

THE LEBANESE CONSTITUTION

PROMULGATED MAY 23, 1926
WITH ITS AMENDMENTS

1995

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.