



**CONSTITUTION (POLITICAL
PARTIES AMENDMENT) BILL 2009**

(NO. 24 of 2009)



**CONSTITUTION (POLITICAL PARTIES
AMENDMENT) BILL 2009**

(NO. 24 of 2009)

A

BILL

Entitled

AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT TO ALTER THE CONSTITUTION.

ENACTED by the National Parliament of Solomon Islands.

ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES

1. Short title and commencement
2. Section 11 amended
3. Section 12 amended
4. Section 13 amended
5. Section 15 amended
6. Section 33 amended
7. Section 34 amended
8. New section 34A added
9. Section 37 amended
10. Section 39 amended
11. Section 50 amended
12. Section 66 substituted
13. Section 69C amended
14. New section 69D added
15. Section 93 amended
16. Section 145 amended
17. Schedule 2 substituted
18. Consequential amendment and transitional

CONSTITUTION (POLITICAL PARTIES AMENDMENT) BILL 2009

1. This Act may be cited as the Constitution (Political Parties Amendment) Act 2009, and commences on a date appointed by the Minister, by notice in the *Gazette*. Short title and commencement
2. Section 11 of the Constitution is amended in subsection (6) – Section 11 amended
- (a) by deleting “or” at the end of paragraph (a), and by replacing the comma with a semi-colon at the end of paragraph (b); and
- (b) by adding the following paragraphs –
- “(c) for the purpose of regulating the formation and operation of political parties; or
- (d) for the purpose of regulating the conduct of members of political parties and other persons, in relation to elections or parliamentary proceedings,”.
3. Section 12 of the Constitution is amended in subsection (2) – Section 12 amended
- (a) by deleting “or” at the end of paragraph (b), and by replacing the comma with a semi-colon at the end of paragraph (c); and
- (b) by adding the following paragraphs –
- “(d) for the purpose of regulating the formation and operation of political parties; or
- (e) for the purpose of regulating the conduct of members of political parties and other persons, in relation to elections or parliamentary proceedings,”.
4. Section 13 of the Constitution is amended in subsection (2) – Section 13 amended

- (a) by deleting “or” at the end of paragraph (b), and by replacing the comma with a semi-colon at the end of paragraph (c); and
- (b) by adding the following paragraphs –
 - “(d) for the purpose of regulating the formation and operation of political parties; or
 - (e) for the purpose of regulating the conduct of members of political parties and other persons, in relation to elections or parliamentary proceedings.”.

Section 15
amended

5. Section 15 of the Constitution is amended in subsection (5) –

- (a) by deleting “or” at the end of paragraph (f); and
- (b) by adding the following paragraphs –
 - “(fa) for the purpose of regulating the formation and operation of political parties;
 - (fb) for the purpose of regulating the conduct of members of political parties and other persons, in relation to elections or parliamentary proceedings; or”.

Section 33 amended

6. Section 33 of the Constitution is amended –

- (a) by repealing subsection (1) and substituting the following subsections –
 - “(1) There shall be a Prime Minister who shall be appointed by the Governor-General under this subsection or elected, from among the members of Parliament, in accordance with the procedures set out in Part 1 or 2 of Schedule 2.
 - (1A) As soon as practicable after the conclusion of a general election, the Governor-General shall appoint, by proclamation, a continuous period of sittings days for the meeting of members to be

presided by the person who last held office as Speaker or, in his absence, the person who last held office as Deputy Speaker for the purposes of taking of oath under section 63, the election of the Speaker under section 64(1)(a) and for the appointment or election of a member as Prime Minister.

(1B) If the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker are both absent, the Clerk to Parliament shall preside and conduct the taking of oath under section 63 and the election of the Speaker under section 64(1)(a) but the appointment or election of a member as Prime Minister shall be conducted by the newly elected Speaker.”.

- (b) by adding after the proviso to subsection (3) the following subsections –

“(4) If a Minister is unable, by reason of illness or absence from Solomon Islands, to perform the functions of his office for a period of ten days or more, the Governor-General may, on the advice of the Prime Minister, appoint another Minister to act in the office of that Minister.

(5) The Prime Minister may, from amongst the members of Parliament (other than Ministers) in Government, appoint such prescribed number of parliamentary secretaries to perform the functions as may be specified in the instrument of appointment, and such appointments are not to be regarded as Cabinet positions.”.

7. Section 34 of the Constitution is amended –

Section 34
amended

- (a) in subsection (1), by deleting “the members of Parliament shall meet as soon as possible during the same session of Parliament to elect a new Prime Minister in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2 of this Constitution” and substituting “a new Prime Minister shall be appointed or elected in accordance with section 33(1)”;

- (b) in subsection (3) –
- (i) in paragraph (a), by deleting “elect a Prime Minister in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2 to this Constitution” and substituting “appoint or elect a Prime Minister in accordance with section 33(1)”; and
 - (ii) by deleting “or” at the end of paragraph (c) and replacing the full stop at the end of paragraph (d) with “; or” and by adding the following paragraph –
 - “(e) if he is replaced under section 34A.”;
- (c) in subsection (4), by deleting “elected to the office of Prime Minister in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2 to this Constitution” and substituting “appointed or elected to the office of Prime Minister in accordance with section 33(1);
- (d) in subsection (5), by deleting “elected to the office of Prime Minister in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2 to this Constitution” and substituting “appointed or elected to the office of Prime Minister in accordance with section 33(1); and
- (e) in subsection (6), by repealing paragraph (a) and substituting the following paragraph –
- “(a) upon the appointment or election of a member of Parliament to the office of Prime Minister in accordance with section 33(1);”.

New section 34A
added

8. The Constitution is amended by adding after section 34 the following section –

Replacement of
the Prime
Minister

“34A. (1) Notwithstanding section 34, if majority of the members of Parliament of the political party or coalition of political parties in Government have lost confidence in the Prime Minister, a member of that political party or coalition of parties may move a motion in Parliament under this section for the replacement of the Prime Minister.

(2) A motion under subsection (1) shall not be passed by Parliament unless notice of the motion has been given to the Speaker at least seven clear days before it is introduced, and if Parliament is not sitting, the Speaker shall convene a meeting of Parliament within fourteen clear days after the date he receives the notice of the motion.

(3) If a motion is passed by Parliament under this section, the Prime Minister shall forthwith tender his resignation in accordance with section 34(3)(d), and thereafter the political party or coalition of political parties in Government shall, in writing, forward the name of the member of that political party or coalition of parties for appointment as Prime Minister to the Speaker who shall, in writing, advise the Governor-General forthwith for the appointment of that member as the replacement Prime Minister under this subsection, notwithstanding section 33(1).

(4) Notwithstanding section 34(6)(a), the office of a Minister shall not become vacant when the Prime Minister tenders his resignation under subsection (3).”.

9. Section 37 of the Constitution is amended –

Section 37
amended

- (a) by adding, “and any written laws” at the end of the section; and
- (b) by renumbering the current provision as subsection (1) and by adding the following subsection –

“(2) Any business of Government, department or any written law that is not specifically assigned under subsection (1) comes under the responsibility of the Prime Minister, including the responsibility to perform the functions of the office of a Minister who is for any reason unable to perform the functions of such office for a period of less than ten days.”.

10. Section 39 of the Constitution is amended by adding, “and, subject to modifications of the oaths, parliamentary secretaries appointed under section 33(5)” after “Cabinet”.

Section 39
amended

11. Section 50 of the Constitution is amended –

(a) by deleting “or” at the end of paragraph (f) and by replacing the full stop with a semi-colon at the end of paragraph (g);

(b) by adding the following paragraph –

“(h) if he resigns from the political party of which he was a member.”;

(c) by renumbering the current provision as subsection “(1)” and by adding the following subsections –

“(2) For the purpose of subsection (1)(h), the political party shall give notice, in writing, to the Speaker of such resignation, and the member shall vacate his seat on the date the Speaker receives a notice under this subsection, or otherwise the Speaker shall, in writing, determine the date of vacation of that seat.

(3) A member of Parliament who is removed, on prescribed grounds, by his political party, as a member of that party–

(a) shall not vacate his seat;

(b) shall be deemed to be an independent candidate, without affecting his right to join another political party currently represented in Parliament; and

(c) shall not be entitled to be given any assignment or appointment in Government.”.

12. The Constitution is amended by repealing section 66 and substituting the following section –

Leader and
Deputy Leader of
the Opposition

“66. (1) The Governor-General shall, on the advice of the Speaker, from the members of the Opposition in Parliament, appoint a Leader of the Opposition and a Deputy Leader of the Opposition in accordance with Part 2 of Schedule 2.

(2) The power of the Governor-General to make appointment under subsection (1) includes the power to terminate such appointment.

(3) The Leader of the Opposition may, in writing, assign responsibilities, corresponding to any Government ministerial portfolio, as are necessary to members of Parliament in Opposition.

(4) The office of the Leader of the Opposition or of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition shall become vacant if –

- (a) he ceases to perform his functions as a member of Parliament pursuant to section 51;
- (b) his appointment is terminated;
- (c) he ceases to be a member of Parliament;
- (d) he is elected as Deputy Speaker;
- (e) in the case of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, he ceases to be the Deputy Leader of the Opposition by virtue of his appointment as Leader of the Opposition.”.

13. Section 69C of the Constitution is amended in subsection (2)(b) by deleting “the Leader of the Independent Group”.

Section 69C
amended

14. The Constitution is amended by adding after section 69C the following section –

New section 69D
added

“Political Parties
Integrity
Commission and
regulation of
political parties”

“69D. (1) There shall be a Political Parties Integrity Commission consisting of the following Commissioners who are to be appointed in accordance with the prescribed procedures –

- (a) a Chairman;
- (b) a Deputy Chairman; and
- (c) three other commissioners.

(2) Parliament may prescribe –

- (a) the functions, powers and duties of the Political Parties Integrity Commission;
- (b) the registration, development and management of political parties; and
- (c) any other matter necessary to give effect to or for the purposes of this section.”.

Section 93 amended

15. Section 93 of the Constitution is amended by repealing paragraph (c) and substituting the following paragraph –

- “(c) the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition;”.

Section 145 amended

16. Section 145 of the Constitution is amended in subsection (1)(b) by deleting “Leader of the Official Opposition, Leader of the Independent Members” and substituting “Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition”.

Schedule 2 substituted

17. The Constitution is amended by repealing Schedule 2 and substituting a new Schedule 2, as set out in this Act.

Consequential amendment and transitional

18. (1) Any other reference to “Leader of the Independent Members” or “independent group” in the Constitution or any other written law is repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding the repeal of section 66, the existing independent group and the Leader of the Independent Member shall continue as if section 66, any related provision of the Constitution and of other written law have not been repealed and continue in operation, until the current Parliament is dissolved, including the appointment of another Leader of such group if the position is vacant before the current Parliament is dissolved.

“SCHEDULE 2 TO THE CONSTITUTION

(Sections 33(1) and 66)

**PART 1 – PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTMENT OF PRIME
MINISTER**

1. (1) The Speaker shall –
- (a) on the same sitting day or the next sitting day from the date of his election pursuant to section 33(1A) or (1B); or
 - (b) within seven days from the date the office of the Prime Minister becomes vacant,

Political party with
absolute majority
to nominate Prime
Minister

give written invitation to the political party which has absolute majority of all seats in Parliament to nominate, in writing, to the Speaker the name of the leader, or otherwise the name of a member of the political party for appointment as Prime Minister under section 33(1), which the political party believes commands or will command the confidence of majority of members of Parliament.

(2) In determining whether a political party has absolute majority of all seats in Parliament, any independent member who joins the political party after a general election or any coalition agreement signed before a general election, pursuant to any law that regulates political parties, shall not be taken into account in determining the number of seats won by the political party.

(3) The written nomination under subparagraph (1) shall be sent by the political party to the Speaker within three sitting days.

(4) Upon receiving the written nomination under subparagraph (3), the Speaker shall –

- (a) direct the Clerk to Parliament to lay such written nomination in Parliament; and

- (b) thereafter, present such written nomination before Parliament and announce in Parliament the name of the member nominated by the political party.

(5) The Speaker shall, within three days from making the announcement under subparagraph (4), advise the Governor-General, in writing, on the name of the member announced under subparagraph (4) for appointment as Prime Minister under section 33(1).

Political parties without absolute majority to nominate Prime Minister

2. (1) If no member is appointed as Prime Minister pursuant to paragraph 1, the Speaker shall –

- (a) on the same sitting day or the next sitting day or as soon as is practicable from the date of his election pursuant to section 33(1A) or (1B); or
- (b) within seven days from the date the office of the Prime Minister becomes vacant,

give written invitation to the political party which has the highest number of seats in Parliament to nominate, in writing, to the Speaker the name of the leader, or otherwise the name of a member of the political party for appointment as Prime Minister under section 33(1), which the political party believes commands or will command the confidence of majority of members of Parliament.

(2) For the purposes of subparagraph (1), if two or more political parties have equal number of seats in Parliament, the invitation shall be given to those political parties.

(3) The political party invited under subparagraph (1) shall, in writing, invite all other political parties, coalition of political parties or, where necessary, independent members for the purpose of forming a coalition Government.

(4) A political party, coalition of political parties or independent members invited under subparagraph (3) shall, within three sitting days from the date of invitation under that subparagraph, respond to the invitation in writing

stating whether or not it or he wishes to join the coalition Government.

(5) The written nomination under subparagraph (1) shall be sent by the political party to the Speaker within three sitting days.

(6) Upon receiving the written nomination under subparagraph (5), the Speaker shall –

- (a) direct the Clerk to Parliament to lay such written nomination in Parliament; and
- (b) thereafter, present such written nomination before Parliament and announce in Parliament the name of the member nominated by the political party.

(7) The Speaker shall, within three days from making the announcement under subparagraph (6), advise the Governor-General, in writing, on the name of the member announced under subparagraph (6) for appointment as Prime Minister under section 33(1).

3. (1) If no member is appointed as Prime Minister pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 2, the Speaker shall –

- (a) on the same sitting day or the next sitting day or as soon as is practicable from the date of his election pursuant to section 33(1A) or (1B); or
- (b) within seven days from the date the office of the Prime Minister becomes vacant,

give written invitation to the coalition of political parties (“Coalition”) formed under a coalition agreement made before the general election in accordance with any law regulating political parties, which has absolute majority of all seats in Parliament to nominate, in writing, to the Speaker the name of the leader, or otherwise the name of a member of the Coalition for appointment as Prime Minister under section 33(1), which the Coalition believes commands or will command the confidence of majority of members of Parliament.

Coalition of parties
with absolute
majority to
nominate Prime
Minister

(2) In determining whether the Coalition has absolute majority of all seats in Parliament, any independent member who joins the Coalition after a general election shall not be taken into account in determining the number of seats won by the Coalition.

(3) The written nomination under subparagraph (1) shall be sent by the Coalition to the Speaker within three sitting days.

(4) Upon receiving the written nomination under subparagraph (3), the Speaker shall –

- (a) direct the Clerk to Parliament to lay such written nomination in Parliament; and
- (b) thereafter, present such written nomination before Parliament and announce in Parliament the name of the member nominated by the Coalition.

(5) The Speaker shall, within three days from making the announcement under subparagraph (4), advise the Governor-General, in writing, on the name of the member announced under subparagraph (4) for appointment as Prime Minister under section 33(1).

Election of Prime
Minister to form
Government of
National Coalition

4. If no member is appointed Prime Minister under paragraphs 1, 2, and 3, the Speaker shall –

- (a) as soon as is practicable; or
- (b) within seven days from the date the office of the Prime Minister becomes vacant,

convene a meeting of members in accordance with Part 2 for the purpose of electing a member as Prime Minister to form a Government of National Coalition with absolute majority from amongst political parties, coalition of political parties or independent members willing to form a government of national coalition.

**PART 2 – PROCEDURES FOR ELECTION OF PRIME MINISTER
UNDER PARAGAPH 4 OF PART 1**

1. When convening a meeting under paragraph 4 of Part 1, the Speaker shall issue to each member a notice stating –
- Calling of election meeting
- (a) the date, place and time of the election meeting;
 - (b) the place at and the date and time on which nomination papers are to be delivered to the Speaker which time shall be not later than four days before the date appointed for the election meeting.
2. A list specifying all candidates and their respective nominators shall be submitted by or by direction of the Speaker to each member prior to the election meeting.
- List of candidates
3. (1) All members shall be eligible for candidature.
- Candidature
- (2) No member shall be a candidate unless he is nominated as such by four other members, and no member may nominate more than one candidate.
- (3) Any candidate may withdraw his candidature at any time before the conclusion of the election.
4. If, at any stage of the election, a candidate dies or in the opinion of the Speaker is seriously incapacitated, or if for any other reason the election in the opinion of the Speaker cannot or is unlikely to be successfully completed in accordance with paragraph 7, the Speaker may either –
- Election may be countermanded or suspended
- (a) countermand the election in which case the electoral procedure shall be commenced *de novo*; or
 - (b) suspend the election proceedings until some later time or day.
5. (1) The election shall be by secret ballot.
- Method of voting
- (2) Each member shall have only one vote at the first and at each subsequent ballot, if any, held in accordance with paragraph 7.

Conduct of meeting

6. (1) The election meeting shall be presided over and the election conducted by the Speaker.

(2) The Speaker may for the purpose of counting votes and for any other purpose relating to the conduct of the election enlist the assistance of such number of public officers as he shall consider necessary.

(3) No person other than the Speaker, a member, or a public officer whose assistance is enlisted under subparagraph (2) shall be present at an election meeting.

Voting procedure

7. (1) If any candidate should at any ballot receive an absolute majority of votes his name shall be submitted to the Governor-General under paragraph 8.

(2) If no candidate should receive an absolute majority of votes at the first ballot a further ballot shall be held wherein –

(a) the candidate who received fewest votes at the first ballot shall thereby be eliminated; or

(b) if there is a tie between two or more candidates for the fewest number of votes received at the first ballot, the Speaker shall decide by lot which one of such candidates shall be eliminated.

(3) If in a second ballot no candidate should receive an absolute majority of votes, subject to subparagraph (5), further ballots shall be held until one candidate receives an absolute majority of votes.

(4) The procedure specified in subparagraphs (1) and (2) relating to the first and second ballots shall apply in relation to subsequent ballots.

(5) If, after one or more ballots, all candidates save two have been eliminated, only one further ballot shall be conducted to decide the election between these two candidates.

(6) If the ballot conducted in accordance with the preceding subparagraph results in a tie between the two candidates, one further ballot shall be conducted to decide the election between these two candidates and if there is a tie between them again, the Speaker shall countermand the election and the election procedure shall be commenced *de novo*.

(7) No ballot shall be held within a period of less than six hours after the conclusion of the preceding ballot.

8. When the count has been completed in any ballot, the Speaker shall –

Announcement of
results

- (a) forthwith announce to the meeting the number of votes received by each candidate and, if any candidate has received an absolute majority of vote, or the greater number of votes; and
- (b) in writing, advise the Governor-General on the name of the member who has received an absolute majority of vote.

9. Upon receiving the advice from the Speaker, the Governor-General shall –

Notification of
result

- (a) cause that fact and the identity of the Prime Minister to be made known to the public in such manner as to him may seem appropriate; and
- (b) declare by notice in the Gazette the name of the member elected as Prime Minister.

10. Any dispute arising out of or in connection with the calling or conduct of any election meeting or the election of the Prime Minister under this Part shall be determined by the Speaker whose determination of the matter in dispute shall be final and conclusive and shall not be questioned in any proceedings whatsoever.

Disputes

**PART 3 – PROCESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION AND DEPUTY LEADER OF
THE OPPOSITION**

Nomination Leader
of the Opposition

1. (1) The Speaker shall within seven consecutive days after
- (a) the appointment or election of the Prime Minister; or
 - (b) whenever there is a vacancy in the office of Leader of the Opposition,

invite the political party or coalition of political parties with the highest number of seats in Opposition to nominate the name of its leader or a member for appointment as Leader of the Opposition within seven consecutive days of receiving the invitation from the Speaker.

(2) Upon receiving the name of the member under subparagraph (1), the Speaker shall advise the Governor-General forthwith.

(3) This paragraph applies to the appointment of the Deputy Leader of Opposition, subject to necessary modifications.

Parties with equal
seats – Leader and
Deputy Leader

2. For the purposes of paragraph 1, if two or more political parties have equal number of seats, all the political parties shall, by a resolution of all the parties, nominate the names of two members of the political parties for appointment as the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Nomination of
Deputy Leader

3. The political party or coalition of political parties with the second highest number of seats in Opposition is entitled to nominate its leader or a member for appointment as Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Parties with equal
seats to nominate
Deputy Leader

4. For the purposes of paragraph 3, if two or more political parties have equal number of seats, such political parties shall, by a resolution of all the parties, endorse the name of member for appointment as Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

All parties may
resolve Leader and
Deputy Leader

5. All the political parties and independent members in the Opposition may resolve not to invoke paragraphs 1 to 4 and agree to

nominate two members in Opposition to be respectively appointed as Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

6. If a political party, coalition of political parties or all the political parties and members have lost confidence in the Leader of the Opposition or Deputy Leader of the Opposition –

Termination

- (a) in the case of the Leader of the Opposition or Deputy Leader of the Opposition appointed under paragraphs 1 to 4, the political party or coalition of political parties may by written petition signed by at least three-quarters of all the members, request the Governor-General to terminate under section 66 the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition or Deputy Leader of the Opposition and nominate a member for such appointment; or
 - (b) in the case of the Leader of the Opposition or Deputy Leader of the Opposition appointed under paragraph 5, all political parties and members may by written petition signed by at least three-quarters of all the members, request the Governor-General to terminate under section 66 the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition or Deputy Leader of the Opposition and nominate a member for such appointment.”
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**CONSTITUTION (POLITICAL PARTIES AMENDMENT)
BILL 2009**

OBJECTS AND REASONS

The objects of this Bill are –

- (a) to facilitate the registration, administration and development of political parties and stability of the Government, including the establishment of the Political Parties Integrity Commission under the Constitution;
- (b) to ensure that the regulation of political parties does not violate the relevant fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals under the Constitution;
- (c) to alter the rule on the election of Prime Minister to appointment by the Governor-General;
- (d) to provide for dismissal of Prime Minister when members of his political party or coalition of parties in Parliament have lost confidence in the Prime Minister;
- (e) to abolish the provision for independent group and provide for one Opposition side in Parliament;
- (f) to provide for other amendments relating to acting appointments of Ministers and assignment of responsibilities, including appointment of parliamentary secretaries.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Clause 1 provides for the short title and commencement provisions.

Clause 2 amends section 11 to ensure that freedom of political thought under freedom of conscience is not breached by a law that regulate formation and operations of political parties or conduct of their members and other persons in relation to political parties.

Clause 3 amends section 12 to cover laws that regulate formation of political parties and the conduct of political parties and other persons in relation to elections.

Clause 4 amends section 13 to cover laws that regulate formation of political parties and the conduct of political parties and other persons in relation to elections.

Clause 5 amends section 15 to cover laws that regulate formation of political parties and the conduct of political parties and other persons in relation to elections.

Clause 6 amends section 33 to allow for the appointment and election of Prime Minister, including provisions for appointment of acting Ministers when absent for 10 days or more and parliamentary secretaries.

Clause 7 amends section 34 amended as consequential to the appointment and dismissal of Prime Minister.

Clause 8 adds new section 34A to provide for the dismissal of Prime Minister when his political party or coalition of political parties have lost confidence in the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister refuses to resign when called upon to do so.

Clause 9 amends section 37 to provide for the assignments of written laws in Ministerial Assignments. It also gives the responsibility to the Prime Minister for any business that is not specifically assigned, including performing the functions of the office of a Minister who is unable to perform the function of his office for less than ten consecutive days.

Clause 10 amends section 39 to cover oath of offices for parliamentary secretaries.

Clause 11 amends section 50 to provide for vacation of seat if the member defects or voluntarily from retires his political party. A member of Parliament that is removed by his party does not vacate his membership in Parliament but will lose any right to be appointed as a Minister or other parliamentary appointments and cannot "cross-the-floor".

Clause 12 amends section 66 to remove the official independent group and provide only for an opposition party and provides for appointment of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It will also include assignment of shadow ministers to members in the Opposition.

Clauses 13, 15 and 16 amend section 69C amended as consequential to the removal of official independent group.

Clause 14 adds new section 69D to establish the Political Parties Integrity Commission and to provide a constitutional basis for making a law to further provide the functions, powers and duties of the Commission and the regulation of political parties.

Clause 17 Replaces Schedule 2 which sets out the process for appointing or electing a Prime Minister and for the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of Opposition.

Clause 18 provides for consequential amendments and transitional in relation to the current independent group and its leader to continue until the current Parliament is dissolved.

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DR. DEREK SIKUA
PRIME MINISTER



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