

# **CONSTITUTION OF LEBANON**

PROMULGATED MAY 23, 1926 WITH ITS AMENDMENTS

1990

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# **PART ONE**

## **FUNDAMENTAL PROVISIONS**

### **PREAMBLE**

(INTRODUCED BY THE CONSTITUTIONAL LAW OF SEPTEMBER 21, 1990)

A) Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and independent country. It is a final homeland for all its citizens. It is unified in its territory, people, and institutions within the boundaries defined in this constitution and recognized internationally.

B) Lebanon is Arab in its identity and in its affiliation. It is a founding and active member of the League of Arab States and abides by its pacts and covenants. Lebanon is also a founding and active member of the United Nations Organization and abides by its covenants and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Government shall embody these principles in all fields and areas without exception.

C) Lebanon is a parliamentary democratic republic based on respect for public liberties, especially the freedom of opinion and belief, and respect for social justice and equality of rights and duties among all citizens without discrimination.

D) The people are the source of authority and sovereignty; they shall exercise these powers through the constitutional institutions.

E) The political system is established on the principle of separation of powers, their balance and cooperation.

F) The economic system is free and ensures private initiative and the right of private property.

G) The even development among regions on the educational, social, and economic levels shall be a basic pillar of the unity of the state and the stability of the system.

H) The abolition of political confessionalism shall be a basic national goal and shall be achieved according to a staged plan.

I) Lebanese territory is one for all Lebanese. Every Lebanese shall have the right to live in any part thereof and to enjoy the rule of law wherever he resides. There shall be no segregation of the people on the basis of any type of belonging, and no fragmentation, partition, or settlement of non-Lebanese in Lebanon.

J) There shall be no constitutional legitimacy for any authority which contradicts the 'pact of mutual existence.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **THE STATE AND ITS TERRITORY**

### **Article 1**

(As amended by the constitutional law of November 9, 1943)

Lebanon is an independent, indivisible, and sovereign state. Its frontiers are those which now bound it:

*On the North:* From the mouth of Nahr Al-Kabir along a line following the course of this river to its point of junction with Wadi Khalid opposite Jisr Al-Qamar.

*On the East:* The summit line separating the Wadi Khalid and Nahr Al-Asi, passing by the villages of Mu'aysarah, Harbanah, Hayt, Ibish, Faysan to the height of the two villages of Brifa and Matraba. This line follows the northern boundary of the Ba`albak District at the northeastern and south eastern directions, thence the eastern boundaries of the districts of Ba`albak, Biqa', Hasbayya, and Rashayya.

*On the South:* The present southern boundaries of the districts of Sûr (Tyre) and Marji`yun.

*On the West:* The Mediterranean.

### **Article 2**

No part of the Lebanese territory may be alienated or ceded.

### **Article 3**

The boundaries of the administrative areas may not be modified except by law.

### **Article 4**

Greater Lebanon is a Republic the capital of which is Beirut.

### **Article 5**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of December 7, 1943)

The Lebanese flag shall be composed of three horizontal stripes, a white stripe between two red ones. The width of the white stripe shall be equal to that of both red stripes. In the center of and occupying one third of the white stripe is a green Cedar tree with its top touching the upper red stripe and its base touching the lower red stripe.

## **CHAPTER TWO THE LEBANESE: THEIR RIGHTS AND DUTIES**

### **Article 6**

Lebanese nationality and the manner in which it is acquired, retained, and lost shall be determined in accordance with the law.

### **Article 7**

All Lebanese shall be equal before the law. They shall equally enjoy civil and political rights and shall equally be bound by public obligations and duties without any distinction.

### **Article 8**

Individual liberty is guaranteed and protected by law. No one may be arrested, imprisoned, or kept in custody except according to the provisions of the law. No offense may be established or penalty imposed except by law.

### **Article 9**

There shall be absolute freedom of conscience. The state in rendering homage to the God Almighty shall respect all religions and creeds and shall guarantee, under its protection the free exercise of all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. It shall also guarantee that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, shall be respected.

### **Article 10**

Education shall be free insofar as it is not contrary to public order and morals and does not affect the dignity of any of the religions or sects. There shall be no violation of the right of religious communities to have their own schools provided they follow the general rules issued by the state regulating public instruction.

### **Article 11**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of November 9, 1943)

Arabic is the official national language. A law shall determine the cases in which the French language can be used.

### **Article 12**

Every Lebanese shall be the right to hold public office, no preference shall be made except on the basis of merit and competence, according to the conditions established by law. A special statute shall guarantee the rights of civil service in the departments to which they belong.

### **Article 13**

The freedom to express one's opinion orally or in writing, the freedom of the press, the freedom of assembly, and the freedom of association shall be guaranteed within the limits established by law.

### **Article 14**

The place of residence is inviolable. No one may enter it except in the circumstances and manners prescribed by law.

### **Article 15**

Rights of ownership shall be protected by law. No one's property may be expropriated except for reasons of public utility, in the cases established by law and after fair compensation has been paid beforehand.

## **PART TWO POWERS**

### **CHAPTER ONE GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 16**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The legislative power shall be vested in a single body, the Chamber of Deputies.

#### **Article 17**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

Executive power shall be entrusted to the Council of Ministers and the council shall exercise it in accordance with conditions started in this constitution.

#### **Article 18**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
and the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

The Chamber of Deputies and the Council of Ministers have the right to propose laws. No law shall be promulgated until it has been adopted by the Chamber.

#### **Article 19**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
and the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

A Constitutional Council shall be established to supervise the constitutionality of laws and to arbitrate conflicts that arise from parliamentary and presidential elections. The President of the republic, the speaker of Parliament, the Prime Minister, along with any ten

Members of Parliament, have the right to refer to this Council matters that relate to the constitutionality of laws. The officially recognized heads of religious communities have the right to refer to this Council laws relating to personal status, the freedom of belief and religious practice, and the freedom of religious education.

The rules governing the organization, operation, composition of the Council and referral thereto shall be decided by a special law.

#### **Article 20**

(Abrogated by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And introduced by the Constitutional Law of September 21 1990)

The judicial power shall be exercised by courts of various degrees and jurisdictions. It shall function within the limits of an order established by the law and offering accordingly the necessary guarantees to judges and litigants.

The law shall determine the conditions and limits of the judicial guarantees. The judges shall be independent in the exercise of their functions. The decisions and judgments of all courts shall be rendered and executed in the name of the Lebanese People.

#### **Article 21**

Every Lebanese citizen who has completed his twenty-first year is an elector provided he fulfills the conditions stated by the electoral law.

## **CHAPTER TOW LEGISLATIVE POWER**

#### **Article 22**

With the election of the first Chamber of Deputies on a national, non-confessional basis, a Senate shall be established in which all the religious communities shall be represented. Its authority shall be limited to major national issues.

#### **Article 23**

(Abrogated by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

#### **Article 24**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And by order 129 of march 18, 1943,  
And by the constitutional law of January 21, 1947,  
And by the constitutional law September 21,1990)

The Chamber of Deputies shall be composed of elected members; their number and the method of their election shall be determined by the electoral laws in effect. Until such time as the Chamber enacts new electoral laws on a non-confessional basis, the distribution of seats shall be according to the following principles:

- a. Equal representation between Christians and Muslims.
- b. Proportional representation among the confessional groups within each of the two religious communities.
- c. Proportional representation among geographic regions.

Exceptionally, and for one time only, the seats that are currently vacant, as well as the new seats that have been established by law, shall be filled by appointment, all at once, and by a two thirds majority of the Government of National Unity. This is to establish equality between Christians and Muslims as stipulated in the Document of National Accord. The electoral laws shall specify the details regarding the implementation of this clause.

#### **Article 25**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

Should the Chamber of Deputies be dissolved, the Decision of dissolution must provide for the holding of new elections to be held in accordance with Article 24 and within a period not exceeding three months.

### **CHAPTER THREE: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 26**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 10, 1927)

The Government and the Chamber of Deputies shall be located in Beirut.

#### **Article 27**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And constitutional law of January 21, 1947)

A member of the Chamber shall represent the whole nation. No restriction or condition may be imposed upon his mandate by his electors.

#### **Article 28**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the constitutional law of May 8, 1929)

A Deputy may also occupy a ministerial position. Ministers, all or in part, may be selected from among the members of the Chamber of Deputies or from persons outside the Chamber.

#### **Article 29**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

Cases in which persons are disqualified from becoming Deputies shall be determined by law.

### **Article 30**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And b the order 129 of march 18, 1943,  
And by the constitutional law of January 21, 1947,  
And by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990 )

The Deputies alone have competence to judge the validity of their mandate. No Deputy's mandate may be invalidated except by a majority of two thirds of the votes of the entire membership. This clause is automatically canceled as soon as the Constitutional Council is established and as soon as the laws relating to it are implemented.

### **Article 31**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

Meetings of the Chamber outside those set for legal sessions shall be unlawful and *ipso facto* null and void.

### **Article 32**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The Chamber shall meet each year in two ordinary sessions. The first session shall open on the first Tuesday following March 15 and shall continue its meetings until the end of May. The second session shall begin on the first Tuesday following October 15; its meetings shall be reserved to the discussion of, and voting on the budget before any other work. This session lasts until the end of the year.

### **Article 33**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
An by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

The ordinary sessions shall begin and end automatically on the dates fixed in Article 32. The President of the Republic in agreement with the Prime Minister may summon the Chamber to extraordinary sessions by a decree that specifies the dates of the opening and closing of the extraordinary sessions as well as the agenda. The President of the Republic shall be required to convene the Chamber if an absolute majority of the total membership so requests.

### **Article 34**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The Chamber shall not be validly constituted unless the majority of the total membership is present. Decisions shall be taken by a majority vote. Should the votes be equal, the question under consideration shall be rejected.

### **Article 35**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The meetings of the Chamber shall be public. However, at the request of the Government or of five Deputies, the Chamber may meet in secret sessions. It may then decide whether to resume the discussion of the same question in public.

### **Article 36**

Votes shall be cast verbally or by the members rising and sitting, except in case of elections when the ballot shall be secret. With respect to laws in general and on questions of confidence, the vote shall always be taken by roll-call and in an audible voice.

### **Article 37**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the constitutional law of may 8,1929)

Every Deputy shall have the absolute right to raise the question of no-confidence in the government during ordinary or extraordinary sessions. Discussion of, and voting on such a proposal may not take place until at least five days after submission to the Bureau of the Chamber and its communication to the ministers concerned.

### **Article 38**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

No Bill that has been rejected by the Chamber may be re-introduced during the same session.

### **Article 39**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

No member of the Chamber may be prosecuted because of ideas and opinions expressed during the period of his mandate.

### **Article 40**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

No member of the Chamber may, during the sessions, be prosecuted or arrested for a criminal offense without the permission of the Chamber, except when caught in the act.

### **Article 41**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the order of march 18, 1943  
And by the constitutional law of January 21, 1947)

Should a seat in the Chamber become vacant, the election of a successor shall begin within two months. The mandate of the new member shall not exceed that of the old member whose place he is taking; however, should the seat in the Chamber become vacant during the last six months of its mandate, no successor may be elected.

### **Article 42**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the order of march 18,1943,  
And by the constitutional law of January 21, 1947)

General elections for the renewal of the Chamber shall take place within a sixty-day period preceding the expiration of its mandate.

#### **Article 43**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The Chamber shall draw up its own internal rules and procedures.

#### **Article 44**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927

And by the constitutional law of January 21, 1947,

And by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990 )

Each time a new Chamber is elected, the Chamber shall meet under the presidency of the oldest member, and the two youngest members shall serve as secretaries. It shall then elect separately, by a secret ballot and by an absolute majority of the votes cast, the President and the Vice President of the Chamber to hold office for the length of the Chamber's term. At the third ballot, a relative majority shall be sufficient. Should the votes be equal, the oldest candidate shall be considered elected.

Every time a new Chamber is elected, as well as in the October session or each year, the Chamber shall elect two Secretaries by secret ballot according to the majority stipulated in the first part of this article.

The Chamber may, once only, two years after the election of the President and the Vice President, and in the first session it holds, withdraw its confidence from the President or the Vice President by a Decision of two thirds of the Chamber, based on a petition signed by at least ten Deputies. The Chamber, at such point, must hold an immediate session to fill the vacant post.

#### **Article 45**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

Members of the Chamber may only vote when they are present at the meeting. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

#### **Article 46**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The Chamber shall have the exclusive right to maintain order in its meetings through its President.

#### **Article 47**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

Petitions to the Chamber may not be presented except in writing. They may not be presented verbally or at the bar of the Chamber.

#### **Article 48**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The remuneration of members of the Chamber shall be determined by law.

## **CHAPTER FOUR THE EXECUTIVE POWER**

### **ONE: THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC**

#### **Article 49**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927,  
And by the constitutional law of may 8, 1929,  
And by the constitutional law of January 21, 1947  
And by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

The President of the Republic is the head of the state and the symbol of the nation's unity. He shall safeguard the constitution and Lebanon's independence, unity, and territorial integrity. The President shall preside over the Supreme Defense Council and be the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces which fall under the authority of the Council of Ministers.

The President of the Republic shall be elected by secret ballot and by a twothirds majority of the Chamber of Deputies. After a first ballot, an absolute majority shall be sufficient. The President's term is six years. He may not be re-elected until six years after the expiration of his last mandate. No one may be elected to the Presidency of the Republic unless he fulfills the conditions of eligibility for the Chamber of Deputies.

It is also not possible to elect judges, Grade One civil servants, or their equivalents in all public institutions to the Presidency during their term or office or within two years following the date of their resignation and their effective cessation of service, or following retirement.

#### **Article 50**

Upon assuming office, the President of the Republic shall take an oath of fidelity before the Parliament, to the Nation and the constitution, in the following terms:

*"I swear by Almighty God to observe the Constitution and the laws of the Lebanese Nation and to maintain the independence of Lebanon and its territorial integrity."*

#### **Article 51**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

The President of the Republic shall promulgate the laws after they have been approved by the Chamber in accordance with the time limits specified by the constitution. He asks for the publication or these laws, and he may not modify these laws or exempt anyone from complying with their provisions.

### **Article 52**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927,  
And the constitutional law of November 9, 1943,  
And by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

The President of the Republic shall negotiate and ratify international treaties in agreement with the Prime Minister. These treaties are not considered ratified except after approve by the Council of Ministers. They shall be made known to the Chamber and Deputies whenever the national interest and security of the state permit. However, treaties involving the finances of the state, commercial treaties, and in general treaties that cannot be renounced every year shall not be considered ratified until they have been approved by the Chamber of Deputies.

### **Article 53**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927,  
And by the constitutional law o January 21, 1947,  
And by the constitutional law of september 21, 199)

1. The President of the Republic preside over the Council of Ministers when he wishes without participating in voting.
2. The President of the Republic shall designate the Prime Minister in consultation with the President of the Chamber of Deputies based on binding parliamentary consultations, the content of which he shall formally disclose to the latter.
3. He alone shall issue the Decree which designates the Prime Minister.
4. He shall issue, in agreement with the Prime Minister, the decree appointing the Cabinet and the decrees accepting the resignation of Ministers or their dismissal.
5. He alone shall issue, the decrees accepting the resignation of the Cabinet or considering it resigned.
6. He shall forward to the Chamber of Deputies Bills that are delivered to him by the Council of Ministers.
7. He shall accredit ambassadors and accept the credentials of ambassadors.
8. He shall preside over official functions and grant official decorations by Decree.
9. He shall grant particular pardons by Decree, but a general amnesty cannot be granted except by a law.
10. He shall address, when necessary, messages to the Chamber of Deputies.
11. He may introduce, from outside the agenda, any urgent matter to the council of Ministers.
12. He may, in agreement with the Prime Minister, call the Council of Ministers to an extraordinary session whenever he deems this it necessary.

### **Article 54**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of september 21, 1990)

The decisions of the President of the Republic must be countersigned by the Prime Minister and the Minister or Ministers concerned with the exception of the Decree designating a new Prime Minister and the Decree accepting the resignation of the Cabinet or considering it resigned. Decrees issuing laws must be countersigned by the Prime Minister.

### **Article 55**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And by the constitutional law of may 8 1929  
And by the constitutional law of September 21,1990)

The President of the Republic may, in accordance with the conditions stipulated in Articles 65 and 77 of this constitution, ask the Council of Ministers to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies before the expiration of its mandate. If the Council, based on this request, decides to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, the President shall issues the Decree dissolving it, and in this case, the electoral bodies shall meet as provided for in Article 25, and the new Chamber shall be called to convene within fifteen days after the proclamation of the election.

The Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies shall continue to function until the election or a new Chamber.

If elections are not held within the time limit specified in Article 25 of the constitution, the Decree dissolving the Chamber shall be considered null and void, and the Chamber of Deputies shall continue to exercise its powers according to the stipulations of the constitution.

### **Article 56**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the constitutional law of September 21,1990)

The President of the Republic shall issue the laws which have been definitely adopted and demand their publication. He must issue laws which were declared urgent by a Decision of the Chamber within five days and demand their publication.

He shall issue decrees and demand their publication; he has the right to ask the Council of Ministers to reconsider any decision taken by the Chamber within fifteen days as of its registration with the Presidency. If the Council of Ministers insists on the adopted decision or if the time limit expires without the decree being issued or returned, the decision or decree shall be considered automatically operative and must be published.

### **Article 57**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

The President of the Republic, after informing the Council of Ministers, shall have the right to request the reconsideration of a law once during the period prescribed for its issue. This request may not be refused. When the President exercises this right, he shall not be required to issue the law until it has been discussed and approved by an absolute majority of all the members legally composing the Chamber. If the time limit expires without the law being issued or returned, the law shall be considered automatically operative and must be promulgated.

### **Article 58**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

By means of a decree issued after the approval of the Council of Ministers, the President of the Republic may put into effect any bill which has been previously declared to be urgent by the government with the approval of the Council of Minister in the decree of its transmission to the Chamber, and on which the Chamber has not given a decision within forty days following its communication to the Chamber, and including it in the agenda of a general meeting and reading it therein.

### **Article 59**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The President of the Republic may adjourn the Chamber for a period not exceeding one month. He may not do so twice during the same session.

### **Article 60**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

While performing his functions, the President of the Republic shall not be held responsible except when he violates the constitution or in the case of high treason.

However, responsibility with respect to ordinary crimes shall be subject to the ordinary laws. For such crimes, as well as for violation of the constitution and for high treason, he may not be impeached except by a two thirds majority of the total members of the Chamber of Deputies. He shall be tried by the Supreme Council provided for in Article 80. The functions of Public Prosecutor of the Supreme Council shall be performed by a judge appointed by the Supreme Court formed all its chambers.

### **Article 61**

Should the President of the Republic be impeached, he shall be suspended from his functions. The presidency shall remain vacant until the Supreme Council has settled the matter.

### **Article 62**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

Should there be a vacancy in the Presidency for any reason whatsoever, the Council of Ministers shall exercise the authorities of the President by delegation.

### **Article 63**

The remuneration of the President of the Republic shall be determined by a law. It may not be increased or reduced during his term of office.

## **TWO: THE PRIME MINISTER**

### **Article 64**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

The Prime Minister is the Head of Government and its representative. He speaks in its name and shall be considered responsible for executing the general policy that is set by the Council of Ministers. He shall exercise the following powers:

1. He shall head the Council of Ministers and shall be *ex officio* Deputy Head of the Supreme Defense Council.

2. He shall conduct the parliamentary consultations for forming the government. He shall sign, with the President of the Republic, the Decree of its formation. The government must present its general statement of policy to the Chamber to gain its confidence within thirty days of the date of issuance of the Decree in which the government was formed. The government shall not exercise its powers before it gains confidence nor after it has resigned or is considered resigned, except in the narrow sense of a care-taker government.

3. He shall present the Government's general policy before the Chamber of Deputies.

4. He shall sign, with the President of the Republic, all decrees, except the Decree which designates him the Prime Minister, and the Decree accepting the government's resignation or considering it as having resigned.

5. He shall sign the Decree calling for an extraordinary parliamentary session, and decrees issuing laws, and decrees requesting the reconsideration of laws.

6. He shall call the Council of Ministers into session and sets its agenda, and he shall inform the President beforehand of the subjects included on the agenda and of the urgent subjects that will be discussed.

7. He shall follow up the activities of administrations and public institutions, and shall coordinate among the Ministers and give general guidance to ensure the proper progress of affairs.

8. He shall hold working meetings with the concerned authorities in the Government in the presence of the concerned Minister.

## **THREE: THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

### **Article 65**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

The Executive authority shall be vested in the Council of Ministers. It shall be the authority to which the armed forces are subject. Among the authorities that it shall exercise are the following:

1. It shall set the general policy of the Government in all fields, draw up Bills and organizational Decrees and take the decisions necessary for implementing them.

2. It shall watch over the execution of laws and regulations and supervise the activities of all the Government's branches including the civil, military, and security administrations and institutions.

3. It shall appoint state employees, dismiss them and accept their resignations according to the law.

4. It shall dissolve the Chamber of Deputies upon the request of the President of the Republic if the Chamber of Deputies, for no compelling reasons, fails to meet during one of

its regular sessions and fails to meet throughout two successive extraordinary sessions, each longer than one month, or if the Chamber returns the entire budget plan with the aim of paralyzing the Government. This right cannot be exercised a second time if it is for the same reasons which led to the dissolution of the Chamber the first time.

5. The Council of Ministers shall meet periodically in a special seat, and the President of the republic shall chair its meetings when he attends. The legal quorum for a Council meeting shall be a two-thirds majority of its members. It shall make its decisions by consensus. If that is not possible, it makes its decisions by vote of the majority of attending members. Basic issues shall require the approval of two thirds of the members of the government named in the Decree of its formation. The following issues are considered basic:

The amendment of the constitution, the declaration of a state of emergency and its termination, war and peace, general mobilization, international, long-term comprehensive development plans, the appointment of employees of grade one and its equivalent, the reconsideration of the administrative divisions, the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, electoral laws, nationality laws, personal status laws, and the dismissal of Ministers.

#### **Article 66**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

Only Lebanese who satisfy the conditions for becoming deputies may assume ministerial posts.

The Ministers shall administer the Government's services and shall be entrusted with applying the laws and regulations, each one pertaining to matters relating to his department.

Ministers shall be collectively responsible before the Chamber for the general policy of the Government and individually responsible for their personal actions.

#### **Article 67**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

Ministers may attend the Chamber if they so desire, and they shall have the right to be heard whenever they request to speak. They may be assisted by whomever they select from among the officials of their Departments.

#### **Article 68**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

When the Chamber, in accordance with Article 37, passes a vote of no confidence in a Minister, that Minister shall be required to resign.

#### **Article 69**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927,  
Abrogated by the constitutional law of may 8, 1929,  
And issued by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

1 The Government shall be considered resigned in the following circumstances:

- a. if the Prime Minister resigns;
- b. if it loses more than a third of the members specified in the Decree of its formation;
- c. if the Prime Minister dies;

- d. at the beginning of the term of the President of the Republic;
- e. at the beginning of the term of the Chamber of Deputies;
- f. when it loses the confidence of the Chamber of Deputies based on the Chamber's initiative or based on the Council's initiative to seek confidence.

2 A Ministers shall be dismissed by a Decree signed by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister after the approval of two-thirds of the Council members.

3 When the Council resigns or is considered resigned, the Chamber of Deputies shall automatically be considered convened in extraordinary session until a new Council has been formed and has gained the Chamber's confidence.

#### **Article 70**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

The Chamber of Deputies has the right to impeach the Prime Minister and Ministers for high treason or for breach of their duties. The decision to impeach may not be taken except by a two-thirds majority of the total members of the Chamber. A special law shall determine the conditions of the civil liability of the Prime Minister and individual Ministers.

#### **Article 71**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of september 21, 1990)

The impeached Prime Minister or Minister shall be tried by the Supreme Council.

#### **Article 72**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of September 21, 1990)

The Prime Minister or Minister shall leave office as soon as the Decision of impeachment concerning him is issued. If he resigns, his resignation shall not prevent judicial proceedings from being instituted or continued against him.

## **PART THREE**

### **A: ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC**

#### **Article 73**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927,  
And the constitutional law of may 22,1948,  
And the constitutional law of april 24,1976)

One month at least and two months at most before the expiration of the term of office of the President of the Republic, the Chamber shall be convened by its President to elect the new President of the Republic. However, should it not be convened for this purpose, the Chamber shall meet automatically on the tenth day preceding the expiration of the President's term of office.

#### **Article 74**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

Should the Presidency become vacant through the death or resignation of the President or for any other cause, the Chamber shall meet immediately and by virtue of the law to elect a successor. If either Chamber happens to be dissolved at the time the vacancy occurs, the electoral bodies shall be convened without delay and, as soon as the elections have taken place, the Chamber meets by virtue of the law.

#### **Article 75**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The Chamber meeting to elect the President of the Republic shall be considered an electoral body and not a legislative assembly. It must proceed immediately, without discussion of any other act, to elect the Head of the State.

### **B: AMENDMENT THE CONSTITUTION**

#### **Article 76**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The constitution may be revised upon the suggestion of the President of the Republic. In such a case the Government submits a bill to the Chamber of Deputies.

#### **Article 77**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927,  
And the oonstitutional law of September 21,1990)

The constitution may also be revised upon the request of the Chamber of Deputies. In this such the following procedures shall be observed:

During an ordinary session and upon the proposal of at least ten of its members, the Chamber of Deputies may propose, by a two-thirds majority of the total members lawfully composing the Chamber, the revision of the constitution.

However, the articles and the issues referred to in the proposal must be clearly defined and stated. The President of the Chamber shall then transmit the recommendation to the Government requesting it to prepare a bill relating thereto. If the Government approves the proposal of the Chamber by a majority of two thirds, it must prepare the draft amendment and submit it to the Chamber within four months; if it does not approve, it shall return the Decision to the Chamber for reconsideration. If the Chamber insists upon the proposal by a three-fourths majority of the total members lawfully composing the Chamber, the President of the Republic has then either to comply with the Chamber's recommendation wish ask the Council of Ministers to dissolve the Chamber and to hold new elections within three months. If the new Chamber insists on the necessity of amendment, the Government must acquiese and submit the draft amendment within four months.

## **C: PROCEDURE OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES**

### **Article 78**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

When a bill dealing with a constitutional amendment is submitted to the Chamber, it must confine itself to its discussion before any other work until a final vote is taken. It may discuss and vote only on the articles and the questions clearly enumerated and defined in the bill submitted to it.

### **Article 79**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927,  
And the amended by the constitutional law o September 21,1990)

(1) When a bill law dealing with a constitutional amendment is submitted to the Chamber, it cannot discuss it or vote upon it except when a majority of two thirds of the members lawfully composing the Chamber are present. Voting shall like wise be by the same majority.

(2) The President of the Republic shall be required to promulgate the law of the constitutional amendment under the same conditions and in the same form as ordinary laws. He shall have the right within the period established for the promulgation, to ask the Chamber to reconsider the bill, in which case the vote is by a majority of two thirds majority.

## **PART FOUR MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

### **A: THE SUPREME COUNCIL**

#### **Article 80**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And as amended by the constitutional law of September 21,1990 )

The Supreme Council, whose function is to try Presidents and Ministers shall, consist of seven deputies elected by the Chamber of Deputies and of eight of the highest Lebanese judges, according to their rank in the judicial hierarchy, or, in case of equal ranks, in the order of seniority. They shall meet under the presidency of the judge of the highest rank. The Decisions of condemnation by the Supreme Council shall be rendered by a majority of ten votes. A special law shall be issued to determine the procedure to be followed by this Council.

### **B: FINANCES**

#### **Article 81**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

Public taxes be imposed and no taxes shall be established or collected in the Lebanese Republic except by a comprehensive law which shall apply to the entire Lebanese territory without exception.

## **Article 82**

No tax may be modified or abolished except by virtue of law.

## **Article 83**

Each year at the beginning of the October session, the Government shall submit to the Chamber of Deputies the general budget estimates of state expenditures and revenues for the following year. The budget shall voted upon article by article.

## **Article 84**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

During the discussion of the budget and draft laws involving the opening of supplementary or extraordinary credits, the Chamber may not increase the credits proposed in the budget or in the draft laws mentioned above either by way of amendment Or by means of a proposal. The Chamber may, however, adopt, by way of proposal, laws involving further expenditures after the close of this discussion.

## **Article 85**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And by the constitutional law of January 21,1947,  
And by the constitutional law of September 21,1990)

No extraordinary credit may be opened except by a special law. however, should unforeseen circumstances render urgent expenditures necessary, the President of the Republic may issue a Decree, based on a Decision of the Council of Ministers, to open extraordinary or supplementary credits or transfer appropriations in the budget as long as these credits do not exceed a maximum limit specified in the budget law. These measures shall be submitted to the Chamber for approval at the first ensuing session.

## **Article 86**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927  
And as amended by the constitutional law of September 21,1990)

If the Chamber of Deputies has not given a final decision on the budget estimates before the expiration of the session devoted to the examination of the budget, the President of the Republic, in coordination with the Prime Minister shall, immediately convenes the Chamber for an extraordinary session which shall last until the end of January in order to continue the discussion of the budget; if at the end of this extraordinary session, the budget estimates have not been finally settled, the Council of Ministers may than make a decision on the basis of which a decree is issued by the President giving effect to the above estimates in the form in which they were submitted to the Chamber. However, the Council of Ministers may not exercise this right unless the budget estimates were submitted to the Chamber at least fifteen days before the commencement of its session. During the said extraordinary session, taxes, charges, duties, imposts, and other kinds of revenues shall continue to be collected as before. The budget of the previous year shall be adopted as a basis. To this must be added the permanent supplementary credits and from it must deducted the permanent credits which have been dropped, and the Government shall fix the expenditures for the month of January on the basis of the 'provisional twelfth.'of preceding year.

#### **Article 87**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of October 17, 1927)

The final financial accounts of the administration for each year must be submitted to the Chamber for approval before the promulgation of the budget of the second year which follows that year. A special law shall be issued for the setting up of an Audit office.

#### **Article 88**

No public loan or undertaking involving an expenditure from the treasury funds may be contracted except by virtue of a law.

#### **Article 89**

No contract or concession for the exploitation of the natural resources of the country, or a public utility service, and no monopoly may be granted except by virtue of a law and for a limited period.

### **PART FIVE PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE MANDATORY POWER AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS**

#### **Article 90**

(abrogated by the Constitutional Law of November 9, 1943)

#### **Article 91**

(abrogated by the Constitutional Law of November 9, 1943)

#### **Article 92**

(abrogated by the constitutional law of November 9, 1943)

#### **Article 93**

(abrogated by the constitutional law of January 21, 1947)

#### **Article 94**

(abrogated by the constitutional law of November 9, 1943)

### **PART SIX FINAL AND TEMPORARY PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 95**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of November 9, 1943

And by the constitutional law of September 21, 1990)

The Chamber of Deputies that is elected on the basis of equality between Muslims and Christians shall take the appropriate measures to bring about the abolition of political confessionalism according to a transitional plan. A National Committee shall be formed, headed by the President of the Republic, it include, in addition to the President of the

Chamber of Deputies and the Prime Minister, leading political, intellectual, and social figures.

The tasks of this Committee shall be to study and propose the means to ensure the abolition of confessionalism, propose them to the Chamber of Deputies and to the Ministers council of ministers, and to follow up the execution of the transitional plan.

During the transitional phase:

a. The sectarian groups shall be represented in a just and equitable manner in the formation of the Cabinet.

b. The principle of confessional representation in public service jobs, in the judiciary, in the military and security institutions, and in public and mixed agencies shall be cancelled in accordance with the requirements of national reconciliation; they shall be replaced by the principle of expertise and competence. However, Grade One posts and their equivalents shall be excepted from this rule, and the posts shall be distributed equally between Christians and Muslims without reserving any particular job for any setarian group but rather applying the principles of expertise and competence.

**Article 96**

(Abrogated by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

**Article 97**

(Abrogated by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

**Article 98**

(Abrogated by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

**Article 99**

(Abrogated by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

**Article 100**

(Abrogated by the Constitutional Law of January 21, 1947)

**Article 101**

Beginning September 1, 1929, the state of 'Greater Lebanon' shall be known as 'The Lebanese Republic' without any other change or modification.

**Article 102**

(As amended by the Constitutional Law of November 9, 1943)

All legislative provisions contrary to the present constitution shall be abrogated.