

REPUBLIC OF LEBANON

LAW NO. 25

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS LAW

CHAPTER ONE

The Electoral System, Number of Deputies and Electoral Districts

Article 1

The parliament shall be made up of 128 deputies elected by a majority system for a mandate of four years. The voting shall be made universal, by secret ballots and in one round.

Article 2

A- The number of parliamentary seats and their distribution among confessions shall be determined according to electoral districts and pursuant to the table annexed to this law. The nomination of candidates shall also follow the electoral districts. The annex is an integral part of the present law.

B- All voters of a certain electoral district, and from different confessions, shall vote for the candidates of their district.

CHAPTER TWO

Voters and Candidates

Article 3

Every Lebanese individual who has attained the legal age stipulated in the constitution, whether or not resident on the Lebanese territory, shall be entitled to vote.

Article 4

The following shall be prevented from voting:

- 1- Persons deprived by legal sentence of their civil rights
- 2- Persons convicted to be permanently disqualified from public service at any grades or positions
- 3- Persons disqualified from their grades or public service temporarily, until the end of the disqualification period
- 4- Persons convicted of a felony
- 5- Persons convicted of one of the following major offences: burglary, fraud, issuing of uncovered checks, breach of trust, misappropriation of funds, bribery, perjury, rape, intimidation, falsification, forgery, false testimony, immoral crimes as stated in the seventh chapter of the penal code, and crimes related to the planting, production and/or trade in illicit drugs
- 6- Persons interdicted by court order until the end of the interdiction period

7- Persons declared fraudulently bankrupt or those sentenced to sanctions stated in Articles 689 to 698 of the Penal Code

8- Persons convicted and sentenced to sanctions stated in Articles 329 to 334 of the penal code
The aforementioned persons may not vote until after rehabilitation.

Article 5

Naturalized Lebanese individuals may not vote before ten years after the naturalization decree is issued.

This provision does not involve the foreign woman who becomes Lebanese by marrying a Lebanese citizen. (Clause added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25)

Article 6

Non retired military personnel of various ranks or those considered as such, whether in the army, Internal Security Forces, Public Security, State Security, or Customs Police may not vote.

Article 7

Every Lebanese who has completed the age of twenty-five years may run for parliamentary elections.

Article 8

The only persons allowed to run for parliamentary elections are Lebanese citizens registered in the voters' rolls, enjoying their civil and political rights and literate. Naturalized persons may not run for elections until ten years after their naturalization.

Article 9

Military personnel of various ranks, whether in the army, State Security, Internal Security Forces, Public Security or Customs Police and those considered as such may not run for parliamentary elections; however, they may run as candidates if they are sent into retirement or if their resignation has been accepted six months before the elections' date.

Article 10

1- The below mentioned persons may not run as candidates while still exercising their jobs and within the periods that follow their end of service or their resignation acceptance date:

a- Judges of all degrees and ranks, whether in the legal, administrative, financial, religious, confessional or spiritual judiciary, unless they submit their resignation and effectively stop the practice of their function pursuant to the legal judiciary law provisions.

b- Public employees of the first and second ranks, unless they submit their resignation and effectively stop the practice of their functions six months at least before the expiry of the parliament's mandate;

c- Full-time board chairpersons and members of public institutions and bodies, mixed economy companies (semi-public), public capital companies, as well as public utility institutions and their Directors General, unless they present their resignation and effectively stop the practice of their functions six months at least before the expiry of the parliament's mandate.

d- Presidents or vice-presidents of municipal councils in *Muhafazats* and district centers and municipal unions, unless they submit their resignation and effectively stop the practice of their functions two years at least before the expiry of the parliament's mandate; and six months at least before that date for the rest of Municipal Councils' presidents and vice-presidents.

2- Regardless of any other reference, a resignation based on the above mentioned reasons shall be deemed accepted as soon as it is submitted and the work effectively stopped.

3- The faculty, full timers and contractual members of the Lebanese University shall be exempted from the provisions of the present article.

CHAPTER THREE **Supervising the Elections Campaign**

Article 11

A commission called "The Supervisory Commission on the Electoral Campaign" (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission") shall be created. It shall be entrusted with the practice of functions stated in the present law and is linked to the Minister of Interior and Municipalities (hereafter called the "Minister"). The Minister supervises its work, decides its premises and attends its meetings whenever he wishes to. He shall chair the said meetings without participating in the voting.

Article 12

The Commission shall be made up of ten members as follows:

- A presiding judge of the Court of Cassation, discharged with honorable title and selected from a list of three names nominated by the Higher Judicial Council (as President)
- A presiding judge from the State Council, discharged with honorable title and selected from a list of three names nominated by the State Council bureau (as Vice-President)
- A presiding judge from the National Audit Office, discharged with honorable title and selected from a list of three names nominated by the National Audit Office (as member)
- A former President of the Bar Association (Barrister), selected from a list of three former Barristers nominated by the board of Beirut Bar Association (as member)
- A former President of the Bar Association (Barrister), selected from a list of three former Barristers nominated by the board of Tripoli Bar Association (as member)
- Two media and advertising experts selected from 6 names nominated by the National Media Council (as two members)
- Three senior experts in election-related disciplines (including elections management, funding and promotion).

The Commission members shall be appointed by virtue of a decree issued by the Council of Ministers upon the suggestion of the Minister, within a maximum period of two months as of the present law issue date.

The President of the Commission may delegate some of his powers to one or more members.

Article 13

The term of office of the Commission members shall start as soon as their appointment decree is issued upon the decision of the Council of Ministers, and shall end six months after the universal parliamentary elections.

If any member's position becomes vacant for whatever reason, the Commission shall announce the vacancy. The President shall notify the Minister, within one week, in order to take the appropriate measures and appoint a substitute member.

The substitute member shall be appointed within a maximum of 15 days as of notification, in the same way adopted when the original member was appointed, and for the remaining period of the original member's term of office.

Article 14

The Commission shall, within 15 days after its formation, draw up its bylaws that should comprise rules and procedures governing its work for the implementation of the present law.

The Minister shall issue a decision approving the said bylaws within one week after receiving them.

Article 15

No Commission member shall, at the same time, hold the office of Prime Minister or Minister, Head or Member of Parliament, Board President or Member in any public institution, or Head of any municipal council. In addition, a Commission member shall not be entitled to run for parliamentary, municipal or mayoral elections or fill any public, political or administrative position before the lapse of one whole year as of the expiry of his term of office.

Article 16

The Commission president and members may not, during their term of office, carry out any task or activity that is incompatible with the functions and impartiality of the Commission.

During their work within the Commission, the president and members of the commission shall abstain from giving any lectures or participating in any seminar related to elections. They shall also abstain from issuing any declaration of any type.

The Commission shall, pursuant to the provisions of its bylaws, decide to terminate the term of office of a member in case he breaches the aforementioned obligations, provided that the commission's decision is approved by the Minister.

Article 17

None of the members of the Commission shall be subject during their term of office and without the Commission's authorization, to any criminal action, criminal measure or arrest for acts related to their work within the Commission. No decision of provisional detention shall be taken against any of the Commission members for acts not related to their work within the Commission, except for flagrant offences (*flagrante delicto*).

The Minister of Justice shall submit a request for commencing proceedings or appropriate legal measures, pursuant to a note from the Court of Cassation Attorney General including the nature,

place and time of the act, and relevant summary of evidence supporting such proceedings and penal measures.

The request for commencing procedures shall be submitted to the Minister.

The Commission shall be convened within one week to consider the request and take the relevant decision after listening to the concerned Commission Member who shall not take part in the vote. The Commission renders its decision based on an absolute majority system of voting within a period one week and sends it to the Minister for approval.

Article 18

The Commission President and Members shall receive a monthly flat remuneration determined by a decree from the Council of Ministers upon the Minister's suggestion.

Article 19

The Commission shall be in charge of the following tasks and prerogatives:

- 1- Receive the requests of private printed and audio visual media wishing to participate in the paid electoral advertising pursuant to the provisions of this law.
- 2- Supervise the compliance of rolls, candidates, and mass media of any form whatsoever, with the rules and regulations governing electoral competition pursuant to the provisions of this law.
- 3- Supervise electoral spending pursuant to the provisions of this law.
- 4- Receive and audit the financial statements of electoral campaigns of lists and candidates within one month after the polling day.
- 5- Draw up a report on the Commission's activities and forward it to the Minister who shall submit it to the President of the Republic, Prime Minister and Speaker of the Parliament. The report shall be published in the official gazette.

Article 20

Competent civil society organizations may accompany and observe the elections provided that they fulfill the following conditions:

- The organization should be Lebanese, non-political and non-profit, having duly lodged its articles of incorporation three years, at least, before the request filing date.
- It should neither be connected to any political side or party nor have any candidate running for elections in its administrative board.
- Its statutes should specify, for the last three years at least, objectives on the promotion of democracy, human rights, elections, transparency, or training related to these issues.
- The organization's members should not be less than 100 at the request filing date pursuant to lists duly submitted to the concerned public authorities.
- Its administrative board shall abide by a Code of Ethics established by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities hereafter called "Ministry".
- The Ministry shall examine the received accreditation requests and verify the fulfillment of the conditions above. It may accept or revoke the request. In case of acceptance, the Ministry shall determine the procedures and mechanisms of accompanying and observing the elections under decisions issued by the Ministry one month at least before polling day. (Amended by

virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25- Previous text was: the Commission shall determine the procedures and mechanisms...)

The Ministry shall be in charge of studying the requests of election-related international organizations wishing to participate in accompanying the electoral process pursuant to conditions specified by the Ministry in due time.

Article 21

The Commission's decisions are taken on basis of absolute majority of members whom legally constitute it. The decisions may be challenged before the Council of State within three days of notification or publication. The Council of State shall settle the challenge within three days as of its submission.

Article 22

The Commission may issue a decision to delegate some of its powers to one or many of its members. It may also form committees to carry out specific election-related tasks.

Article 23

The Commission enjoys an administrative workforce. It may conclude contracts with experts who it deems qualified to assist it in practicing its functions. The Commission may also request to be temporarily seconded by an additional number of employees working in public departments and institutions. This process shall be executed pursuant to the decision of the competent Minister, taken upon the request of the Minister of Interior and Municipalities. The decision determines the period during which those employees shall remain in the commission.

Based on the Minister's suggestion, special allocations shall be granted to the Commission's budget.

CHAPTER FOUR

Preparatory Electoral Works and Voters' Rolls

Article 24

Registration on the voters' rolls shall be mandatory; no one shall be allowed to be registered on more than one roll.

Article 25

A voters' roll shall be permanent. However, they shall be revised periodically in accordance with the provisions of the present law.

Article 26

The General Directorate of Personal Status shall prepare, for each electoral district, automated voters' rolls including the voters' names according to the personal status records. The said rolls shall include the names of all voters registered in the electoral district from at least one year as of the date of revision of the voters' rolls, i.e. as of the 5th of December of every year.

Article 27

Voters' rolls must necessarily include: the voter's full name and mother's name, register number as per the personal status records, sex, date of birth and confession. A column shall be reserved on each roll for any occurring modifications, if any, to the records (rectification or replacement), with mentioning the relevant legal evidence thereof.

Voters who are 100 years old and above must automatically be crossed off the voter rolls. However, this crossing-off shall not prevent their "re-registration" at the request of the concerned person, submitted to the Ministry within one month of publication of the voters' rolls.

Article 28

The Directorate-General of Personal Status shall annually insert the additions and crossings-off to the voters' rolls.

Article 29

Heads of regional registration offices and departments shall annually submit to the Directorate-General of Personal Status, between December 5 and January 5, primary rolls including (1) the names of registered persons legally eligible for registration in the voters' rolls, (2) the names of those who are excepted to become eligible by the closing date of voters' rolls, (3) the names of persons omitted or deceased or crossed off the personal status records for any reason whatsoever.

Article 30

The Office of the Police Record in each *Muhafazat* shall annually submit to the Directorate General of Personal Status, between December 5 and January 5, the names of persons convicted of crimes that deprive them of exercising their right to vote according to the provisions of the present law.

Article 31

Judicial Courts shall annually submit to the Directorate General of Personal Status, between December 5 and January 5, a list of final verdicts declaring fraudulent bankruptcy or interdiction.

Article 32

The Directorate-General of Personal Status shall edit the voters' rolls according to the documents referred to it as mentioned in previous articles, upon reviewing them before February 1st of each year.

Each roll shall include a special space reserved to note down the reasons of editing and operations of record transfer from one roll to another. In the event of transfer, mentioning the place of record, the register number and the crossing-off date is mandatory.

In the implementation of the present law, voluntary transfer of the place of record occurring within the year preceding the re-editing the voters' rolls shall not be taken into consideration. Transfer due to marriage shall not be considered voluntary. Thus, a wife whose record was transferred by marriage during the said year shall be entitled to vote.

Article 33

Before the 10th of February of each year, the Directorate-General of Personal Status shall send copies of the primary voter rolls to municipalities, *mukhtars*, *Muhafazat*, *cada* centers, and Lebanese embassies and consulates abroad, to publish and circulate them in order to facilitate the final editing. Addressees should receive these rolls before the 10th of February at the latest in order to call the voters to check them and proceed with their editing according to available documentary evidence.

Article 34

The Ministry shall announce in the media (printed and audio-visual), within the deadline specified in the previous article, that the voters' rolls are ready, and shall call voters to check them and take copies thereof. For the same purpose, the Ministry shall, within the same deadline, publish the primary voters' rolls on its Website and release CDs thereof. Any person may have copies against a price determined by the Ministry.

Article 35

Any interested individual may, as of February 10th of each year, submit to the competent registration committee mentioned in the present law, a request for the correction of any mistake regarding him/her on the voters' rolls, such as registration omission, distortion of his/her name due to negligence, material mistake or any other reason.

The said request shall be submitted to the registration committee within a period that ends by March 10 of the same year, along with supporting evidence and documents. No fee shall be required for the request.

Article 36

Each voter, registered in any voter roll, shall have the right to ask the competent registration committee to cross off or add any name that has been illegally registered or unregistered on the roll. The Governor (*Muhafez*), district commissioner (*Qaimaqam*) and mayor (*Mukhtar*), each within their competence, may exercise this right, before the 10th of March of every year.

Article 37

The Directorate General of Personal Status shall consider, during the preparation of the final voters' rolls, the editing and record transfer operations provided for in the present law. Voters' rolls shall be closed on March 30 of each year and remain in force until March 30 of the following year.

The Minister of Interior and Municipalities shall send a copy of the final voters' rolls he had received from the Directorate General of Personal Status to the Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees to be adopted in any elections held between March 30th of the current year and March 30th of the subsequent year. (Clause added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25).

Article 38

Each electoral district shall have one or more registration committees.

Each registration committee shall be made up of an active judge (as president), one of the heads or members of the municipal councils in the electoral district and one employee from the Directorate General of Personal Status (as two members).

One or more employees from the Directorate General of Personal Status shall be annexed to each registration committee by decision of the Minister.

Article 39

The registration committee shall:

1- Examine and make decisions on the requests for voters' rolls rectification as per the provisions of the present law, and forward them to the concerned persons and the Directorate General of Personal Status. Such decisions are appealable before the competent higher registration committee mentioned in the present law within five days of notification by means of a duty-free petition. The appellant shall be exempted from retaining a lawyer.

2- Receive the elections' results upon the closing of polling stations, revise the minutes and documents, and take appropriate decisions in this regard. Count and tabulate the results of each candidate and submit them to the presidents of competent higher registration committees.

Article 40

The Ministry shall appoint a higher registration committee for each electoral district.

Each higher registration committee shall comprise a consultant from the Court of Cassation or a presiding judge of the Court of Appeal (as president), an active judge and an inspector from the Central Inspection bureau (as two members), and the head of the registration office or any head of department or employee from the Directorate General of Personal Status (as reporter).

Article 41

The presidents and members of each higher registration committee shall be appointed by virtue of decrees issued upon the suggestions of the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Interior and Municipalities.

Article 42

The higher registration committee shall receive the records of results submitted by all the registration committees of the electoral district, along with related documents and attached tables of results.

The higher registration committee shall revise the said documents, correct data and counting mistakes, if any, and correct the results accordingly.

Article 43

Parliamentary elections shall be held on one day for all electoral districts within the sixty days preceding the expiry of the Parliament's mandate. However, in case the Parliament is dissolved, elections shall then be held within three months after the publication of the dissolution decree.

Article 44

Voters shall be called to vote by virtue of a decree. A period of ninety days at least shall lapse between the publication of this decree and the Elections Day.

Article 45

If a parliament seat becomes vacant— due to death, resignation, deputyship annulment, or any other reason, elections shall be held to fill the vacant seat within two months after the vacancy date. The seat is deemed vacant as of the date of death or date of publication of the Constitutional Council’s decision to annul a deputyship in the official gazette.

If vacancy occurs within the last six months of the Parliament’s mandate, the vacant seat shall not be filled.

By-elections shall be held at the level of the electoral district to which the vacant seat belongs. Only resident voters shall take part in by-elections. Polling stations shall be determined within this district by the Ministry.

The term of office of a candidate winning by-elections may not exceed the term of office of the replaced deputy.

Contrary to the provisions of articles 9 and 10 of the present law, the persons mentioned in the said articles shall be entitled to run for elections if they resign and definitely stop the practice of their functions within a period of 15 days as of the issue of the elections’ writ decree.

Article 46

Any individual who meets the conditions of membership in the parliament may run as candidate in any district. However, no one may run for elections in more than one electoral district at the same time.

Article 47

1- Each candidate running for parliamentary elections shall submit to the Ministry a notarized request signed by himself, pursuant to a specimen including the following data:

- The full name of the candidate
- The seat and the district he/she would be running for

2- The following documents shall be attached to the request:

- A police record less than one-month old
- Two passport photos
- A financial receipt from the cashier’s office proving that he has paid the candidacy fees amounting to 2 million Lebanese pounds and the election deposit amounting to six million Lebanese pounds
- A bank certificate confirming the opening of an electoral campaign account as stipulated in the present law
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Article 48

Each winning candidate may recover the deposit paid. Losing candidates may not recover the said deposit unless they receive at least 20% of the legally counted votes within the electoral district.

Article 49

- 1- Candidacy filing shall be closed sixty days before polling day.
- 2- The candidate must submit to the Ministry his candidacy application along with all required documents no later than the candidacy closing date.
- 3- The Ministry shall give the candidate a provisional proof of payment acknowledging receipt of the application and related documents.
- 4- The Ministry shall decide on the candidacy applications within five days of receipt. In case the candidacy is accepted, it shall give the candidate a final receipt for his application registration. In case of refusal, it shall inform the candidate about the reasons thereof.
- 5- If the Ministry remains silent on the candidate application for more than five days after registration thereof, the application shall be deemed approved and the Ministry shall give the candidate the final receipt for his application registration.
- 6- In case the Ministry rejects the candidate's application, he may, within five days of notification of the express rejection, file a simple duty-free petition to the State Council. This council shall then deliberate and decide on his petition within three days of receipt. The decision rendered in this regard shall be final and irrevocable.

Article 50

If the deadline for candidacy filing expires and no candidate has registered for a particular seat, this deadline shall be automatically extended by seven days.

If the deadline for candidacy filing expires and only one candidate has registered for a given seat, this candidate shall be deemed an uncontested winner. The Ministry shall immediately send to the president of parliament a letter informing him thereof.

Article 51

Candidacy applications not complying with the previous articles shall be considered null. The same applies to the applications filed at the same date by the same candidate in more than one district. However, if these applications bear different dates, only the last one shall be taken into consideration and all previous applications shall be deemed null.

Article 52

A candidate may not drop out except on the basis of a notarized legal authorization filed with the Ministry forty-five days at least before the polling day. In this case, he may recover half of the deposit paid.

If the cancellation of candidacy hinders the election of the number of deputies needed within the district, new candidacies may be accepted for the concerned district only if submitted within a period of seven days as of the date of cancellation.

Article 53

After closing the candidacy filing, the Ministry shall announce the names of the accepted candidates and immediately send them to the Governors and District Commissioners and publish them where necessary.

CHAPTER FIVE

Electoral Funding and Spending

Article 54

The electoral campaigns funding and the candidates spending during the electoral campaign which starts on the date of application for candidacy and ends upon closing the ballot boxes, shall be governed by the provisions of the present law.

Article 55

- 1- Each candidate must open an account under the name “**Electoral Campaign Account**” with an operating bank in Lebanon. He shall attach to the candidacy application, a certificate from the said bank, proving the existence of such an account and mentioning the account number and owner’s name.
- 2- The Electoral Campaign Account shall not be subject to bank secrecy. The candidate is automatically considered as waiving the right to such secrecy upon the account opening.
- 3- All electoral contributions and expenses shall be exclusively made through this account during the period of the electoral campaign.
- 4- Every candidate shall determine the procedures that he/she follows for receiving funds and contributions meant to fund the electoral campaign and the authority to pay electoral expenses, in conformity with the provision of the present law.
- 5- No amount exceeding 1million LBP shall be received or paid unless by check.
- 6- Each candidate shall, upon filing the candidacy application, declare the name of his financial auditor, under a notarized written letter submitted to the Commission.

Article 56

- 1- The candidate may use his own money to fund his electoral campaign. The money of the spouse or any of the ascendants and descendents shall also be considered as the candidate’s own money.
All expenses contracted or paid by the candidate from his own money for his electoral campaign shall be subject to an expenditure ceiling.
- 2- Only Lebanese natural or legal persons may offer contributions for a candidate’s electoral campaign.
- 3- A candidate or list shall be strictly prohibited from accepting or receiving, whether directly or indirectly, contributions or aids from foreign states or from a non-Lebanese natural or legal person. (Correction of typing mistake in the Arabic version by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25)
- 4- Any grant, donation, cash or in-kind gift or subscription offered to the candidate, shall be considered a contribution to the electoral campaign funding.
- 5- The services provided for free by volunteers shall not be considered as contributions as per this law.
- 6- The total amount of all contributions received by a candidate for his electoral campaign shall not exceed the electoral expenditure ceiling.

Article 57

- 1- The maximum limit of funds that each candidate may spend on his electoral campaign shall be determined as follows:

- A fixed flat amount equivalent to one hundred and fifty million Lebanese pounds
- A variable part depending on the number of voters within his electoral district and determined by virtue of a decree issued by the Council of Ministers upon the suggestion of the Minister of Interior and Municipalities.

Article 58

The aggregate expenses incurred by the candidate and those paid in their favor or with their express or tacit consent by other persons, shall be considered electoral expenditure under the present law. The said expenditure shall be directly related to the electoral campaign. It shall include among others:

1. Rental of electoral offices and all related charges.
2. Organization of rallies, festivals, public meetings and election-related banquets.
3. Preparation, publication and distribution of advertising and promotional material such as books, booklets, bulletins, publications, and letters sent by regular or electronic mail.
4. Design, printing, distribution and posting of pictures, posters and billboards.
5. Compensations paid to party agents and persons involved in the electoral campaign.
6. Transportation fees of electoral campaign staff and voters.
7. Electoral promotion costs and any other costs paid to any radio, TV, newspaper, magazine or any other publication used for electoral campaigning.

Article 59

Financial donations including service provision or payment of money to voters such as (inter alia) in-kind and cash donations and support to individuals, charity, social, cultural, family, religious organizations or other, or sports clubs and all non-public institutions shall be prohibited during the campaign period.

The above-mentioned donations shall not be prohibited if they are granted by candidates or institutions owned or run by candidates who have been doing so on a regular basis for not less than three years prior to the commencement of the electoral campaign.

Article 60

1. The Commission shall form one committee or more to undertake, independently from any other authority, the supervision of candidates' compliance with the provisions concerning the opening of the electoral campaign bank account, as well as financial support and contributions and expenditure during the electoral campaign.
2. The Commission may at any time, check the "electoral campaign account" of each candidate and request any information or documents or clarifications.
3. The committee shall submit to the Commission a report on the audit and supervision results and the candidates' compliance with legal provisions concerning funding and spending.

Article 61

1- After the elections, each candidate must draw up an exhaustive statement of account following the principles of accounting and including, in details, the total received contributions

with their sources and dates, and the total of expenses paid or to be paid with their nature and dates, during the electoral period.

2- This statement should be submitted to the Commission within one month after the polling day along with supporting documents related to all account items, such as receipts and disbursement notes, in addition to an exhaustive bank statement of the electoral account showing all transactions made through this account since its opening until the submission of the said statement.

3- There shall be attached to the statement of account a declaration signed by each candidate-- whether list candidate or independent candidate- and notarized in order to be accurately dated. The candidate declares thereby, under his full responsibility, that the attached statement of account is correct, exhaustive and includes all received contributions and paid or to be paid expenses pertaining to the electoral campaign. He shall also expressly declare that there are no other cash or in-kind expenses or funds paid in cash or through other bank accounts or third parties.

Article 62

1- Whoever intentionally breaches any of the provisions of this chapter shall be sentenced to 6 months imprisonment at most and to a fine ranging between 50 million LBP and 100 million LBP, or to one of the said sentences, with no prejudice to sanctions of penal crimes as per the law.

2- When the challenge is submitted, the commission's report and the candidate's exhaustive statement of account shall be sent to the Constitutional Council. The said documents shall be attached to the candidate's election challenge file.

CHAPTER SIX Electoral Media and Advertising

Article 63

In the implementation of the present law, the hereunder terms, whether used in their singular or plural form, shall have the following meaning:

Electoral media:

Any media material such as news, analyses, statements, interviews, debates, discussions, reports, press conferences and meetings, directly or indirectly related to elections and broadcasted for free, in the usual or special programs of a media company.

Electoral promotion:

Any material related to the candidates' programs, electoral campaigns and political and electoral positions, recorded/filmed inside or outside the media company studios, and through which the candidate wishes to address the voters by broadcasting it, at their own expense, in the company's programs dedicated for this purpose, against a specific price.

Electoral advertising:

Any material promoting the election of a certain candidate broadcasted against specific prices, during the commercials' breaks of the media company.

Electoral material:

It includes the electoral media, promotion and advertising.

Article 64

Each list or candidate shall undertake the organization of various legal activities to explain their electoral program using the appropriate way and means, with no prejudice to the rules and regulations.

Article 65

During the electoral campaign period determined in this law, the electoral material used in the audio visual and printed media starting the date of application for candidacy until the closing of ballot boxes, shall be governed by the provisions of the present chapter

Article 66

A- Paid electoral promotion and advertising in both private and public audio-visual and printed media shall be authorized pursuant to the following provisions:

1- The private and public media wishing to take part in electoral advertising or promotion shall submit to the Commission, at least ten days before the beginning of the electoral campaign, a declaration expressing its wish to participate, along with a price list and information on the "spaces" it intends to consecrate for electoral advertising and promotion.

2- The media shall comply with their price list and "spaces" allocation info submitted. They shall not reject any electoral advertising requested by a candidate adhering to the mentioned prices.

3- Media companies failing to submit their declaration within the set deadline shall be banned from undertaking any electoral promotion or advertising activity during the whole electoral campaign period.

4- The audio-visual media shall expressly indicate when broadcasting electoral ads that they are paid ads as they shall mention the advertising party.

5- The media shall be banned from accepting any ads for free or against a rate that is different from the price list submitted.

6- The candidate or its legal representative shall submit a copy print/tape of the electoral promotion or advertisement, along with a written booking request, to the Commission and media companies to broadcast it. This shall be done three days at least before the first broadcast date.

7- Every media company shall present a weekly report to the Commission, including an account of all electoral ads and promotions broadcasted during the past week with the broadcasting time and rates received.

8- None of the candidates may disburse more than 50% of their total promotion and advertising spending to one Media Company, be it a radio station, TV channel, or printed media.

B- Audio visual and printed media wishing to cover the voting and vote count procedures shall obtain written authorizations for this purpose from the Commission, pursuant to the provisions of the present law.

Article 67

The public media shall remain impartial in all phases of the electoral process. They (including body and staff) may not carry out any activity that might be considered in favor of any candidate or list at the expense of another candidate or list.

Article 68

1- All media shall observe the freedom of expression of opinions and trends of thought in the private audio-visual media during the electoral campaign so that fairness, balance, and impartiality among candidates and lists would be guaranteed.

2- Clause 1 above shall apply to all electoral media programs and public and political news programs including news bulletins, political talk shows, interviews, reports, meetings, discussions, round tables and live electoral events.

3- None of the audio visual private media shall declare its support or encouragement to any candidate or list, in order to maintain the principle of independence.

The mentioned media shall, during the electoral campaign, clearly distinguish between facts and realities on one hand and opinions and comments on the other hand, in all their news bulletins.

4- During the electoral campaign, the audio-visual media, lists and candidates shall abide by the following obligations:

- Refrain from any act of libel, slander and defamation towards any list or candidate.
- Refrain from broadcasting anything that might trigger religious/confessional/ethnic sensitivities or acts of violence or riots, or support for terrorism, crimes, or sabotage.
- Refrain from broadcasting anything that might be a means of pressure, intimidation, mistrust, allusion, disbelief, or promise of material or in-kind benefits.
- Refrain from distorting, screening, falsifying, omitting, or misrepresenting information.

5- The Commission shall ensure the balance in media access during the electoral campaigning period among competing lists and candidates by binding media companies to host all competitors--list representatives or individual candidates--under the same conditions in terms of timing, duration and program types.

Article 69

All audio-visual media shall reserve, during the electoral campaign, at least three hours weekly for broadcasting election-related educational programs produced by the Ministry of Information, and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, in coordination with the concerned media.

Article 70

1- The competent local authority shall, under the supervision of the administrative authority in each city or village, designate appropriate billposting places for electoral ads and posters during the whole electoral campaign period.

2- No ad or poster for candidates shall be posted outside the places reserved for this purpose. In addition, any candidate shall be prohibited from posting an ad or a poster in places reserved for others.

3- The competent local authority shall allocate the specified places as per Clause 1 of this article among lists and candidates according to the order in which candidacy applications were filed or

announcement of lists was made. (“or announcement of lists” added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25)

Local authorities and companies exploiting the ads places shall collaborate with the Commission for the sound implementation of these provisions.

4- No candidate or list may waive his/its electoral ads places in favor of another candidate or list.

Article 71

1- Public utilities, governmental institutions, public institutions, private or public universities, faculties, institutes and schools, and houses of worship may not be used for electoral events and rallies or for posting pictures or for electoral promotion purposes.

2- Civil servants and employees of public institutions, municipalities, and municipal unions may not use their powers in favor of any candidate or list.

Article 72

On the elections’ day, the distribution of ballot papers, flyers, or any other documents in favor of or against a candidate shall be banned at polling center entrances or any other place located in the direct vicinity of the center, at the risk of confiscation without prejudice to all other sentences stated herein.

Article 73

Twenty-four hours before polling day until the closing of ballot boxes, all private and public audio-visual media shall be prohibited from broadcasting any live electoral advertisement, promotion, or call, except for voices/scenes that cannot be avoided while covering the electoral operation.

On the Elections Day, coverage shall be limited to the electoral activity happenings.

Article 74

1- The Commission shall specify the conditions of opinion polls operations performed during the electoral campaign and the procedure to follow in order to ensure reliable, fair and impartial polls.

2- The Commission shall specify the terms and conditions of publication, broadcasting, and distribution of opinion polls results during the electoral campaign. It shall have all powers to verify the compliance of opinion polls with rules and regulations and with the Commission’s decision. It shall be entitled to take all necessary measures in order to stop or remedy violations against audio-visual media, opinion polls institutions, or any third party.

3- The party conducting the poll shall be responsible of mentioning in the announcement, publication, broadcasting, or distribution of the opinion polls’ results the following information:

- Name of the entity conducting the opinion poll
- Name of the entity asking for and paying the cost of the opinion poll
- Dates for conducting the on-the-field-opinion poll
- Size, mode of selection and distribution of the polled sample
- Poll technique
- The verbatim asked questions
- Limits of results’ interpretation and margin of error when need be

4- Ten days before the polling day and until the closing of all ballot boxes, no opinion polls or comments thereon shall be published, broadcasted or distributed in any way whatsoever.

Article 75

1- The Commission shall verify the adherence of printed and audio-visual media in Lebanon to the electoral promotion provisions mentioned herein.

2- The Commission shall, at its own discretion, assess whether or not, and to what extent, the access of candidates to foreign satellite media should be part of the advertising and media spaces allocated by the Commission to each list or candidate.

3- The Commission shall immediately consider any complaint filed by a wronged list or candidate. Decisions as to filing such complaint in the competent Court of Publications shall be taken within twenty four hours of receipt.

Article 76

Without prejudice to the criminal code, press law, and audio-visual media law, the Commission may take any of the following procedures against any printed or audio visual media for violating the provisions of this chapter on electoral media and advertising:

A - Address a warning to the defaulting media and compel it to broadcast an excuse or enable the wronged candidate to exercise the Right to an Answer.

B- Refer the defaulting media to the competent Court of Publications who shall take one of the measures hereunder:

- Impose a financial fine on the defaulting media ranging between 50 and 100 million Lebanese pounds.

- Partially suspend the work of the defaulting media for a maximum of three days. This measure shall include suspending all political and news programs, bulletins, interviews and fora.

- If the violation recurs, totally suspend the work of the defaulting media and totally suspend all of its programs for a maximum of three days.

The Public Prosecution shall sue the defaulting media before the Court of Publications directly or upon a request filed by the wronged party. The defaulting media shall submit a brief to the court within 24 hours of notification.

The Court of Publications shall render its judgment within a maximum of 24 hours. The Public Prosecution and the accused party may appeal the decision before the Court of Appeal within 24 hours starting from the judgment declaration date for the Public Prosecution, and from the notification date for the defaulting media.

The appeal shall not stop the judgment execution unless the Court of Cassation decides to stop the said execution within 24 hours after filing the challenge.

Article 77

Media companies shall broadcast and publish the corrections and feedback of candidates within a period of 24 hours after the broadcasting/publication of the criticized news.

The media shall refuse to broadcast/publish any feedback violating the laws.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Voting Operation

Article 78

Deputies are elected in polling stations which locations shall be made known clearly.

The electoral district shall be divided, by the Minister's decision, into a number of polling centers (*markaz*) including polling stations (*qalam*). Each village incorporating 100 to 400 registered voters shall be entitled to one polling station. The number may increase to more than 400 voters per station if deemed necessary for the smooth running of the electoral process; however it shall not exceed 800.

The number of polling stations shall not be more than 20 in one polling center.

The Minister's decision regarding the distribution of polling stations shall be published in the official gazette and on the Ministry's website 30 days at least before polling day. Such a distribution may not be modified during the week preceding the polling day unless for serious reasons and under justified decision.

Article 79

1- The Governor or District Commissioner, each according to their terms of office, shall appoint, from the civil servants, one head and one clerk or more for each polling station. He shall then appoint one of the latter as polling center officer and another one as assistant to supervise the vote count. These appointments are made at least one month before polling day. However, the appointed civil servants shall not be informed of their assignment location until three days before the polling day.

The head of the polling station shall be assisted by four assistants: two of his choice and another two chosen from among the literate voters present at the opening of the polling station. The Governor or District Commissioner may, if necessary, appoint reserve assistants if need be.

2- Only the head of the polling station shall have the authority to keep order inside the polling station. No security forces are allowed to stay inside the station without his request. They may intervene temporarily and for the sole reason of guaranteeing the sound running of the electoral process.

3- The polling station head shall not, in any case, prevent the candidates and party agents and accredited observers from exercising their right of supervising electoral activities. He may not evict any party agent unless he/she causes disorder in spite of addressing warnings and recording them in the minutes.

If the polling station head takes such a measure, he shall make out a record in this regard stating the facts, the reasons and the time thereof. He shall then sign it with all the present party agents and immediately submit it to the competent registration committee.

4- An election worker, who without any legal grounds, fails to appear in the polling station where he is appointed as head or clerk, shall be jailed for one month or shall pay a one-million LBP fine. In this case, only the medical reports issued by the Public Medical Committee shall be taken into consideration.

The polling station head or clerk, who fails to perform his obligations or follow the instructions stipulated in the present law, shall be jailed for a period ranging from three months to three years or shall pay a fine of one million to three million LBP.

In this case, and contrary to the provisions of article 61 of the Civil Servants Law, issued by virtue of decree 112/59 on June 12, 1959, the Public Right lawsuit shall be brought by the candidate's personal allegation or upon the Public Prosecution's allegation or upon the request of the concerned registration committee head. The lawsuit does not need the approval of the administration to which the civil servant is affiliated.

Article 80

1- Voting shall always take place on a Sunday, same day for all Lebanese regions, from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

2- Before the polling day, the Ministry shall organize, in all electoral districts, a central voting operation exclusive for the civil servants in charge of running the polling stations on the polling day. Ballot boxes of civil servants stations shall be closed after calculating the number of envelopes in each box. While still closed, the boxes shall be immediately sent, escorted by the Internal Security Forces, to the competent registration committee in order to count them and then to add their results to those of the other ballot boxes at the end of the electoral process on Sunday. The said voting operation shall observe the regulations set forth in the present law. ("Escorted by the Internal Security Forces" added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25).

Article 81

1- Based on the voters' rolls, the Ministry shall issue voters' lists (lawa'ih shatib) to be used in all polling stations inside or outside Lebanon. In addition to the data taken from the voters' rolls, each voters' list shall include the voter's ID card number or passport number if available on the date when the lists were prepared, as well as three boxes: one for the voter's signature, one for the polling station member appointed to verify the voting, and one for comments that may arise from the voting operation.

2- All pages of the voters' list of each polling station shall be attached to each other, numbered, and sealed by the Ministry.

3- No one shall be allowed to vote unless their name is registered on the check list of the polling station or unless they obtain the competent registration committee's decision allowing them to register their name.

Article 82

- 1- Each polling station shall be made up of one head and one clerk with four assistants as mentioned herein. The Governor or District Commissioner, each within his scope of work, may, if necessary, appoint reserve assistants.
- 2- The head of the polling station and at least half of the assistants must be present during the electoral process.

Article 83

- 1- Each candidate or list shall have the right to delegate one of the electoral district voters to access the polling station, at a rate of one party agent for every polling station. They may also choose mobile agents from among the voters of the district to have access to all polling stations within the said district at a rate of one party agent for every two polling stations in villages and one party agent for every 5 polling stations in cities.
- 2- The accredited observers authorized by the Ministry according to the present law, may enter the polling stations at any moment to observe the developments of the electoral process.

Article 84

Security forces shall maintain order at the entrance of and around the polling centers. Any electoral or advertising activity, for example: use of loudspeakers, loud music, party flags and parades shall be prohibited in the vicinity of the polling center.

Article 85

- 1- The Ministry shall provide the polling stations with the necessary equipment and stationery for the electoral process. Furthermore, it shall provide them with one ballot box made of a transparent solid material with one hole each.
- 2- Each polling station shall have one or more voting booths, all conforming to the specifications determined by the Ministry.
- 3- The voting booth is mandatory under the penalty of cancelling the voting operation in the concerned polling station.

Article 86

- 1- Before the beginning of voting, the polling station head shall open the box and verify with the polling station panel and party agents that it is empty. He shall then lock it properly under the supervision of the eldest assistant.
- 2- During the electoral operations, official copies of voters' lists and the Ministry's decision that establishes and designates the polling station shall be published at the polling station entrance. A copy of the electoral law and a list of the party agents shall be placed on a table in the polling station so that the voters, candidates and their agents can examine them.
- 3- Before the commencement and until the end of the electoral operations, the polling station head shall make sure that all posters, symbols, writings, and slogans of any nature whatsoever are removed from the polling station.

Article 87

The votes are cast in sealable opaque envelopes of one type for all voters, supplied by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities and made available for voters on the polling station desk

in front of the station Head. The envelopes shall display the label “Ministry of Interior” and bear the stamp of the Governorate or District, along with the date, and shall be sent from the Governor (Mohafez) or District Commissioner (Qaimaqam) via policemen or gendarmes to every polling station head before the polling day. The number of envelopes shall be equal to that of voters registered on the polling station’s rolls. At the same time, an additional number of unstamped envelopes (20%) shall be sent to the polling station head.

The policemen or gendarmes shall write a delivery report, have it signed by the station Head and send it to the registration committee of the district via the District Commissioner or any delegate thereof.

- Before the voting process, the Head of the Polling Station shall verify that the number of stamped envelopes is exactly equal to that of registered voters.
- In case of any force majeure or cheating attempt to violate the genuineness of elections or any other reason leads to a lack of envelopes, the Head of the polling station shall replace those envelopes with the unstamped envelopes received. He shall stamp those with the Polling Station stamp along with the date. The replacement reason shall be mentioned in the minutes.

The remaining unstamped envelopes that were not used shall be enclosed with the minutes.

When entering the station, the voter is supposed to discretely hold a paper containing the names of candidates he/she wishes to elect or use one of the blank papers put on the table inside the booth and write the names of candidates he/she wishes to elect.

- Inside the booth mentioned in article 85 of the present law, a list of the candidates’ names shall be posted. Blank papers and pencils shall be also made available therein to all voters.

Article 88

1- As soon as the voter enters the polling station, the station head shall verify his/her identity based on his ID card or Lebanese valid passport. If the data on the ID card or passport is found conflicting with the data on the check lists, the ID card or passport number shall be used as reference instead.

2- After the polling station panel has made sure that the voter’s name exists on the check list of the polling station, the station head shall give the voter an officially stamped envelope after having duly signed it.

3- The station head shall ask the voter to necessarily go into the voting booth to choose the names of candidates he/she wishes to elect. If the voter refuses to do so he/she shall be prohibited from voting.

Article 89

Each voter shall be entitled to vote for a number of candidates that equals the number of seats allocated to every district, based on its confessional distribution.

Article 90

1- The voter shall approach the polling station panel and show that he/she holds only one envelope. The station head verifies this without touching the envelope or seeing what is inside. Then, he authorizes the voter to drop the envelope, by himself/herself, in the ballot box.

2- The polling station head shall make sure that the voter has indeed gone into the voting booth. If the voter fails to do so, he/she shall be prohibited from voting.

3- Voting is confirmed by the voter's signature on the check list and by inking his thumb with a special indelible ink provided by the Ministry for all polling stations. The said ink should last at least 24 hours. Any voter with such ink on his thumb is barred from voting again.

Article 91

No voter may delegate his right to vote to another party. However, a handicapped voter who cannot practice his right to vote shall be allowed, under the supervision of the polling station panel, to have the assistance of another voter of his choice. Such an event shall be mentioned in the box reserved for comments on the check list.

Article 92

The Ministry shall take into consideration the needs of disabled persons while organizing the electoral process and take all measures allowing those to exercise their right to vote without obstacles.

The Ministry shall put in place a relevant exhaustive implementation code after consulting with Disabled Persons organizations and Service Providing organizations set forth in the Law on the Rights of Disabled Persons no 220 dated 29/5/2000.

Article 93

The polling station head shall announce the end of the voting process at 7:00 pm. However, if there are still voters present in the entrance area of the polling center who have not voted yet, the polling time shall be extended until they have cast their votes. Such an event shall be mentioned in the minutes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Counting Votes and Declaring the Results

Article 94

At the end of the voting process, polling is closed and only the station panel, party agents (permanent and/or mobile) and accredited observers may stay inside the polling station.

The ballot box shall be opened and the envelopes counted. The minutes shall mention if the envelope count is more or less than the number of names crossed-off on the check list.

The polling station head or any of his assistants shall open the envelopes one by one and audibly read the name or names elected by the voter, under the effective supervision of candidates or agents or authorized observers if any.

Article 95

The Ministry shall equip the polling stations with special cameras and TV Screens allowing the projection of the ballot papers content on a screen, and therefore, allowing the station panel,

party agents and authorized observers to easily read the names on the ballot papers during the vote count.

Article 96

Should one of the ballot papers include a number of candidates exceeding the number of Deputies to be elected, the names of candidates of each confession mentioned first (before the others) shall alone be taken into consideration while counting the votes.

Ballot papers or envelopes thereof that contain identification marks or insults to candidates or other persons shall be considered as spoilt ballots. (Clause added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25)

Names of candidates that may be spelled in ways different from the usual local spelling that is known to citizens, such as foreign names and compound names, shall not be considered spoilt if they sufficiently designate the person in question. This is particularly applicable when the electoral district does not include any other candidate having the same or a similar name. (Clause added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25)

If one ballot paper contained two confusingly indistinguishable candidate names, it shall be attached with the spoilt ballots to the minutes, along with its envelope, after having it signed by the polling station panel. The minutes shall mention the reason of such attachment. (Clause added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25)

Blank ballots are considered as valid votes and shall not be counted with invalid ballots. (Clause added by virtue of law /59/ dated 27/12/08 amending some articles of law no. 25)

Article 97

After counting the ballot papers, the head of the polling station shall announce and sign the provisional voting results, immediately post them on the polling station door and issue certified copies to each of the candidates and their agents upon their request.

Article 98

Upon announcing the provisional results of the voting in the polling station, the station head shall draw up in two original copies a task report and all its pages shall be signed by the station panel members.

The head of the station shall enclose in an envelope all voters' lists signed by the voters, the ballot papers considered void and envelopes thereof, the aforementioned task report and the candidate vote-count sheet.

This envelope shall be sealed with wax and transmitted, with security escort, by the station head and clerk to the registration committee office where it shall be delivered together with all documents included therein to the head of the registration committee, or his delegate, who shall open it afterward in the presence of party agents.

The head and clerk of the polling station shall both be held responsible if the envelope is found open or altered upon arrival.

Article 99

The registration committees shall study the minutes and documents, take the relevant decisions, and announce the figures stated in each record to the attendants (the candidates or their agents). These committees shall also count and add the votes obtained by each candidate, then draw up a record of all results- according to the tables and minutes done in duplicate after having them signed by all of the committee members-, and submit it to the higher committee of the electoral district.

The Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees at the Ministry of the Interior and Municipalities shall appoint an employee to receive the minutes of polling stations and documents attached thereto one after another from the registration committee as soon as this committee has finished its work with every envelope. The said employee shall sign an acknowledgement of receipt of each envelope and documents thereof. He shall also receive a signed copy of the record together with the result table set forth by the committee.

Article 100

The higher committee of the electoral district receives the results submitted by the registration committees along with the attached tables.

It shall proofread the documents and only correct the data and counting mistakes if any, and then correct the final result accordingly.

Moreover, it shall add the votes in the tables, write a final result for the electoral district on the final table- in numbers and letters with mentioning the word “only” after the total- and have the minutes and final general table signed by all of its members.

Thereupon, it shall announce, in front of the candidates or their agents, the final results obtained by each candidate.

Article 101

The Higher Committee shall deliver to the *Muhafez* or district commissioner *Qaimqam*, the final minutes and the general results table and shall draw up an exchange confirmation statement signed by the *Muhafez* or *Qaimqam*, and any member of the higher registration committee named by the head of the committee.

The results taken from the final minutes and the general table enclosed thereto shall be immediately sent to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, which shall announce the final official results and the names of winning candidates. The Minister shall immediately notify the Speaker of the Parliament and the Head of the Constitutional Council of the results.

The ballot papers shall be confidentially kept at the Central Bank of Lebanon, in portfolios marked with the name of their source polling stations for three months after the announcement of results. Afterward, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities shall destroy the ballot papers pursuant to a duly written report, unless they are subject to review or challenge before the Constitutional Council.

CHAPTER NINE

Incompatibility between Parliamentary Membership and Some Other Offices

Article 102

1- No one may be a Member or President of Parliament and at the same time be a board member or chairperson of any public institution or public utility institution or hold any post in any public administration, public institution, municipality, municipal union, privileged company, mixed-economy company, or public-capital company.

No MP may hold any religious post with a salary or remuneration paid from the Treasury.

Each of those elected as MPs shall be automatically considered discharged from their job if they do not refuse the MP mandate within one month after the announcement of election results.

2- No one may be a Member of Parliament and at the same time be attorney of the State or any of its departments or public institutions or municipalities or municipal unions or any of the institutions or companies mentioned in Clause 1 above.

Each of those elected as MP shall be automatically discharged from his duties.

Article 103

A Member of Parliament may not be granted any monopoly, privilege or any commitment by the state or public institutions or municipalities. Their spouse and children shall be considered one.

CHAPTER TEN

Voting by Non-Resident Voters

Article 104

All Lebanese natives living outside the Lebanese territory shall be entitled to vote in Lebanese embassies and consulates pursuant to the provisions of this law, provided that their name is registered on the voters' rolls and no legal reason prevents their right to vote.

Article 105

The voting of non-resident Lebanese natives shall be governed by the general provisions on the voting of resident Lebanese citizens, in conformity with this chapter's provisions.

Article 106

Upon the ratification of this law, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants shall invite, via Lebanese embassies and consulates, by the means it deems appropriate, all the Lebanese non-resident natives fulfilling the above mentioned conditions, to voice their wish to participate in voting from their country of residence. They shall proceed by registering their names either personally or by a duly registered letter submitted to the embassy or consulate of their choice, including all the relevant information on their identity and register number.

The timeframe for registration shall not exceed the 31st of December of every year preceding the parliamentary elections. After this date, the non-resident Lebanese natives' right to vote in the subsequent parliamentary elections ceases to be valid.

Article 107

The concerned embassies and consulates shall consecutively send at the end of every week, the names of persons registered to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants.

The competent departments at the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities shall verify the registration of those names on the voters' rolls and shall, after the expiry of the registration timeframe, prepare independent voters' rolls for each embassy or consulate, including the names of eligible voters, distributed on basis of electoral districts. However, the number of registered voters in one electoral district shall not be less than 200 voters. A sign shall be put next to their names to prevent them from voting in their original place of residence.

Article 108

The Ministry of Interior and Municipality shall send, via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, the independent voters' rolls to all concerned embassies and consulates. Based on the number of eligible voters, the embassies and consulates are supposed to mount one polling station or more (if the voters' number exceeds 400) within their own premises or in any other adequate location.

Article 109

The ambassador or consul coordinates with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants to form the panel of each polling station. The panel shall at least include one head and one clerk selected from the embassy or consulate staff or contractual employees when need be. They shall also specify their terms of reference.

Party agents may be present during the voting, counting of votes and announcement of results.

Article 110

Voting outside Lebanon shall be made ten days at the most before the Election Day in Lebanon, according to the concerned electoral districts, and with the use of opaque sealable envelopes of one type adopted and stamped by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities.

The ballot boxes shall be open from 7 am to 10 pm.

The head of the station shall sign the envelope and give it to the voter, after having verified their identity and the presence of their name on the voters' rolls.

Voters may vote by presenting their Lebanese ID card or valid Lebanese passport.

The voter is bound to enter the polling booth and put one paper in the envelope including the names of candidates he/she wishes to elect. He/she shall personally drop the envelope in the ballot box.

A voter's voting shall be confirmed by his/her signature or fingerprint as well as the signature of one polling station member next to the voter's name on the voters' list used in the electoral operation.

Article 111

At the end of the voting operation, the ballot box (es) shall be open in the presence of the ambassador or consul. The latter may delegate representatives if any force majeure prevents them from attending. The envelopes and ballots papers are counted and calculated in the presence of the polling station panel.

Article 112

A report on the electoral operation shall be set forth with a detailed description of the number of votes received by each candidate. The report shall be signed by the ambassador and consul, and the results shall be posted on the polling station gate.

After announcing the results as above mentioned, all papers and envelopes shall be burnt down save for ballots considered as "spoilt ballots" for containing identification marks or insults or two confusingly indistinguishable candidate names.

Article 113

The polling station head shall put in an envelope: the check lists signed by the voters, the spoilt ballot papers and envelopes thereof, the minutes of the electoral operation and the candidates' vote count sheet. The envelope shall be sealed with wax and sent to the concerned registration committees in Lebanon via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants by the fastest possible means of communication.

Article 114

To guarantee the implementation of the provisions of the present chapter, and the non-resident Lebanese natives' right to vote in their country of residence after the 2009 universal parliamentary elections, the following procedures shall be taken as of the ratification of the present law:

- 1- Before every 10th of February, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities shall send the voters' rolls on CDs through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants to the Lebanese Embassies and Consulates abroad.
- 2- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants shall circulate and make public the aforementioned rolls by all means possible. It shall invite the voters to check them and ask for correction when need be, before resending them to the Directorate General of Personal Status ahead of every 10th of March. The revisions, rectifications and crossing out of the rolls' records shall follow the principles and procedures stipulated in chapter four of this law. Communication shall be made via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, who reports to the competent authority.
- 3- Within a period of one year after the present law publication, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants shall prepare a detailed study on the voting mechanism of non-resident Lebanese natives in embassies and consulates. The study shall include all technical details related to the human and financial readiness of the said embassies and consulates, in addition to recommendations on their logistic and technical needs, and the

implementation timeframes and approximate cost thereof. The study shall be submitted to the Council of Ministers to take appropriate executive measures and secure the needed approbations.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Final Provisions

Article 115

In cases where the present law does not provide for the details of implementation thereof, the said details shall be determined by virtue of decrees issued upon a suggestion of the Minister of Interior and Municipalities.

Article 116

All texts opposing the provisions of the present law or conflicting with its content shall be deemed null; particularly, law no.171 issued on January 6, 2000.

Article 117

This law shall enter into force immediately after its publication in the official gazette.

Baabda, on 8 October 2008

President Michel SLEIMAN (signature)

President of the Council of Ministers, Fouad SINIORA (signature)

Issued in the official gazette no. 41, on 09/10/2008.