

YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS FORUM

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

Rationale

The newly elected Parliament has a large number of young members, and among them many first-time legislators. This provides an excellent opportunity to harness their enthusiasm and equip them with the skills and capabilities needed to become better legislators. The process of leadership development should start with these parliamentarians so that new traditions of democratic development can be established. In order to assist young Parliamentarians and to develop future political leadership of the country, a Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF) was established in 2003 consisting of members of Parliament who were 45 years of age or under at the time of election. The purpose of the Forum is to provide young parliamentarians with a platform where they can share and develop ideas, improve their legislative and leadership skills, and form inter-regional and inter-party networks.

As legislators, it is important for these Members of Parliament to learn how to initiate and support legislation that can improve the conditions of their constituents. In order for them to fulfil this role, they need to not only be aware of national and international issues of economic, social, and political importance but also play a more proactive role in policy making. They need to understand the imperatives of economic development and the limitations of developing policies within the given frameworks of international powers. International events have a direct impact on our social and economic realities, thus creating a need for policy makers to understand the currents of the global economy, and the need to work strategically with global powers. Indeed, legislators have to work within the given power arrangements and play an active and effective role as parliamentarians, and more importantly as reformers and leaders. The purpose of the Forum is to help young legislators understand these issues, and to equip them with the knowledge and skills to be better lawmakers. The Young Parliamentarians Forum is also expected to provide young legislators with the leadership skills to act as a catalyst for change in Pakistan's political system and as pioneers of meaningful reforms.

The Role of Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS)

Following the reconstitution of the Young Parliamentarians Forum on 11 June 2014, and keeping in mind the sustainability of YPF it was agreed that the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) would function as the secretariat for the YPF.

PIPS was created in 2008 through an Act of parliament and is a permanent constitutional body mandated with the task of building capacity of Members of Parliament and secretariats. This mandate of PIPS makes it the ideal body to act as the secretariat for the YPF. The provision of an effective and efficient secretariat for the YPF is key to enabling the forum to prosper and develop. PIPS status as a permanent statutory body is critical for the success of the YPA platform. It is envisioned that PIPS will not only provide secretariat assistance to the current YPF but will also retain institutional memory of the YPF, which is particularly important following

- general elections when new members of parliament are sworn in. PIPS' status as the secretariat of the YPF will allow it to contribute to re-constituting the new YPF following each general election.

CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The name of the forum will be "Young Parliamentarians Forum" (YPF)

2. Head Office

The Head Office of YPF will be in Islamabad.

3. Objectives

The main objectives of the Young Parliamentarians Forum are as follows:

- To facilitate members to actively participate in YPF sub-committees where they can work across party lines on areas of mutual interest; in particular sub-committees will:
 - Spearhead parliamentary reforms where needed
 - Strengthen the legislative system by promoting more public policy analysis and debate
 - Make recommendations to the Government and National Assembly Committees regarding policy initiatives and reforms
- To organise and develop young leadership across party lines to ensure meaningful participation in the legislation process.
- To facilitate better participation in the Parliament through capacity building.
- To facilitate interaction between the legislators and their regional and international counterparts so they can learn from each other.
- To introduce innovative and creative programmes for the development and enhancement of legislative skills.

4. Ways and Means

YPF will adopt the following ways and means to achieve its objectives:

- Constitute and facilitate the active and effective functioning of thematic YPF sub-committees on, but not limited to: health, education, parliamentary procedures, minority rights, training and employment.

- Hold seminars, debates and brainstorming sessions on different policy areas such as health, education, local government, economic policy, etc.
- Hold training workshops on different legislative capacity building areas such as legislative drafting, budget process, etc.
- Engage in discussions and debates with experts to get a wide range of perspectives on different policy issues.
- Build linkages with relevant national and international think tanks, academic institutions, non-government organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations, youth organisations, and existing bodies within the parliament such as: friendship groups (FGs), Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) etc.
- Participate in foreign study tours to learn from other parliamentary systems.

5. Organisational Structure and Rules for Management¹

The Young Parliamentarians Forum will consist of members of the National Assembly who were 45 years of age or under on the date of their election to the Parliament. S/he will be eligible to remain as a YPF member until the National Assembly completes its term, even if the member's age exceeds 45 years during the tenure of the Assembly. Membership of the YPF can be acquired by filling out the Membership Form and sending it to the YPF Secretariat. The YPF General Secretary will be the competent person to take a decision on membership requests. The following will be the organisational structure of the Young Parliamentarians Forum:

5.1 The YPF Board

The YPF Board will consist of six elected office bearers. The Board will be the highest decision-making body of the organisation. Board members will be directly elected by the Members of YPF for a period of two years. Any YPF member will be qualified to become a member of the Board. Interested YPF members will be invited to submit their names by the YPF secretariat (PIPS). PIPS secretariat will prepare a list of the nominations for the Board and distribute this list amongst all YPF members. YPF members will then cast their votes for each office bearer position making up the Board. Board members will serve for a period of two years and may be elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

An effort will be made to ensure that the Board has party representation approximately in proportion to the representation in the National Assembly. The Board shall meet at least once every two months.

¹ A separate Terms of Reference detailing the rules for management relating to the YPF secretariat are included in the Appendix of this Constitution.

On a quarterly basis, the President will summon a meeting of the YPF Board to review the individual performance/progress reports of each YPF sub-committee.

The YPF Board will consist of the following office bearer positions:

YPF President

The President will be an elected member of the YPF and will serve for a period of two years. A person may be elected President for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The President will be responsible:

- For directing and overseeing that YPF sub-committees are formed within thirty days of the YPF elections and chairpersons elected within thirty days of the formation of the sub-committee;
- For the overall organization and direction of efforts of the YPF;
- Will summon, preside over, and set the agenda for the annual General Meeting of the YPF;
- Will summon, preside over, and set the agenda for Board meetings;
- Will summon, preside over, and set the agenda for the quarterly meeting of the Board to review the performance/progress reviews of each sub-committee;
- Will regularly review and oversee the performance of the Board, sub-committees, and PIPS secretariat.
- Will delegate tasks, as appropriate, to the remaining office bearers and PIPS secretariat.
- Will review the quarterly and annual reports of all sub-committees, and following the review, will send the reports to the YPF coordinator.

YPF Vice-President

The Vice-President will be an elected member of the YPF and will serve for a period of two years. A person may be elected Vice-President for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Vice-president will be responsible:

- For assisting the President where required;
- Fulfills the role of President in his/her absence;
- To attend the quarterly meeting of the Board to review the performance/progress reviews of each sub-committee;

YPF General Secretary and Joint Secretary

The General Secretary and Joint Secretary will be elected members of the YPF and will serve for a period of two years. A person may be elected General Secretary and Joint Secretary for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The General Secretary will be responsible:

- For receiving and considering member applications to join sub-committees;
- Directing, overall supervision, and performance management of the PIPS secretariat;
- For receiving all sub-committee quarterly performance/progress reports and circulating these to the Board;
- For attending the quarterly meeting of the Board to review the performance/progress reviews of each sub-committee.
- For attending all other Board meetings;
- For liaising and communicating with donors vis-à-vis their collaboration with the YPF;
- Representing the YPF at national and international forums;
- Will, in consultation with the YPF President and YPF Coordinator, regularly review and oversee the performance of the board, sub-committees, and PIPS secretariat.
- For responding to important YPF correspondence, with assistance from PIPS secretariat;

The Joint Secretary will be responsible:

- For assisting the General Secretary where required;
- Fulfills the role of General Secretary in his/her absence;
- To attend the quarterly meeting of the Board to review the performance/progress reviews of each sub-committee.
- For attending all other Board meetings.

YPF Treasurer

The Treasurer will be an elected member of the YPF and will serve for a period of two years. A person may be elected Treasurer for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The Treasurer will:

- Keep all financial records of the YPF for audit purposes;
- Collect organization dues;
- Coordinate any fundraising/fee collection for the YPF.
- Ensure that all funds of the YPF are deposited in its name in a bank account as directed by the Board;
- Ensure that all cheques on the YPF account are signed jointly by the YPF Treasurer and YPF General Secretary;
- Attend the quarterly meeting of the Board to review the performance/progress reviews of each sub-committee.
- Attend all other Board meetings.

YPF Media Coordinator

The Media Coordinator will be an elected member of the YPF and will serve for a period of two years. A person may be elected Media Coordinator for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The media coordinator will be responsible for:

- Leading on the communication and liaison with the wider media on the role, purpose, and activities of the YPF;
- Attending the quarterly meeting of the Board to review the performance/progress reviews of each sub-committee.
- Attending all other Board meetings.

5.2 YPF Coordinator

In addition to the YPF Board, a YPF Coordinator will be appointed by the Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly and will serve for the full duration of the YPF tenure until fresh general elections occur.

The YPF Coordinator will work with the Board and:

- Review and approve all quarterly and annual reports of sub-committees within a reasonable time-frame;
- To attend the quarterly meeting of the Board to review the performance/progress of each sub-committee;
- Will, in consultation with the YPF President and YPF General Secretary, regularly review and oversee the performance of the board, sub-committees, and PIPS secretariat;
- Submit the quarterly and annual YPF reports to the Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly;
- Be the primary liaison person between the YPF and the Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly.

6. Removal/Resignation of Office Holders and Members of the Executive Committee

The President, Vice President, General Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer and Media Coordinator can be removed by carrying out a motion of no-confidence supported by at least 4 Members of the Board. The YPF Coordinator however is appointed by the Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly and can only be removed if directed by the Hon. Speaker.

Any member of the Board may tender their resignation from his/her office upon giving notice in writing to the YPF General Secretary.

7. General Meetings

An annual General Meeting will be held at least once a year at such time and such place as decided by the YPF Board. At the Annual General Meeting, among other things the following business shall be transacted:

- a) Review of the Forum's activities and performance over the past year
- b) Discussion on the next annual YPF work plan and targets

The YPF General Meeting can also be called either by the President on his/her own initiative or on a requisition by the majority of the standing members of the Board, or by at least 50 percent of the members of the Forum, by sending a written request to the YPF General Secretary. The General Secretary will immediately inform the YPF President who will call a meeting within two weeks of the receipt of the requisition.

Notice of every Annual Meeting and every extraordinary meeting shall be sent through postal mail and email not less than 15 days before the date of the Meeting, and not less than 7 days before the extraordinary Meeting.

8. Quorum of the General Meeting

Twenty-five percent (25%) of the members present in person shall form a quorum for the annual General Meeting. In case of an extraordinary meeting, called on requisition by the members, one-third of the members present shall form a quorum. If a General Meeting is adjourned for want of quorum the adjourned meeting shall be held at the same time and place on the next day and no quorum shall be required for it.

Every member present at the annual General Meeting or extraordinary shall have one vote. In the event of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote in addition to his/her own vote as a member.

9. Activities of the Young Parliamentarians Forum

Following the annual General Meeting, the YPF Board will meet to deliberate, draft, and agree on an annual work plan and activity calendar. This Board meeting will ensure that discussion and inputs from the annual General Meeting are, if appropriate, incorporated into the YPF annual work plan. The President (or the Vice President in his/her absence) shall conduct the meeting on the YPF work plan and decision will be taken through open debate and consensus or voting if required. Once finalised, the work plan will be binding and all performance review and progress of the YPF organisation will be measured against the identified targets. Once the work plan and the nature of activities are agreed upon, the General Secretary and the Joint Secretary will co-ordinate with YPF members, the Board, and YPF Secretariat on implementation.

A major portion of the YPF activities will take place through the sub-committees. Each sub-committee will be required to draft a 6 month work plan based on the thematic area mandated to the sub-committee. Sub-committee work plans will be sent to the YPF Board. The YPF secretariat, in consultation with sub-committee chairpersons, will submit quarterly performance/progress reports to the General Secretary who will circulate to Board members.

Quarterly Board meetings will review the sub-committee performance report in light of the targets identified in the sub-committees 6 monthly work plan.

All sub-committees will also submit an annual report to the YPF General Secretary who will circulate to Board members. The Board will then meet to review annual progress of the sub-committee.

10. Annual Subscription

The amount of annual subscription for all YPF members shall be Rs. 1000, and may be reviewed from time to time by the Board.

11. Amendments

The Constitution may be amended by the YPF Board by a two-third majority.