



TRUTH EMERGES THROUGH DEBATE: THE ROLE OF HEALTHY COMPETITION AND OPPOSITION IN PARLIAMENT

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17007636>

Annotation. The article highlights the role of the parliament within the system of state power, with particular emphasis on the significance of healthy political competition and opposition. In addition to its legislative function, the parliament also performs oversight, thereby playing a decisive role in the development of democratic processes and the protection of the people's interests. The article analyzes the balance between the majority and the opposition as an essential factor in improving the legislative process, enhancing the quality of laws, and ensuring the efficiency of public administration. Furthermore, it presents historical examples of the formation of factions and blocs in the Parliament of Uzbekistan and their activities as opposition. According to the author's conclusion, the effective functioning of the institution of opposition requires the development of political culture and the practice of national parliamentarism.

Keywords: Parliament, parliamentary oversight, faction, faction bloc, parliamentary majority, parliamentary opposition

Introduction

The institution of parliament plays a decisive role in maintaining the balance among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of state power in accordance with the principle of separation of powers, ensuring checks and balances, strengthening democratic processes in the country, and protecting the interests of the people. Parliament not only adopts laws but also exercises parliamentary oversight, thus serving as one of the key institutions that ensures the stable and effective functioning of state authority.

Undoubtedly, it is difficult to imagine a modern democratic governance system without healthy political competition between the parliamentary majority and the opposition. This institution is considered an important factor in increasing the efficiency of public administration and ensuring that adopted laws are well-founded and comprehensive.

Results

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in his historic speech at the first session of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis following the elections, emphasized the need to revitalize the institution of parliamentary opposition, stating: "If the healthy competition witnessed during



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elections and the struggle of opposing views move into parliament, we firmly believe that this will undoubtedly serve the adoption of laws in line with the interests of the people.” [1] For this purpose, the Head of State proposed to increase the number of guaranteed rights of the parliamentary opposition from three to six, to grant them the right to hold one committee chairmanship and two deputy chairmanships, and to introduce additional rights such as raising at least one issue per quarter within the framework of the “Government Hour” and parliamentary inquiries.

Undoubtedly, many decisions of parliament are adopted under the significant influence of the majority. However, in the activities of a truly democratic parliament, it is important that the authority of the majority does not turn into absolute power, but rather that balance is maintained by taking into account the position of the opposition. The parliamentary opposition seeks to defend its views and position as an alternative to the decisions of the majority. Through this, it is worth noting that the diversity of ideologies and opinions—political pluralism enshrined in the Constitution—is also ensured in state activities.

In recent years, significant reforms have been carried out to improve the organizational and legal foundations of the activities of the Parliament of Uzbekistan – the Oliy Majlis. These reforms also extend to the institutions of the parliamentary majority and opposition. It is impossible to imagine these two concepts separately. The reason is that in conditions where a parliamentary majority exists and decisions are adopted primarily by the majority, there arises a genuine need for a parliamentary opposition that advances alternative proposals. Diverse opinions and critical approaches help prevent decisions adopted by parliament from being one-sided and ensure that they are formed on the basis of broader interests.

Looking back at history, it becomes evident that several factions in the Parliament of Uzbekistan have functioned as opposition. For instance, on 17 February 2005, the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) faction announced that it would assume the role of parliamentary opposition in response to the formation of a democratic bloc uniting the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, the Fidokorlar People’s Democratic Party, and the Adolat Social Democratic Party.

On 18 March 2015, the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted a resolution “On the statement of the factions of the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Businesspeople – the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan and the Democratic Party of Uzbekistan ‘Milliy Tiklanish’ on



the establishment of the Democratic Forces Bloc.” [2] On the same day, the Legislative Chamber also adopted a resolution declaring the faction of the People’s Democratic Party of Uzbekistan in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis as the parliamentary opposition to the Democratic Forces Bloc, which constituted the majority.

In the current convocation of the Legislative Chamber, the unification of factions into a bloc has also been observed. In particular, on 5 May 2025, the faction of the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Businesspeople – the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan and the faction of the Democratic Party of Uzbekistan “Milliy Tiklanish” signed an agreement to form the “Progress Bloc.” This bloc united 93 deputies and constituted the parliamentary majority. At the same time, on 13 May 2025, the People’s Democratic Party of Uzbekistan officially declared itself the parliamentary opposition, announcing that it did not support certain directions of the “Progress Bloc” and the government’s program. As an opposition faction, the party identified representing the interests of its electorate and defending the principles of social justice as its main tasks. [3] [4] Based on the above, it can be concluded that the institution of parliamentary opposition is not new for the Parliament of Uzbekistan.

To begin with, the literal meaning of the word opposition (from the Latin *oppositio* – “to set against”) refers to a minority that does not recognize official views and represents perspectives and objectives differing from those of the majority in political processes. In global parliamentary practice, there are two widely recognized models of opposition: the Westminster (Anglo-Saxon) model and the Continental (French) model. [5] In the Westminster model, there is a clear distinction between who is in power and who is in opposition: those who win the elections form the government, while those who lose become the opposition. In the constitutions of states following this model, special emphasis is placed on the status of parliamentary opposition. In the French model, the parliamentary opposition is formed by several parties. Hence, the institution of parliamentary opposition is widespread throughout the world, has proven effective, and continues to hold significance today.

Historically, in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the right of factions to form an opposition has been linked to a number of normative-legal acts. Prior to the adoption of the Constitutional Law “On Strengthening the Role of Political Parties in Renewing and Further Democratizing State Governance and Modernizing the Country” [6], the mechanisms of the “parliamentary majority” and “parliamentary opposition” were not regulated by specific laws. However,



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they were provided for in Articles 56–57 of the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, approved by Resolution No. 102-I of 28 July 2005. [7] Article 56 of the Rules stipulated that factions may unite into a bloc in order to express their common interests and coordinate their activities, while Article 57 stated that a faction or a bloc of factions uniting more than half of the deputies shall constitute the parliamentary majority. From an organizational standpoint, a faction not part of the majority could declare itself the parliamentary opposition. However, this regulation left open questions regarding the specific rights and privileges of the opposition. Since the temporary regulations of the chambers mainly governed their internal procedures, there was a clear necessity to regulate these relations at the level of law.

The adoption of the Constitutional Law “On Strengthening the Role of Political Parties in Renewing and Further Democratizing State Governance and Modernizing the Country” provided a legal definition and clarity to the concepts of “parliamentary majority” and “parliamentary opposition.”

In this regard, with the will and support of our people, the rights of the opposition were enshrined at the constitutional level in the renewed Constitution. This serves, on the basis of the principle of a “state serving the people,” to bring democratic processes in the country to a new stage and to make all branches of power more responsible and accountable. According to Article 39 of our Constitution, the rights, freedoms, and dignity of persons belonging to the opposition minority in political parties, public associations, mass movements, as well as in representative bodies of state power, may not be discriminated against by anyone.

The legal foundations of the functioning of the parliamentary opposition are continuing to be improved. In particular, on 30 July 2025, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. ORQ-1077 “On Introducing Amendments and Additions to Certain Legislative Acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan Aimed at Expanding the Guaranteed Rights of the Parliamentary Opposition” was adopted. [8] This law consists of six articles and provides that a political party faction declaring itself the parliamentary opposition shall be guaranteed the right to hold one committee chairmanship and two deputy chairmanships; to submit an alternative draft version of a bill before its second reading; and to raise at least one issue per quarter within the framework of the “Government Hour” and parliamentary inquiries. These changes further clarified the status and powers of the institution of parliamentary opposition.



In addition, a faction that declares itself as the parliamentary opposition, alongside the powers provided for all factions by law, is entitled to have its separate opinion on the issues under discussion included in the minutes of the plenary session of the Legislative Chamber; as well as to ensure the guaranteed participation of its representatives in the conciliation commission regarding a law rejected by the Senate. Furthermore, it is firmly established that the legally guaranteed rights of the parliamentary opposition may not be infringed or discriminated against by the parliamentary majority.

From the above, it follows that there are clear norms and mechanisms in our legislation to ensure the rights of the opposition. At the same time, the ability of minority factions in the Oliy Majlis to declare themselves as opposition and exercise their rights can serve to qualitatively strengthen the work of parliament. Undoubtedly, the consolidation of the institution of parliamentary opposition in legislation is an important achievement; however, ensuring its effective functioning requires the further development of political culture, national traditions of parliamentarism, and practical mechanisms. After all, truth is born in debate and discussion.

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