics for lobbying in its Standing Orders. At present, there are around 4,500 lobbyists at the German *Bundestag* (in Berlin) and approximately 15,000 lobbyists at the European Union level (in Brussels) who are officially registered to engage in lobbying activities. Lists of these lobbyists, which include companies, associations, communication consultants, political advisors, and law firms, are published every year in federal government publications for parliamentary lobbyists. The lobbyists are registered with detailed information, including the sectors of their lobbying activities. To ensure transparency, the public is also able to see the lists of lobbyists on the Internet. With this open and standardized lobbying system, there are no "behind the scenes" lobbying activities at the parliament that could occasion political corruption in the deliberation of bills or other political processes.

The Standing Orders of the DPR stipulated various types of meetings, along with the nature of those meetings. Depending on their nature, the DPR meetings are classified as either closed meetings or open meetings. Closed meetings may only be attended by invited members; open meetings may be attended not only by members but also by non-

members, both invited and uninvited (the DPR Standing Orders, Article 95). Article 96 stipulates the possibility to propose that an otherwise open meeting be held as a closed meeting. If we relate this to the transparency and accountability of parliament, closed meetings do not give the people an opportunity to follow the course of the meetings; consequently, the progression and content of debates in these meetings are not known to the public. Furthermore, pursuant to the DPR Standing Orders Article 118, a closed meeting may also decide that matters discussed and/or decided in the meeting do not have to be included in the proceedings, meeting notes, or brief reports. The existence of this provision is clearly detrimental to the people, because the people should have access to all documents and processes that take place in DPR/DPD meetings. The lack of meeting documents is also a disadvantage for the DPR, because they have no evidence for implementing the policies that have been made (Khatarina, 2005, p. 100).

In the DPD, as in the DPR, there are basically two types of meeting: open and closed. Pursuant to the DPD Standing Orders Article 93, an open meeting/session that is under way may be proposed to be declared closed, either by the chairperson of the meeting/session or by a participant. The discussions in a closed meeting/session are confidential and may not be disclosed if it is explicitly stated that they are confidential and may not be disclosed. However, Article 94 Section 3 of the DPD Standing Orders states that a closed session/meeting may decide to disclose all or part of its discussions.

**Table 1**  
**Names and Types of Meetings/Sessions in the DPR**

Name of Meeting \ Type	Open	Closed
Plenary Session	Yes	Possible
Extraordinary Plenary Session	Yes	Possible
Standing Committee Meeting	Yes	Possible
Joint Committees Meeting	Yes	Possible
Legislation Council Meeting	Yes	Possible
Budget Committee Meeting	Yes	Possible
Special Committee Meeting	Yes	Possible

Name of Meeting	Type	Open	Closed
	Working Meeting		Yes
Hearing		Yes	Possible
Public Hearing		Yes	Possible
The DPR/DPD Leadership Meeting		Yes	Possible
Leadership Meeting of the DPR/DPD House Bodies		Possible	Yes
Deliberation Council Meeting		Possible	Yes
Household Affairs Meeting		Possible	Yes
Committee for Inter-parliamentary Cooperation Meeting		Possible	Yes
Ethics Council Meeting		Possible	Yes
Working Committee Meeting		Possible	Yes
Party Group Meeting		Determined by Party Group	Determined by Party Group

*Source: Khatarina, Riris. Mapping of Parliament Issues: Examined from the DPR/DPD Standing Orders, P3I, Jakarta. p. 100*

Like the DPR Standing Orders, the DPD Standing Orders do not stipulate the possibility of changing a closed meeting into an open meeting. Clearly, this is detrimental to the people, because a meeting/session that discusses important and urgent topics should be open to the people, since it relates to the public interest. The Standing Orders has eliminated the possibility of changing a closed meeting/session into an open one.

These parliamentary Standing Orders are critical in providing legal guarantees for the public to attend meetings in the DPR/DPD. If the Standing Orders stipulate that a meeting is open to the public, this ensures accessibility of information, processes, and the content of the debate. However, if the Standing Orders stipulate that a meeting may be declared closed, then it diminishes the possibility to use sessions as a way to create transparency in the Parliament. Likewise, if the Standing Orders were to stipulate that a closed meeting can decide to declare itself open, the mechanism for such a change must be written explicitly in the Standing Orders. You, as members of parliament, can

make changes in the Standing Orders to ensure that sessions/meetings in the DPR/DPD are always open to the public. The Standing Orders could very easily be revised to allow a closed meeting to be changed into an open one.

**Table 2**  
**Names and Types of Meetings/Sessions in the DPD**

Name of Meeting	Type	Open	Closed
Plenary Session		Yes	Possible
Extraordinary Plenary Session		Yes	Possible
Special-Purpose Plenary Session		Yes	Possible
Ad Hoc Committee (PAH) Meeting		Yes	Possible
Joint Ad Hoc Committee Meeting		Yes	Possible
Bill Drafting Committee Meeting		Yes	Possible
Special Committee Meeting		Yes	Possible
Working Meeting		Yes	Possible
Hearing		Yes	Possible
Public Hearing		Yes	Possible
The DPD Leadership Meeting		Not Possible	Yes
Consultative Committee Meeting		Not Possible	Yes
Committee of Household Affairs Meeting		Not Possible	Yes
Consultation Meeting		Not Possible	Yes
Ethics Council		Not Possible	Yes
Joint Meeting		Not Possible	Yes
Coordination Meeting		Not Possible	Determined by Party Group

*Source: the DPD Standing Orders No. 29/DPD/2005*

In Germany, as well as having a Parliament TV that can be viewed conventionally, the *Bundestag* (parliament) also has a WEB-TV. Through this medium, all meetings, public hearings, and other activities in the parliament can be watched in real time by the public. Records can also be accessed through the website provided (<http://archiv.bundestag.tn.de>). These broadcasts of all meetings and activities in the German parliament are provided without censorship or commentary, so the public can see for themselves the speeches that are made and the debates that occur in parliament meetings. Pursuant to Article 42 Section 1 of the German Constitution (*Grundgesetz*), all meetings that take place in the *Bundestag* are open meetings (*der Bundestag verhandelt öffentlich*), so the parliament is obligated to broadcast and provide information to the public on all events that occur in the parliament. The provisions in the *Grundgesetz* state that all meetings in the *Bundestag* are open by nature. This is the highest legal guarantee for the German public to know what their representatives in the Parliament are doing. The same also applies in the Canadian parliament; all sessions are open.

For the purposes of transparency and accountability of the parliament, consideration needs to be given to how the DPR TV could work in cooperation with private TV channels to broadcast live the debates that take place in the DPR/DPD meetings/sessions. If possible, the DPR TV itself could broadcast the DPR/DPD meetings/sessions live. Clearly, consideration also needs to be given to the costs entailed, as this would of course be very expensive. But apart from the matter of expense, we know that live broadcasts of the debates in the DPR/DPD sessions would give the public a clear picture of parliament members' commitment in fighting for the people's expectations and desires. You will naturally feel disadvantaged if the struggle you undertake in sessions/meetings cannot be seen directly by the public. Residents of the further reaches of the archipelago who are your constituents obviously cannot attend the DPR/DPD sessions in Jakarta, and as a result they cannot know what you are doing to improve their situation. Without the media to report your performance, your role in the parliament will be, to the public, just the same as that of parliament members who never attend meetings or who only come to sign the attendance list and then fall asleep in the meetings.





CHAPTER IV

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**Accessibility of Financial Statements  
and Performance Reports**





**T**ransparency and accountability of parliament can also be achieved by providing public access to the parliament's financial statements and performance reports. As explained earlier, the basic requirement for achieving transparency is access to information on the processes undertaken and the results achieved by parliament, and one form of accountability is output accountability. Financial statements and performance reports are documents that illustrate how well parliament actually works, whether the parliament can properly account for its use of state funds, and whether the policy targets that are set are in fact realized.

Without financial statements and performance reports, the public cannot assess whether the parliament has performed its functions properly. Yet the mere existence of the parliament's financial statements and performance reports will be pointless if the public cannot access these reports.

Performance reports, as the output of performance measurement, are essential to any organization, whether public or private. For a parliament within a system of democratic governance, performance reports are especially important. Johnson and Lewis state that "the problem of measuring the performance of private and public sector organizations is fundamental to any society concerned with the accountability and performance of its institutions" (1991, p. 189 in Widodo). It is therefore fair to say that the performance of the DPR/DPD is strongly related to the transparency and accountability that are to be achieved.

Financial statements and performance reports can now be presented to the public through the use of information and communication technology; this is referred to as electronic filing and electronic reporting. Through the use of electronic data, parliamentary documentation and reports can be more quickly and readily accessed by the public. Several benefits can be obtained through electronic parliamentary reporting:

- The public can easily and efficiently access performance reports and financial statements without having to go to the parliament building;

- Information can be entered and stored by the General Secretariat more easily;
- Document storage costs are reduced and space is conserved;
- Internet access to reports reduces the centralization of information;
- Documents and reports can be accessed at any time;
- Facilitates transparency and openness.

Producing financial statements and performance reports electronically and making them accessible through the Internet create the opportunity for disclosure of information to the public, and this is an essential requirement for transparency and accountability. Nevertheless, the parliament must also consider the aspects of legal appropriateness, confidentiality, and public interest in publishing its financial statements and performance reports electronically. In other words, consideration needs to be given to whether the disclosure of information is appropriate and does not violate the law (information in confidence) and whether it strengthens the people's oversight of the parliament. If necessary, requirements could be stipulated for the public to access such information in such a way that its confidential nature does not impede public access, but also does not create hazards or violate standards.

The financial statement and performance report information presented on the Internet must also meet requirements of ease of access for the public. It should be noted that not everyone has the knowledge or skill to read financial statements and performance reports. Too much information and too much detail will make them hard for most people to read. On the other hand, too little or overly global information will also fail to provide adequate information as material for public oversight. For these reasons, the purpose of presenting data and figures must be clear. Extremely detailed breakdowns of expenses in financial statements, for example, will simply be difficult for the public to read. The same applies to parliament members' routine activities. The financial statements that are presented should be a sort of "middle view," consisting of audited financial statements in a format that can be readily understood by the public.

In brief, while electronic data on the Internet can provide access for the public to study financial statements and performance reports, implementation of this will require serious hard work. It is true that technology can store billions of data, but humans have a limited ability to access and make use of all this data. Therefore, both the parliament and the administrators that manage this aspect must have a strong awareness of the benefits and objectives of presenting data through the Internet.

Further, transparency and accountability of the parliament's financial statements and performance reports must also enable the public to request and obtain additional data as needed (make an inquiry). Therefore, the parliament's website must provide a special menu that gives the public the opportunity to submit requests for specific reports. In practice, there are often obstacles to this, because the administrator cannot follow up on or respond to all such requests for data/information. Lack of reciprocity in interaction between the public and the website administrator can defeat the use of Internet in building communication between the public and the parliament.

As well as requests for further data, the presentation of financial statements and performance reports on the Internet must also allow the public to forward complaints, questions, and input to the DPR/DPD.

Let us say, for example, that the public has data and information on the parliament's performance. This will still be useless if they are not also given the opportunity to submit their complaints, questions, and input. Electronic data on the parliament will only succeed in enhancing public participation when there is two-way communication. The minimum target that must be set in the presentation of electronic data through the Internet is the occurrence of interaction and transactions, and not just unilateral or one-way information.

### Goals of presenting parliament reports electronically via the Internet:

1. Information/education
2. Avenue for participation/consultation
3. Deliberation
4. Evidence that views are heard

Source: Francoli, Mary. 2008. E-participation and Canadian Parliamentarians, in: Electronic Government: Concept, Methodologies, Tools and Applications. Hershey, New York

As noted in the quotation above, the presentation of financial statements and performance reports through the Internet must simultaneously fulfill four functions:

1. As a means to provide information and political education to the public;
2. As a place or medium for public participation and consultation;

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3. As a means for the public to put forward its aspirations, hopes and desires;
  4. As a means to ensure that the public's views are heard by parliament.

The new era of democracy demands changes in the principles of parliament members and the ways of interaction between the parliament and the people. It is hoped that the electronic presentation of financial statements will bring about electronic public participation (e-participation). And when the public has become involved in this process, this will indicate that healthy, democratic parliamentary institutions have been established.

However, the use of information and communication technology to assist the functions of parliament is not without its weaknesses. There are several matters that deserve attention from the parliament, Internet operators, and the public. Because any data/information sent through the Internet is basically open, there must be some restrictions to prevent the misuse of data. These requirements include (1) privacy/confidentiality of public data, (2) dissemination and processing of data for various purposes, (3) freedom of access to public information, and (4) copyright (Leith, 2008, p. 1977). The confidentiality requirement specifies that it must be clear which data may and may not be given to the public. The second requirement relates to the obligation to ensure that information is utilized and disseminated properly and in line with its intended purpose. Freedom of access to information means that it is done in accordance with the laws that regulate the rights and obligations of state officials and the public regarding information. Finally, the copyright requirement limits the right to duplicate the information that is presented.

In current practice, the DPR/DPD performance reports are prepared based on Presidential Instruction No. 7/1999, requiring Reports on Performance Accountability of Government Institutions (LAKIP). As a parliament member, you may wonder why the DPR/DPD is subject to LAKIP, which concerns the executive branch only. True, the DPR/DPD should have their own standards for their performance reports and financial statements. Therefore, as a parliament member, you can push for the DPR/DPD to create their own standard formats, because the legislature's functions differ from those of the government. The DPR/DPD's draft LAKIP has to date been prepared in stages by the General Secretariat and submitted to the DPR/DPD Leadership. To date, the draft LAKIP are prepared based on (1) formulation of the DPR/DPD's Strategic Plans (*Renstra*), (2) Formulation of Performance Indicators, (3) Observations, (4) Measurement, and (5) Performance Evaluation. And because the original LAKIP was designed for government agencies, the DPR/DPD's version has been adapted to the functions of the parliament.



The DPR's performance reports can essentially be divided into institutional performance reports and individual performance reports. The institutional performance reports can be further divided into oversight performance, budget performance, and legislative performance. If we look at the DPR or DPD website, it is clear that the reports of these two parliamentary institutions on the performance of their functions – oversight and follow-up, budgeting, and legislation – are not yet complete or systematic. Fortunately, there are guidelines on the preparation of performance reports on individual DPR members that serve as a basis for assessing their performance. However, these individual performance reports cannot be accessed by the public, so the public cannot measure the performance of their representatives in parliament. As a parliament member, you can urge that the rules for writing and presenting the parliament's performance reports, both institutional and individual, be delineated in greater detail in the Standing Orders so that the reports actually serve their functions (are complete, systematic, accessible, and useful).

Regarding the method of the DPR/DPD's financial reporting, basically these reports are prepared internally by the General Secretariat. The parliament's financial statements are produced monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, and annually. The financial statements prepared by the General Secretariat are submitted to and discussed by the Household Affairs Committee (BURT). Similar reports are formally submitted to the Minister of Finance as the general treasurer of the state. To increase transparency and accountability, the DPR/DPD financial statements should ideally also be published, both online and in print, in a simple format that the public can easily read and understand. In current practice, no DPR/DPD financial statements are made available to the public either through the Internet or in printed form. As a parliament member, obviously you should push for the parliament's financial statements to be disclosed to the public in order to increase parliament's accountability. The DPR/DPD financial statements should also include the financial statements of the DPR Standing Committees and the DPD Ad Hoc Committees. To date, the annual reports of the DPR/DPD Leadership are not made available, and are not yet part of the institutional culture. Therefore, you should urge the DPR/DPD Leadership to provide reports to all members on their use of authority and the performance of their duties as the Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons of the Houses. To achieve transparency and accountability, you should also press for the LAKIP prepared by the DPR/DPD General Secretariat to be accessible to the public online and in print.

CHAPTER V

# Session Management and Transcription Systems



Efforts to achieve parliamentary transparency and accountability can also be undertaken by developing session management and by making accessible to the public reports on the results of sessions. Why should reports on the outcome of sessions be presented to the public? In democratic governance, the parliament has an obligation to provide access and present all information relating to the exercise of its functions to the public. Sessions are a crucial point in the exercise of the parliament's functions; debates and discussions between individuals and between party groups take place in the sessions. All of the parliament's deliberation and decision-making takes place in sessions: deliberation and decision-making on bills, discussions and decision-making on use of the right of inquiry, discussion and decision-making on selection of Standing Committee members, and various other political decisions. It is fair to say that sessions are the most essential activity performed by members of parliament, apart from working visits to their constituencies.

Therefore, the various discussions and events that take place in parliamentary sessions should not only be open to the public, but must also be recorded, and these records disseminated to the public.

The recording of sessions has two functions: first, session records serve as official state documents providing evidence for the various views and actions of the parliament members in sessions. This is useful as evidence of the attitudes, positions, and standpoints of parliament members regarding the matters on which political decisions are made. Even when a group of members are in the minority regarding the decision that is made, their ideas are still recorded in the session records. For parliament members, the records of sessions serve as proof of their having taken the side of certain groups in society. Second, session recording also functions as informational material for the drafting of future policies, because the session records include the philosophical, juridical, and sociological reasons for why a given policy was adopted and why a particular political decision was made. Third, session records are also useful to the public as the information provides the opportunity for active consultation and participation. As we

are all aware, public participation is only possible when information is available on the matters under consideration. Session records provide informational material for the public to be actively involved both in the drafting of bills and in the making of other political decisions. Fourth, for members of parliament, session records serve as material for further discussion in subsequent sessions. In addition, session records are also useful as an instrument to ensure that the conclusions recorded during the sessions are in line with the decisions that are ultimately made. Often the conclusions recorded in the session minutes and the decisions that are eventually made actually differ, either because of negligence in recording or deliberate manipulation. Fifth, session records are also important for the Constitutional Court as informational material and data in reaching verdicts in the judicial review of laws.

Even so, it is no easy matter to produce session records that can be accessed by the public. There are several reasons, including the legal guarantee for the public to access session records, the obligation to record sessions, and the technical difficulties of accessing session record documents. Regarding the legal guarantee, it must be confirmed whether there are legal provisions either in the Constitution or in other Laws that require the parliament to record its sessions and to publish the session records. This legal guarantee is critical, because the parliament could be sued to force it to record all sessions, not merely Plenary Sessions or Committee sessions. Likewise, the types of session recording must be very clearly stipulated, to provide a measure of the level of detail of the recording required. In Indonesia, for example, the types of session records, according to the DPR/DPD Standing Orders, consist of proceedings, meeting notes, and brief reports. Proceedings contain complete notes of everything that occurs in the session. Meeting notes, on the other hand, only contain the main points discussed, the conclusions, and the decisions. And brief reports contain only the conclusions and/or decisions of the meeting. According to the DPR Standing Orders, meeting proceedings are only produced for plenary sessions and extraordinary plenary sessions. For other types of meetings, only meeting notes and brief reports are produced. In other words, if an obligation for the parliament to record sessions in the form of full proceedings were stipulated in the Constitution and/or in a Parliamentary Law, the people would have a strong legal basis to demand openness of meetings. In contrast, in the DPD's Standing Orders, full meeting proceedings are produced for plenary sessions, extraordinary plenary sessions, special-purpose plenary sessions, Ad Hoc Committee (PAH) meetings, joint Ad Hoc Committee meetings, meetings of the Legislative Drafting Committee, meetings of the Consultative Committee, and meetings of Special Committees.





In current practice in the DPD, according to Article 113 of the DPD Standing Orders, provisional meeting proceedings shall be sent to the meeting/session members as soon as possible after the meeting has finished. The words "as soon as possible" in Article 113 do not set a specific time, as the preparation of the proceedings may in fact be quite protracted. As a DPD member, you can propose that the time for preparation of provisional proceedings be set at 1 x 24 hours after the end of the meeting. Article 113 does stipulate that within 2 x 24 hours after receiving the provisional proceedings, the members concerned may provide corrections to parts of the proceedings, without altering the original meaning. If there are differences in the interpretation of meeting/session proceedings, the meeting/session leadership shall decide based on the results of recordings.

According to the DPR Standing Orders, full proceedings are only produced for Plenary Sessions and Extraordinary Plenary Sessions. However, the DPR Standing Orders do not stipulate when these meeting proceedings must be completed or how the DPR members can provide corrections to the proceedings. This makes it difficult for the DPR members to exercise control over the meeting/session proceedings. And for other types of the DPR meetings/sessions, such as DPR Leadership Meetings, Deliberation Council Meetings, and Joint Committees Meetings, only meeting notes and brief reports are required to be produced. Meeting notes contain only the main points of the discussion and the conclusions and/or decisions made in the meeting, and brief reports only contain the conclusions and/or decisions of the meeting.

Thus, it is very difficult for DPR members to monitor the discussions and decisions in meetings for which only meeting notes or brief reports are produced. This could potentially lead to abuse of authority, because the conclusions and/or decisions in the brief reports or meeting notes could differ from the actual discussion.

Although Article 117 of the DPR Standing Orders does allow members to make corrections to the content of meeting notes and brief reports, since there is no time limit and the contents are no more than brief recapitulation of points or notes, this will be detrimental to you as a DPR member, especially since there is often a considerable time lag between the end of the meeting/session and the publication of the brief report or meeting notes. Matters of a sensitive nature are often not disclosed to the public. There is also no mechanism to decide who determines what is and what is not

considered sensitive. If this happens, it is entirely possible that important decisions that are recorded in brief reports and meeting notes may differ from the discussions that actually took place. Therefore, you need to amend the Standing Orders to enable transparency of all meeting discussions and the conclusions/decisions that are made. As a parliament member, you must also draft a regulation to be included in the Standing Orders that allow you to make corrections to meeting proceedings, meeting notes, and brief reports up to the time they are actually published.

Apart from the normative factors in the Standing Orders, there are five main problems with session proceedings. First, the minutes of meetings that are distributed to assembly members often do not receive a response. This is because the members tend to be lazy about reading them; some members even say they do not need the proceedings, because they already know what they contain. Second, session proceedings typically are not published, or are published late, because of the shortage of personnel in the General Secretariat. You, as a parliament member, will have to be more diligent about reading meeting proceedings, because matters that were discussed and decided are not necessarily included in the proceedings. Third, in terms of substance, to date the technical corrections to proceedings, meeting notes, and brief reports of meetings/sessions are only made internally by the General Secretariat. As long as the writing is correct (i.e. no misspellings, etc.), the proceedings/meeting notes/brief reports are considered accurate and ready to be published. Fourth, when personal opinions that are expressed are considered irrelevant to the substance of the session, these are often not recorded in the proceedings, as it is feared they would "obscure" the decision made. This means there might be no record of dissenting opinions expressed by members. Actually, everything that parliament members say in meetings should be made known to the public, whether relevant or irrelevant. Fifth, the members attending the meeting/session can also ask the officer responsible for recording the session to delete certain remarks from the record if they feel the comments are unsuitable to be recorded.

The second factor is whether the people have a legally protected right to access all session records. Although records are made for all meetings, these records are useless to the people if there is no legal provision that guarantees their right to obtain copies of the records. It often happens, pursuant to the parliamentary Standing Orders, that session records are distributed only to the members and other parties that were involved (present and involved in the meeting). This rule is clearly detrimental to the people, because those who were not invited and/or not present or directly involved in the meeting cannot gain access to records of the sessions.

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**Based on a 2005 NDI study, 35% of DPR-RI members said  
that session records are difficult to obtain.**

(NDI, 2005)

If members of parliament find it difficult to obtain session records, it will certainly be even more difficult for the public to access these records. Therefore, it needs to be explicitly stipulated in a Parliamentary Law (either the Law on Freedom of Access to Public Information or the Law on the Composition and Status of the MPR, DPR, DPD and DPRD) and further elaborated in the parliament's Standing Orders that the public has the right to obtain all session documents, including session records. Restrictions would apply only for matters that are specifically prohibited by Law.

Often it is technically difficult for the public to obtain session records. The public has long recognized the bureaucracy as an institution that does not serve the public. Therefore, even if a legal guarantee exists that the public is entitled to obtain parliamentary session records, it must also be guaranteed in technical terms, so that the records can in fact be easily accessed by the public. As explained above, parliament session records also need to be managed electronically through the Internet. The parliament website should provide a special menu for a database of session records that can be accessed online. This electronic database could be arranged by year of session, or by type of meeting, or by the topics discussed, or possibly by all three, to help the public to access the records. Obviously, this also needs to be accompanied by clear requirements for downloading of electronic documents as explained above, regarding confidentiality, the right to public information, and copyright.

For comparison, here are the best practices in the German Parliament (*Bundestag*, [www.bundestag.de](http://www.bundestag.de)): the website contains a Data Bank on all documents related to Bills that are being deliberated; word-for-word proceedings of the debates in all meetings (not only plenary sessions but also other meetings), which can be accessed the day after the meeting; all Laws that have been passed; questions from the public; and events that occur in the *Bundestag*. The German parliament's data bank can also be ordered online in the form of CDs through the website. Best practices that could be adopted from the Canadian Parliament include a virtual library in which various documents, books, and publications can be accessed online; the parliamentary proceedings of both houses of parliament can be accessed live through a web broadcasting service; and, as in Germany, the public can obtain transcripts of meeting proceedings online.

In another best practice from the German *Bundestag*, the public can order a parliament magazine and parliamentary publications by subscription at very affordable rates. And the *Bundestag* library is also open for public use. Requests for magazines, publications, and parliament petitions can be placed online through the *Bundestag* website. The transcription system for recording *Bundestag* sessions has long been in operation. This system enables the public to know, word for word, every discussion and speech by the members of parliament. The transcripts can be accessed over the Internet just one day after the meetings take place. At the next meeting, the meeting protocol and transcript are distributed to the members of parliament to obtain their input. If there are no objections or other input from the members, the meeting protocol and transcript are designated as the official protocol document, and the next day this official protocol can be accessed on the Internet. At the European Union level, the electronic transcription system can even be accessed in several languages.

Back to the DPR/DPD. To address the various problems explained earlier, a transcription system needs to be developed for all discussions in all sessions. A basic transcription system has long been in place in the DPR/DPD; it simply needs to be upgraded so that the people's rights can be fulfilled. Among the key issues that need to be addressed to build a better transcription system are the following:

### **Specialist Transcription Staff**

A number of specialized personnel need to be provided to support this performance, including trained transcribers. It is essential that the General Secretariat staff includes properly qualified transcribers. Transcription cannot be done by persons who do not have professional expertise in this area, especially for session records, which are important public documents. In addition to being accurate, these personnel also need to be highly disciplined and, insofar as possible, to fully understand the issues being discussed.

### **Independence of Transcription Staff**

Negligence or deliberate errors in the writing of session records can have fatal consequences for the parliament's political decisions. Therefore, as well as being professional, the transcribers also must be independent and free from political interests, so that such interests do not influence the records. Given the high level of political tension, session records could be used as a political tool to alter decisions that have been made.

## Transcription Procedures, up to Publication

The transcribers must work with a standardized transcription procedure, from the preparation of transcripts to publication. There has to be a clear flow chart that serves as the standard for all transcription specialists in doing their work. It should cover, for example, the tools to be used, who should inspect the session records before they are published, how many copies need to be published, and other procedures. This also includes whether transcription operations are performed manually or electronically, and how much time is required between the completion of the session and the publication of the transcript.

## Procedure for Revision of Transcripts

Even after transcripts have been published, there may be further input, comments, and suggestions from members of parliament. Especially when a transcript contains serious errors, it must be revised. Corrections to transcripts must be made immediately, following a clear procedure. Therefore, it needs to be stipulated who has the authority to make changes to erroneous or inaccurate transcriptions after they are published. If there is no clarity on this authority, correction of transcripts will take a long time and could easily give rise to conflicts.

## Targets for Use of Transcripts

The target users of transcripts are members of parliament, the public, NGOs, universities, the Constitutional Court, the government, and various other parties with a direct or indirect interest in session records. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to ways to publish transcripts that are appropriate to the targeted users.

## Transcription Costs

Since transcription entails considerable expense, funds need to be specifically set aside in the parliament budget for transcription and publication costs. Often this is not a matter of primary concern to parliament members; the budget for transcription is often neglected and not considered an important aspect of increasing the transparency and accountability of the parliament

## Management of Published Transcripts

Another important matter is transcript management, including how transcripts can be easily obtained when needed. Often, not just the public but even members of parliament experience difficulties in obtaining certain transcripts. A proper system therefore needs to be established for management of published transcripts, in the form of a library that systematically documents all transcript publications. This could be arranged by year, type of sessions, and topics of the sessions.

## Public Access to Published Transcripts

As noted earlier, session transcripts can only be used by the people if, as a matter of policy, there is a legal guarantee for the people to obtain the transcripts and, in technical terms, the people can easily access the transcript publications. Therefore, an internet-based publication system needs to be developed that would enable the public to access session transcript publications at any time.





CHAPTER VI

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**Change toward a Transparent and  
Accountable Parliament**





## Constraints

**T**ransparency and accountability of the parliament in Indonesia (the DPR and the DPD) still face a number of constraints and obstacles. Many factors are involved, starting with cultural factors: the lack of awareness of the importance of the obligation to achieve transparency and accountability to the public. This cultural factor is critical, because it relates to the value of parliament members' moral obligation to their constituents. The second set of factors is structural factors: the institutional constraints to achieving transparency and accountability, such as bureaucratic support, system support, and information and communication technology support. The third set of factors is legal factors: the weakness of the legal basis that mandates the parliament to grant access and to create systems that enable the people to obtain information and to participate actively in the execution of the parliament's functions.

If we look at the current situation, we can see that several efforts are being made to bring about a transparent and accountable parliament. For example, there are now the DPR-RI and the DPD-RI websites that can be accessed to obtain information on various matters. This DPR-RI website provides, for example, meeting proceedings and brief reports arranged by session year, public complaints, profiles of parliament members, and news on activities both of the parliament and of parliament members. This means that meeting proceedings that contain the processes and discussions in sessions can be accessed online by the public. However, the websites still do not present the DPR and the DPD's financial statements and performance reports for the public to access and to obtain an overview of the parliament's achievements and its use of state funds.

Accessibility of DPR and DPD financial statements and performance reports will be a key factor in creating transparency and accountability.

Therefore, as a parliament member, you have a responsibility to urge that the DPR/DPD Standing Orders stipulate that financial statements and performance reports can be accessed by the public, both through the Internet and in printed format.

Likewise, in the session mechanism, the DPR/DPD Standing Orders still allow certain meetings to be conducted behind closed doors, and as a result the public does not know what is discussed in these meetings. According to the Standing Orders, a closed meeting may decide that certain matters discussed and/or decided in the meeting will not be included in the proceedings, notes, and/or brief report of the meeting (Article 118, the DPR Standing Orders). This provision is detrimental not only to the public but also to the DPR members themselves, because there is no authentic evidence that can be used to question the parties involved regarding the implementation of decisions made in these closed meetings. This means that DPR members do not have documents that could be used to evaluate the implementation and impact of certain political decisions based on the actual intentions in the meeting, from the initial discussions through to the making of the decision. As a parliament member, you should promote establishment of a correction system and mechanism for all meeting proceedings, meeting notes, and brief reports.

Article 96 of the DPR Standing Orders and Article 93 of the DPD Standing Orders allow an open meeting to be changed into a closed meeting. This further limits the people's right to attend parliament meetings and sessions. In many countries, it is stipulated in the constitution that all parliament meetings/sessions must be open to the public

**As a member of parliament, you should press for changes in the Standing Orders to make all parliament meetings/sessions open to the general public. This will create transparency and accountability in the DPR and DPD.**

With regard to session transcripts, according to the DPR Standing Orders, proceedings are required to be produced only for plenary sessions and extraordinary plenary sessions. For other types of meetings, only brief reports and meeting notes are produced. This will limit efforts to achieve transparency, because it is through the meeting proceedings that the public can see in detail the processes and discussions that took place in the deliberation of bills and/or other political decisions. Likewise, the provision that meeting proceedings, meeting notes and brief reports can only be distributed to members and other parties concerned also limits the people's right to access parliamentary documents and information.

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**A stipulation needs to be included in the DPR Standing Orders that allows parliament members and the people to obtain all proceedings, minute notes, and brief reports of all meetings in the DPR, insofar as not prohibited by Law.**

Generally, it can be said that several systems and mechanisms exist at present to create transparency and accountability in the DPR RI and the DPD RI. However, much remains to be done in many areas, including the cultural, structural, and legal factors. These three factors are keys to creating a transparent and accountable parliament.

### **The State Finance Accountability Body**

Likewise, pursuant to the Law No. 27/2009 on the MPR, DPR, DPD and DPRD (also called the MD3 Law), Article 110-116, the DPR is required to have a State Finance Accountability Body (BAKN), which has the following tasks: (1) conducting studies on the Supreme Audit Agency (BPK) audit findings submitted to the DPR, (2) presenting the results of such studies to the DPR Standing Committees, (3) following up on results of Standing Committee's deliberations on the BPK audit findings upon the request of the Standing Committees, and (4) providing input to the BPK on its annual audit work plan, constraints in audits, and the presentation and quality of reports. Given the strategic importance of the BAKN for the DPR, you as a parliament member must support the establishment and functioning of the BAKN. This can be achieved by sending party group members with high quality, competence, and integrity to the BAKN. The existence of the BAKN is one of the efforts to create transparency and accountability in the DPR. Obviously, the results of the BAKN's studies on the BPK audit findings, and the follow-up, must be provided openly to the public so that the public can know how well the DPR is performing its function of oversight, specifically over the use of state funds. As a parliament member, you have the chance to oversee the establishment and functioning of the Parliament's State Finance Accountability Body.

### **Transparency in Recruitment of Experts Staff**

Creating transparency and accountability of parliament will also require clarity in the mechanism and process for recruitment of the expert staff who assist the assembly members, specifically the civil servant expert staff and the Personal Assistants to parliament members. To date, the recruitment process for expert staff that are part of

the DPR as an institution, such as the expert staff in the Legislation Council (*Baleg*), has been performed openly. In contrast, the recruitment of expert staff to assist parliament members is still deemed non-transparent and based mostly on personal relationships with the members. This is due to the lack of a clear stipulation in the DPR Standing Orders regarding recruitment of expert staff to assist parliament members. The result is that assembly members lack professional and competent expert staff to support the proper functioning of the parliament. Therefore, you as a parliament member will suffer if you recruit your expert staff solely on the basis of personal relationships and/or political affiliations.

In order to uphold professionalism on the one hand, and transparency and accountability on the other, the DPR Standing Orders need to stipulate the recruitment mechanism and process for expert staff/ personal assistants who will assist parliament members. Recruitment must be done in a way that is open to the public, by an independent, professional committee comprised of various elements.

## The DPR Budget Committee

Another matter that requires your attention as a future DPR member is the effort to promote the establishment of a reformed Budget Committee (*Badan Anggaran*) in the DPR, pursuant to Law No. 27/2009 Articles 104–109. This new Budget Committee will handle these tasks: (1) deliberating with the government, represented by cabinet ministers, the basic points of general fiscal policy and budget priorities for cabinet departments and state institutions, (2) determining state revenue, together with the government, with reference to the recommendations of the relevant committees, (3) deliberating the Bill on the Draft National Budget (RAPBN) with the government, (4) synchronizing the results of the committee's deliberations on the work plans and budgets of cabinet departments and state institutions, (5) discussing realization reports and prognoses relating to the National Budget (APBN), and (6) discussing points in the elucidation of the Bill on the implementation of APBN.

With the existence of the new, standing Budget Committee, the DPR will have a permanent institution that prepares everything relating to the process of formulating



the state budget and the house's internal budget. To ensure accountability, the standing Budget Committee needs to be staffed with parliament members with professional budgeting expertise who represent the Standing Committees, so that they can perform analysis and achieve transparency and accountability in the use of the parliament's budget. You, as a parliament member, will be greatly helped in performing the budgeting function.

In addition, the internal preparation and use of the DPR's budget have until now depended greatly on the DPR General Secretariat, which is in fact a part of the executive branch. Therefore, with the existence of the parliamentary Budget Committee, you will be able to focus on your main functions as a parliament member. Your independence as a member will be even stronger.

## Follow-up on BPK Findings

Also related to transparency and accountability in the management of state finances, one matter that deserves special attention is whether the DPR is optimally performing its role of monitoring the Government's use of its budget. According to the BPK's reports to the DPR and DPD in 2008, only 16 out of 85 central government departments and institutions received Unqualified Opinions, 31 received Qualified Opinions, 37 received Disclaimer of Opinion, and one received an Adverse Opinion. Generally, the management of and accountability for state finances and the internal control systems in government departments and institutions are still quite weak, and their compliance with laws and regulations remains rather poor.

At the local government level, the BPK gave Unqualified Opinions to only three entities, Qualified Opinions to 173 entities, Disclaimers of Opinion to 52 entities, and Adverse Opinions to 51 entities. Generally, the internal control systems for local governments' financial management are weak, and compliance with laws and regulations remains inadequate.

Furthermore, the BPK's 2007 audit report on the DPR and the DPD General Secretariat was a Qualified Opinion; specifically, in the BPK's opinion, the DPR General Secretariat is not yet managing inventory goods in accordance with applicable provisions, making it vulnerable to abuses in the distribution and procurement of inventory goods.

As a parliament member, you must provide reports to the public on what the DPR and DPD have done to act on BPK findings in line with the parliament's functions. The results of this follow-up also need to be conveyed to the public, both online and in print.



You need to communicate to the public the findings of the BPK audits, together with the steps that have been and are to be taken to reduce losses to the state in the use of state finances.

## DPD Work Mechanisms in the Regions

Specifically for the DPD members, as well as being a member of the second chamber of parliament as an organ of the state (*Staatsorgan*), you must also have access to the people you represent in your home region. Unlike the DPR members, you are a representative of the people in your region on a regional basis, so you must be individually and directly accountable to the people for all opinions, decisions, and actions that you take as a DPD member who received a mandate from the people of the region. Therefore, in accordance with Law No. 27/2009, you must also have an office in the constituency that you represent. Your work mechanism in the region will reflect how well you absorb the aspirations of the local administration, DPRD, and the people, and how well you convey to the people of the region the views and policies that develop at the national level.

The transparency and accountability of the DPD as an institution and of each individual DPD member will be evident from sessions and session proceedings, and also from the performance reports and financial statements that are provided to the public. Therefore, your representative office in the region must periodically provide up-to-date information on the performance of the DPD as an institution and of each individual member. Through your office in the region, you need to actively provide the public with progress reports on your execution of their mandate. Your transparency and accountability as a DPD member differs from that of the DPR members, because you are not a member of a party group that represents the interests of political parties. You represent only yourself and the people of your region, so the quality of your performance is determined almost entirely by yourself as a DPD member.

## Bureaucratic Reform in the General Secretariat

In any case, the proper functioning of the parliament as an institution and of individual parliament members is inseparable from the work of its support institution, in this case the General Secretariat. As we are all aware, the General Secretariat is part of the government bureaucracy, with all the problems that entails. The quality of the parliament's performance will be greatly determined by the quality, competence, and integrity of the DPR and DPD General Secretariat staff. For example, the freedom

of information, specifically information on the outcomes of sessions, performance reports, and financial statements of the DPR/DPD will be determined by the capacity of the General Secretariat personnel. Generally, all bureaucracies in Indonesia suffer from a range of “illnesses,” such as an authoritarian culture, civil servant incompetence, hierarchical structures, unnecessarily complicated processes, uncertainty regarding times and costs and, to a certain extent, deteriorated morality. If these problems exist in the DPR/DPD General Secretariat, they will have fatal consequences, because the parliament is an institution that directly represents the people's interests.

Therefore, as a DPR/DPD member, you must work hard to reform the bureaucracy in the DPR/DPD General Secretariat in order to enhance its ability to support the parliament's performance of its functions. This could involve restructuring to achieve more functional arrangements, better application of performance-based budgeting, a fair and suitable remuneration system, promotions based on performance, and monitoring and reporting of the use of funds by the General Secretariat. With the establishment of the new Budget Committee and the State Finance Accountability Body in the DPR, the functions of oversight of the use of finances and the financial statements prepared by the General Secretariat must be transparently and accountably provided to the public. The parliament's use of funds must not be left unscrutinized, and there must be no overlap between the work of the committees and that of the General Secretariat.

## Members' Attendance

To improve your transparency and accountability as a DPR/DPD member, you need to develop enthusiasm and motivation to attend all scheduled sessions. As we all know, the low level of attendance of DPR/DPD members has become a focus of attention of the people, as their constituents. One excuse often given is the large number of different Special Committees (*pansus*) and Working Committees (*panja*) that members are expected to participate in. Clearly, it needs to be stipulated in the DPR/DPD Standing Orders that a parliament member cannot serve as a member of more than two such committees. On the other hand, it has been heavily criticized that DPR/DPD members indeed have little motivation to attend meetings and sessions. Therefore, the lists showing members' attendance in meetings and sessions need to be periodically presented to the public. These attendance lists should be accessible online on the DPR/DPD websites.

As a parliament member who diligently attends meetings and sessions, you will clearly be disadvantaged by any lack of transparency regarding members' overall attendance, because there will be no way for the people to know about your performance in the meetings/sessions you attend. The people will not even know which members actually attend and actively participate in DPR/DPD meetings/sessions, and which simply cannot be bothered to attend. Without transparency, the people cannot know or measure the work performance of the industrious and the lazy members.

## Transparency and Accountability of Comparative Studies

Another matter that deserves your attention as a DPR/DPD member is the need to establish a transparent and accountable system for "comparative study" visits to other countries. It is widely recognized that parliament members' comparative studies abroad are often simply formalities that have no genuine impact on the drafting of policies. In fact, comparative studies are often jokingly referred to as "price comparison studies." You certainly do not want the public to label you as a parliament member who squanders public money on trips abroad with no concrete results.

On this basis, transparency and accountability are urgently needed for the planning and results of comparative studies. For example, information needs to be presented to the public on the purpose of the study, who will take part in the study, why they are going to countries A and B but not C, who they will meet with and visit, what topics will be investigated, how much budget is needed, and how long the visit will last. You also need to convey to the public the specific results of the study visit, and how these are applied in the laws and policies produced by the DPR/DPD. If your spouse or other relatives accompany you on a comparative study, you need to explain to the public that this was entirely at your own expense, without one penny of state funds being spent. Simply by disclosing this information, the billions of rupiah spent by the DPR/DPD on comparative studies can be properly accounted to the public.

## Members' Personal Websites

One other thing you should do to establish transparency and accountability as an individual parliament member is to create a personal website. A domain has, in fact, been set up for parliament members to create personal websites. These websites are necessary as a means of political communication between you and your constituents. Through your website, you can convey your ideas, political decisions, and other matters you have been working on as per the promises you made during your election campaign.





You can also explain about the obstacles and constraints you face in working for your constituents' interests in parliament. It is essential that the website includes a special menu whereby the public can submit their complaints and criticisms regarding the political stances you have taken and decisions you have made in parliament. All of this will enhance the people's trust in you as a parliament member. And as a consequence, you will have a greater chance of being reelected for the next term of office.

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