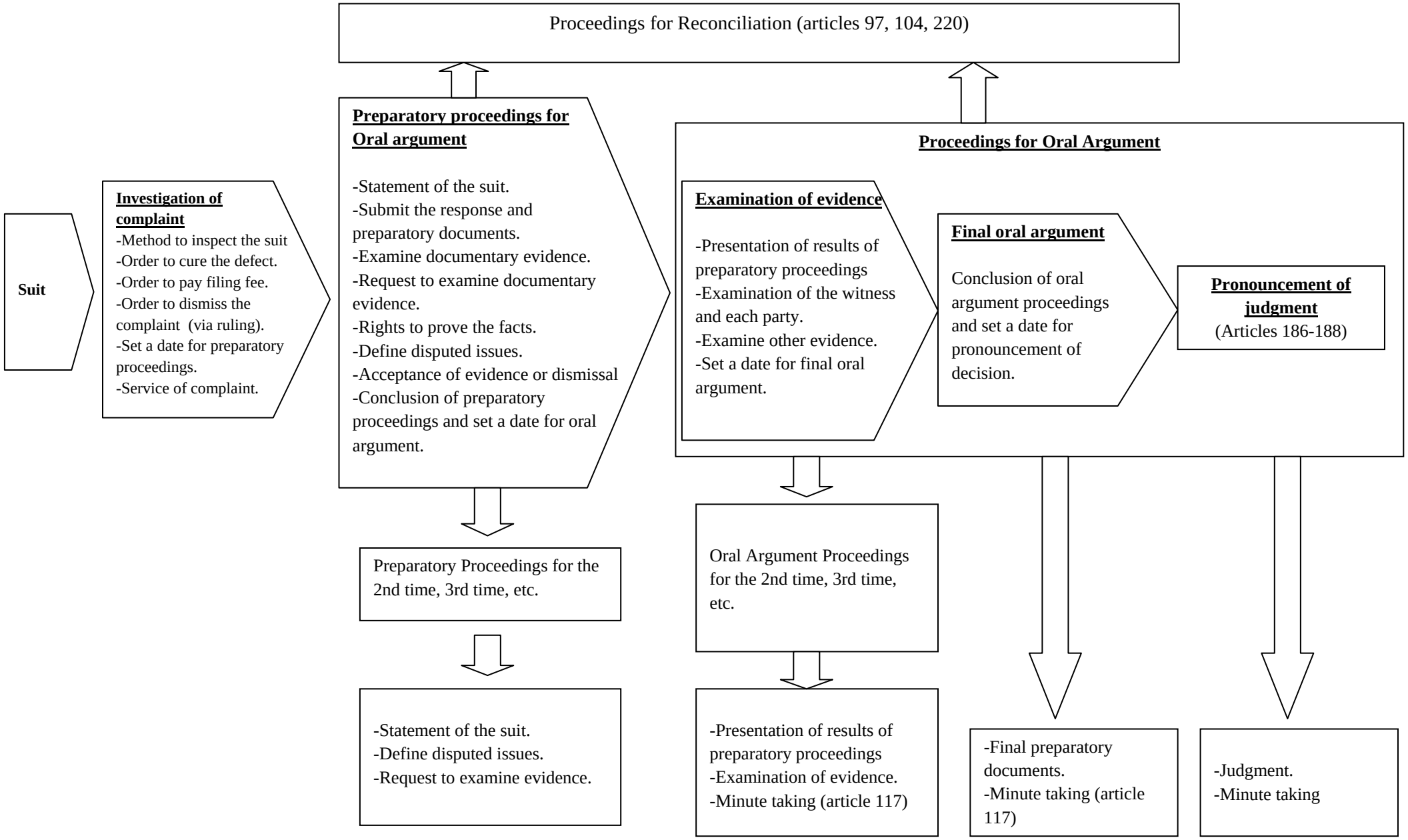PROCEEDINGS AT THE COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE