

The Constitution of The United Arab Emirates

“We, the Rulers of the Emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Um Al Quwain, Fujairah and Ras Al-Khaimah”

Reflecting our will and the will of the people of our emirates to form themselves into a Federation in order to provide a better life and more enduring stability, and enjoy a higher international standing for the Emirates and all their people;

Desiring to create closer relations among the Emirates in the form of an independent sovereign federal State capable of protecting its existence and the existence of its members and cooperating with the sister Arab States and with all other friendly Member States of the United Nations Organization and of the community of nations, in general, on the basis of mutual respect and exchange of interests and benefits;

Desiring also to lay the foundation for federal rule in the coming years on a sound basis that reflects the reality and the capacity of the Emirates at the present time, enables the Federation to achieve its objectives, safeguards the identity of its members in a way not in conflict with these objectives and, at the same time, prepares the people of the Federation for a dignified and free constitutional life while going ahead towards a full-fledged representative democratic regime in an Islamic and Arab community free of fear and anxiety;

Realizing that it is our dearest desire and strongest determination to achieve all the above-mentioned in order to push ahead our country and our people up to take an appropriate place among the civilized states and nations,

Announce to Allah, the Supreme and Almighty, and to all the people our approval of the Constitution undersigned by us.

Part One

The UAE Principles and Main Objectives

Article (1)

The United Arab Emirates is an independent, sovereign, and federal State hereinafter

referred to as ("the UAE"). The UAE consists of the following Emirates:

Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, Fujairah and Ras Al-Khaimah.

Any other independent Arab State may, subject to the unanimous approval of the Federal Supreme Council, join the UAE.

When admitting a new member to the UAE, the Federal Supreme Council shall determine the number of seats to be allocated to that member in the Federal National Council (FNC) in excess of the number provided in Article 68 of the Constitution.

Article (2)

In assuming its responsibilities under the provisions of the Constitution, the UAE has sovereignty over all territory and territorial waters lying within the international boundaries of the member Emirates.

Article (3)

A member Emirate shall exercise sovereignty over its own territories and territorial waters in all matters which are not within the jurisdiction of the UAE under the Constitution.

Article (4)

The UAE may not cede its sovereignty or relinquish any part of its territories or waters.

Article (5)

The UAE shall have its flag, an emblem and a national anthem. The flag and the emblem shall be specified by Law. An Emirate shall have its own flag to use it within its territories.

Article (6)

The UAE is a part of the greater Arab nation to which the UAE is linked by the ties of religion, language, history and common destiny.

The people of the UAE are one people, and a part of the Arab nation.

Article (7)

Islam is the official religion of the UAE. The Islamic Shari'a is a main source of legislation in the UAE. The official language of the UAE is Arabic.

Article (8)

The citizens of the UAE shall have a single nationality specified by law and shall enjoy abroad the protection of the Federal Government in accordance with the generally accepted international principles.

A citizen's nationality may not be divested or withdrawn except in exceptional events as provided in Law.

Article (9)

Abu Dhabi City shall be the capital city of the UAE.

Article (10)

The objectives of the UAE are as follows: Maintain the UAE's independence and sovereignty, safeguard the UAE's security and stability, repel any aggression against the UAE's existence or the existence of its Member States, protect the rights and freedoms of the people of the UAE, establish close co-operation among the Emirates for their common interest to achieve such objectives, promote the prosperity and progress of the Emirates in all fields, provide a better life for all the citizens as each Member Emirate shall respect the independence and sovereignty of the other Emirates in their internal affairs as provided in the Constitution.

Article (11)

1. The Emirates of the UAE shall form a united entity in terms of economy and customs. The Federal Laws shall regulate the appropriate gradual phases to achieve this unity.
2. The free movement of all capital and goods among the Emirates of the UAE is guaranteed and may not be restricted except by a federal Law.
3. All taxes, fees, revenues, and tolls imposed on the movement of goods from one member

emirate to another emirate are hereby repealed.

Article (12)

The foreign policy of the UAE shall be directed towards supporting the Arab and Islamic causes and interests and towards establishing closer friendship and co-operation with all the nations and peoples on the basis of the principles of the charter of the United Nations Organization and international ideals.

Part Two

Basic Social and Economic Pillars of the UAE

Article (13)

The UAE and the member Emirates shall co-operate, each within the limits of its responsibilities and abilities, in executing the provisions of this Part.

Article (14)

Equality, social justice, and providing safety, security, and equal opportunities to all the citizens are pillars on which the community stands. Solidarity and shared sympathies are close links that tie the Emirates together.

Article (15)

The family is the cornerstone of the community. The fundamental principles on which the family is based are, religion, ethics and patriotism. The Law safeguards the family's existence and maintains and protects it from corruption.

Article (16)

The community shall care for children and mothers, and protect minors and others who are unable to look after themselves for any reason, such as illness, incapacity, old age or forced unemployment, assist and rehabilitate them for their own interest and for the interest of the community. Welfare and social security Laws regulate these matters.

Article (17)

Education is a fundamental factor for the progress of the society. Education is mandatory in its primary stage and is free of charge at all stages in the UAE. The law lays down the necessary plans for disseminating and spreading everywhere all levels of education and for eradicating illiteracy.

Article (18)

An individual or organization may establish a private school in accordance with the provisions of the Law provided that the school must be subject to the supervision of the competent public authorities, and comply with the instructions thereof.

Article (19)

The community shall provide all the citizens with medical care and means of prevention and treatment from diseases and epidemics and shall promote the establishment of public and private hospitals, clinics, and treatment houses.

Article (20)

The community shall appreciate work as a cornerstone of its development. The community shall provide jobs to the citizens, qualify them for those jobs, and create the appropriate conditions for service by enacting legislation protecting the rights of the employees and the interests of the employers in the light of the advanced international labor legislation.

Article (21)

Private property is protected and the restrictions against it shall be specified by law. A person may not be deprived of his/her private property except in such circumstances as may be required by the public interest, in accordance with the provisions of Law, and for equitable consideration.

Article (22)

Public property is inviolable. Every citizen has the duty of protecting public property. The law specifies the cases in which violating that duty is punishable.

Article (23)

The natural resources and wealth in each Emirate are deemed the public property of that Emirate. The community shall preserve and utilize in a good way those resources and wealth for the interest of the national economy.

Article (24)

The national economy shall be based on social justice, shall mainly depend on faithful cooperation between the public and private activities, and shall seek to achieve economic development, increase productivity, raise the standards of living, and achieve prosperity for citizens as provided in law.

The U.A.E. shall encourage co-operation and savings.

Part Three

Freedoms, Rights and Public Duties

Article (25)

All individuals are equal in Law. There shall be no distinction among the citizens of the UAE on the basis of origin, nationality, faith or social status.

Article (26)

Personal freedom is guaranteed to all citizens. A person may not be arrested, searched, detained or imprisoned except in accordance with the provisions of the Law.

A person may not be subjected to torture or to degrading treatment.

Article (27)

Crimes and punishments shall be defined by the law. A person may not be punished for an

act or omission committed before the relevant law is issued.

Article (28)

Penalty is personal. An accused is presumed innocent until proved guilty in a legal and fair trial.

An accused person has the right to appoint as his/her attorney at law anyone who is capable to defend him/her in trial.

The law shall specify the cases where a defense attorney shall be represent an accused person.

An accused person shall not be physically or morally harmed.

Article (29)

Freedom of movement and residence shall be guaranteed to the citizens as provided within the law.

Article (30)

Freedom of opinion and of expressing that opinion verbally, in writing, or by any other medium of expression is guaranteed as provided within the law.

Article (31)

Freedom of communication by post, telegraph and other means of communication and the confidentiality thereof are guaranteed in accordance with the law.

Article (32)

Freedom to exercise religious worship is guaranteed in accordance with the generally-accepted traditions provided that such freedom is consistent with the public policy or does not violate the public morals.

Article (33)

Freedom of assembly and establishing associations is guaranteed as provided within the law.

Article (34)

A citizen is free to choose his work, profession or trade as provided within the law and subject to the legislation regulating such professions and trades

A person may not be subjected to forced labor except in such cases as may be provided in law and provided that such person is compensated for such labor.

A person may not be enslaved.

Article (35)

The door for holding a public office is open to all citizens on the basis of equal conditions and in accordance with the provisions of the Law.

A public office is a national service entrusted to the person who holds that office. A public servant shall, while performing his/her duties, seek to achieve only the public interest.

Article (36)

Housing is inviolable. A person may not enter another person's house without the permission of those living in that house except in such cases and conditions as may be provided in the law.

Article (37)

A citizen may not be deported or exiled from the UAE.

Article (38)

It is prohibited to extradite a citizen and a political refugee.

Article (39)

Public confiscation of property is prohibited. A person's private property may not be confiscated except by court judgment and in such cases as provided in Law.

Article (40)

Foreigners in the UAE enjoy the rights and freedoms stipulated in the applicable international instruments or in the treaties and conventions to which the UAE is a party and have to perform the duties which correspond to those rights and freedoms.

Article (41)

A person has the right to file a complaint with a competent authority, including a judicial authority, against the violation of the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Part.

Article (42)

A citizen has the duty to pay such taxes and public levies as prescribed in law.

Article (43)

Defending the UAE is a sacred duty of every citizen and performing military service is an honor which is regulated by law.

Article (44)

Respect of the Constitution, the laws and the orders issued by the public authorities in execution thereof, compliance with the public order, and respect of public moral are duties binding to all the people living in the UAE.

Part Four
The Federal Authorities

Article (45)

The federal authorities consist of the following:

1. The Federal Supreme Council.
2. The UAE President and Vice President.
3. The UAE Council of Ministers.
4. The Federal National Council.
5. The Federal Judiciary.

Chapter One
The UAE Supreme Council

Article (46)

The Federal Supreme Council is the highest authority in the UAE. The Federal Supreme Council consists of the Rulers of all the Emirates of the UAE; In case of a Ruler's absence or when it is not possible for a Ruler to attend, the acting Ruler in the Emirate shall substitute the Ruler in the Federal Supreme Council.

Each Emirate has a single vote in the deliberations of the Council.

Article (47)

The Federal Supreme Council shall undertake the following:

1. Draw up the general policy in all the matters assigned to the UAE by the Constitution and consider anything that may achieve the objectives of the UAE and the common interest of the Member Emirates.
2. Ratify the various federal laws before they are issued including the Annual General Budget Act and the Closing Account Act.
3. Ratify the decrees relating to the matters which, under the provisions of the Constitution, must be ratified or approved by the Supreme Council before such decrees are issued by the President of the UAE.

4. Ratify, by a decree, the international treaties and conventions.
5. Upon a proposal by the President of the UAE, approve the appointment of the Prime Minister of the UAE, accept his resignation, and remove him from office.
6. Approve the appointment of the President and Judges of the Federal Supreme Court and accept their resignation and, in the cases provided in the Constitution, dismiss them by a decree.
7. Exercise high control over the UAE's affairs, in general.
8. Any other responsibilities as provided in the Constitution or in the federal laws.

Article (48)

1. The Supreme Council shall lay down its by-law including its operating procedure and the way of voting on its resolutions, The Council's deliberations are held in camera.
2. The Supreme Council shall establish a General Secretariat staffed by an adequate number of officers to assist the Council in performing its duties.

Article (49)

The resolutions of the Supreme Council on substantive matters shall be taken by majority of five of its members provided that such majority shall include Abu Dhabi and Dubai Emirates. The minority shall abide by the opinion of the majority.

The resolutions of the Council on procedural matters are taken by majority vote. The Council's by-law specifies these matters.

Article (50)

The meetings of the Supreme Council are held in the UAE's capital city and may be held in such other place as may be agreed upon in advance.

Chapter Two

The President and Vice President of the UAE

Article (51)

The Federal Supreme Council shall elect from among its members a President and Vice President of the Union; and the Vice President shall exercise all the President's responsibilities in the event of the latter's absence for any reason.

In exception to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Union's President may nominate another Vice President, and such nomination shall be submitted to the Federal Supreme Council. The Vice President's appointment shall be pursuant to a resolution issued by the Union's President after the Federal Supreme Council's approval.

If the Union's President has more than one Vice President, the President of the Union shall – upon the approval from the Federal Supreme Council – issue a federal decree distributing the Vice President's responsibilities stipulated in the Constitution and Federal Laws among his two Vice Presidents.

Article (52)

The term of office of the President and the two Vice President is five years; and the President and his two Vice Presidents may be re-elected for the same office; and each of them shall – upon assuming office, take the following oath before the Federal Supreme Council:

"I swear by Allah, the Great, that I shall be faithful to the United Arab Emirates; respect its Constitution and laws; protect the interests of the people of the Union; and to perform my duties honestly and faithfully and safeguard the Union's independence and its territorial integrity".

Article (53)

Where the office of the President or the Vice President falls vacant for death or resignation, or because any one of them ceases to be the Ruler in his Emirate for any reason, the Supreme Council shall be called for a meeting within a month from that date to elect a successor to the vacant office for the period stipulated in Article 52 hereof. In the event that

the two offices of the President and the Vice President of the Supreme Council become vacant at the same time, the Council shall immediately be called for a meeting by any one of its members or by the Prime Minister of the UAE to elect a new President and Vice President to fill the two vacant offices.

Article (54)

The President of the UAE has the following responsibilities:

1. Preside over the Supreme Council and direct its discussions.
2. Convene and dismiss the Supreme Council in accordance with the rules of procedure determined by the Council in its by-law. The Council shall convene if a member of the Council so requests.
3. Call, if necessary, on the Supreme Council and the Cabinet of the UAE to hold a joint meeting.
4. Sign and promulgate the federal laws, decrees and resolutions ratified by the Supreme Council.
5. Appoint the Prime Minister, accept his resignation, and relieve him from office subject to the approval of the Supreme Council; and, upon the proposal of the Prime Minister of the UAE, appoint the Deputy Prime Ministers and the ministers, accept their resignation, and relieve them from office.
6. Appoint the UAE's diplomatic representatives to foreign states and other civil and military senior federal officials except for the President and the judges of the Federal Supreme Court, accept their resignation, and dismiss them subject to the approval of the Federal Council of Ministers. Such appointment, acceptance of resignation, or dismissal shall be conducted by decrees in accordance with the federal laws.
7. Sign the letters of credence of the UAE's diplomatic representatives to foreign states and organizations, accept the credentials of diplomatic and consular representatives of foreign states to the UAE, and receive their letters of credence; and sign the instruments appointing and accepting the credence of the representatives.
8. Supervise, through the Federal Cabinet and the competent ministers, the execution of

federal laws, decrees and resolutions.

9. Represent the UAE internally, before the other States, and in all international relations.
10. Grant pardon, commute punishment, and approve capital sentences in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and federal laws.
11. Confer civil and military decorations and Medals of Honor in accordance with the relevant laws thereof.
12. Exercise such responsibilities as may be vested in him by the Supreme Council or provided in the Constitution or federal laws.

Chapter Three

UAE Council of Ministers

Article (55)

The Federal Cabinet consists of the Prime Minister, his deputies and a number of ministers.

Article (56)

For a person to be a minister, such person must be a citizen of the UAE known for his competence and experience.

Article (57)

The Prime Minister, his deputies and the ministers shall, before assuming office, take the following oath before the President of the UAE:

"I swear by Allah, the Great, that I shall be loyal to the United Arab Emirates; respect its Constitution and laws; perform my duties with honesty; completely observe the interests of the people of the UAE, and completely safeguard the existence of the UAE and its territorial integrity."

Article (58)

The law shall specify the responsibilities of the ministries and the powers of each minister. The first Federal Cabinet shall be composed of the following ministries:

1. Foreign Affairs
2. Interior
3. Defense
4. Finance, Economy and Industry
5. Justice
6. Education
7. Public Health
8. Public Works and Agriculture
9. Communications, Post, Telegraph and Telephone
10. Labor and Social Affairs
11. Information
12. Planning

Article (59)

The Prime Minister shall preside over the meetings of the Council of Ministers. He shall call the Council into session, and shall run its discussions, follow up the activities of the ministers, and supervise the co-ordination of activities among the ministries and in all the executive apparatuses of the UAE.

One of the Deputy Prime Ministers shall exercise all the authorities of the Prime Minister in the event of the Prime Minister's absence for any reason.

Article (60)

The Council of Ministers, being the executive body of the UAE, shall undertake, under the high oversight of the President of the UAE and the Supreme Council all the federal internal and foreign affairs as provided in the Constitution and the federal laws.

The Council of Ministers, in particular, shall exercise the following responsibilities:

1. Follow up the execution of the general policy of the UAE Government inside and outside the country.
2. Propose federal draft laws and submit them to the Federal National Council before

submitting them to the President of the UAE for forwarding them to the Supreme Council for ratification.

3. Prepare the draft federal annual general budget and final account.
4. Prepare draft decrees and different resolutions.
5. Issue such regulations as may be necessary for executing the federal laws insomuch as such regulations do not amend, put on hold, or except certain persons from the execution of these laws; and issue control regulations and other regulations regulating the public departments and administrations as provided in the provisions of the Constitution and the federal laws. A competent federal minister or any other administrative authority may be assigned, by special provision of the Law or by the Council of Ministers, to issue some of these regulations.
6. Supervise, through all the concerned authorities in the UAE or in the Emirates, the execution of the federal laws, decrees, resolutions and regulations.
7. Supervise the execution of judgments rendered by the federal courts and the execution of international treaties and conventions concluded by the UAE.
8. Appoint and dismiss federal employees in accordance with the provisions of the law provided that such appointment and dismissal does not need to be made by a decree.
9. Oversee the performance of activities in the federal public departments and administrations and the conduct and discipline of the federal employees in general.
10. Any other responsibilities vested in the Cabinet by law or determined by the Supreme Council within the limits of the Constitution.

Article (61)

The deliberations of the Cabinet shall be held in camera. The resolutions of the Cabinet shall be issued by majority vote of its members. In the event of parity, the Prime Minister shall have the casting vote.

The minority shall abide by the opinion of the majority.

Article (62)

While in office, the Prime Minister, the Deputies of the Prime Minister, or any Minister of the UAE may not practice any professional, commercial or financial activity or enter into any commercial transactions with the Government of the UAE or the Governments of the Emirates or holds, besides his office, more than one official post in the Government of an Emirate.

Article (63)

Members of the Cabinet shall seek to serve the interests of the UAE, enhance the public welfare, avoid completely to make personal benefits, and shall not exploit their official post in any way to their benefit or to the benefit of anyone with whom they have special relationship.

Article (64)

The Prime Minister, his deputies and the ministers jointly shall be politically responsible before the President of the UAE and the Federal Supreme Council for execution of the internal and foreign general policy of the UAE. Each of them shall be personally responsible before the President of the UAE and the Supreme Council for the activities of his ministry or office.

Where the Prime Minister resigns, is removed from office, or is dead or where his office falls vacant for any reason whatsoever, the whole Cabinet is deemed resigned. The President of the UAE may ask the ministers to remain in office temporarily to manage urgent affairs till the new Cabinet is formed.

Article (65)

At the beginning of every financial year, the Cabinet shall submit to the President of the UAE a detailed report on the internal achievements and on the UAE's relations with other States and international organizations. The President of the UAE then shall submit the report to the

Supreme Council. The report also contains the recommendations of the Cabinet on the best ways to strengthen the foundations of the UAE, consolidate its security and stability, and achieve its objectives and progress in all fields.

Article (66)

1. The Cabinet shall develop its own by-law including its rules of procedure.
2. The Cabinet shall establish a general secretariat staffed by a number of officers to assist the Council in performing its duties.

Article (67)

The Law shall determine the salaries of the Prime Minister, his deputies and the other ministers.

Chapter Four

The Federal National Council

Article (68)

The Federal National Council (FNC) shall comprise of forty members. The seats of the Federal National Council are distributed to the member Emirates as follows:

Abu Dhabi	8 seats
Dubai	8 seats
Sharjah	6 seats
Ras Al Khaimah	6 seats
Ajman	4 seats
Umm Al Quwain	4 seats
Fujairah	4 seats

Article (69)

An Emirate is free to determine the method of selection of its representatives in the Federal National Council.

Article (70)

A member of the Federal National Council shall meet the following conditions:

1. Be a citizen of an Emirate of the UAE, and resides permanently in the Emirate which that person represents in the Federal National Council.
2. Be, when selected, not less than twenty-five calendar year.
3. Has civil capacity, is known for good manners and reputation, and has not previously been convicted of an offence against honor unless he has been rehabilitated in accordance with the Law.
4. Has adequate knowledge of reading and writing.

Article (71)

A person may not be a member of the Federal National Council and at the same time holds a public office in the UAE including ministerial posts.

Article (72)

The term of membership in the Federal National Council is four calendar years, commencing from the date the Federal National Council holds its first meeting

Article (73)

Before a member of the Federal National Council assumes office in the Federal National Council or in its committees, such member shall take the following oath before the Federal National Council in a public session:

"I swear by Allah, the Great that I shall be loyal to the United Arab Emirates; respect the Constitution and the laws of the UAE, and to perform my duties in the Federal National Council and its committees honestly and truthfully."

Article (74)

If, for any reason, a seat of a member of the Federal National Council falls vacant before the end of the term of his membership, a substitute shall be selected within two months from

the date the vacancy is announced by the Federal National Council, unless the vacancy occurs during the three months preceding the end of the Federal National Council term. The new member shall complete the term of membership of his predecessor.

Article (75)

The meetings of the Federal National Council shall be held in the capital city of the UAE. The Federal National Council may, by way of exception, by resolution taken by majority vote of the members and subject to the approval of the Council of Ministers, hold its sessions in any other place in the UAE.

Article (76)

The Federal National Council shall decide upon the validity of the mandate of its members. It shall also decide upon disqualifying members, if they lose one of the required conditions by a majority of all its members and upon the proposal of five among them. The Federal National Council shall be competent to accept resignation from membership. The resignation shall be considered as final from the date of its acceptance by Federal National Council.

Article (77)

A member of the Federal National Council shall represent the entire people of the UAE and not merely the Emirate which that member represents in the FNC.

Section Two

Rules of Procedure

Article (78)

The Federal National Council shall meet in an annual regular session for a minimum of seven months, commencing on the third week of October every year. The Federal National Council may be called into an extraordinary session, if necessary. The Federal National Council may not hear at an extraordinary session any matter other than those for which it

has been called into session.

Article (79)

The Federal National Council shall be called into session and shall be dismissed by Decree issued by the President of the UAE subject to the approval of the Federal Council of Ministers. A meeting of the Federal National Council convened without a formal call or in a place other than that specified for its meetings in the Constitution shall be deemed invalid and has no effect.

However, if the Federal National Council is not convened for its annual regular session before the third week of November, the Federal National Council is convened ipso facto on the twenty first of that month.

Article (80)

The President of the UAE shall inaugurate the regular annual session of the Federal National Council and delivers a speech addressing the State of the Union, the major events and matters which happened during the year, and the drafts and reforms the Federal Government intends to make during the new session.

The President of the UAE may delegate the Vice President or the Prime Minister to open the session or to deliver the inaugurating speech.

The Federal National Council shall select, from among its members, a committee to prepare a draft reply to the inauguration speech containing the Federal National Council remarks and wishes. After the reply is passed by the Federal National Council, it is then submitted to the President of the UAE to be presented to the Supreme Council.

Article (81)

A member of the Federal National Council shall not be accountable for any opinions or views he expresses while performing his duties in the Federal National Council or in its committees.

Article (82)

Except in case of flagrante delicto, no penal procedure may, without permission of the Federal National Council, be taken against a member of the Federal National Council while the Federal National Council is in session. Where such procedure is taken while the Federal National Council is in recess, the Federal National Council must be so notified.

Article (83)

The Federal National Council Chairman and other members shall be entitled from the date of taking the oath before the Federal National Council to such remuneration as may be specified by law in addition to travel expenses from their place of residence to the place where the Federal National Council meets.

Article (84)

The Federal National Council shall have a Bureau consisting of a Chairman, First and Second Deputy Chairman, and two controllers, all of whom shall be selected by the Federal National Council from among its members.

The term of office of the Chairman and the Chairman's deputies shall expire with the end of the term of Federal National Council or when it is dissolved, in accordance with the provisions of the second paragraph of Article (88).

The term of the office of the two Controllers shall expire with the selection of two new controllers at the opening of the next regular annual session. Where a post in the bureau becomes vacant, the Federal National Council shall select a substitute to fill that vacancy for the remaining period.

Article (85)

The Federal National Council shall have a General Secretariat headed by a General Secretary. The Federal National Council By-law specifies the General Secretary's responsibilities. The Federal National Council shall lay down its by-law and such by-law shall be issued by resolution of the President of the UAE upon the approval of the Federal

Supreme Council.

Article (86)

The sessions of the Federal National Council shall be held in public. Sessions may be held in camera upon the request of a representative of the Government, the Speaker of the Federal National Council, or one third of the Federal National Council members.

Article (87)

The quorum of the deliberations of the Federal National Council shall be valid only if attended by a majority of its members at least. The Federal National Council Resolutions shall be issued by absolute majority of the votes of the members present, except in cases where a special majority is required. In case of parity, the chairman of the session shall have the casting vote.

Article (88)

The meetings of the Federal National Council may, by a Decree issued by the President of the UAE with the approval of the Federal Council of Ministers, be adjourned for a period not exceeding one month provided that such adjournment is not repeated in one session except with the approval of the Federal National Council and for once only. The period of adjournment shall not be calculated as part of the term of the regular session.

The Federal National Council may be dissolved by Decree issued by the President of the UAE with the approval of the Federal Supreme Council provided that the Decree of dissolution calls on the new Federal National Council to meet within sixty days from the date of the Decree of dissolution. The Federal National Council may not be dissolved again for the same reason.

Section Three

Responsibilities of the Federal National Council

Article (89)

Without prejudice to the provisions of Article (110), federal draft laws, including financial draft laws, shall be presented to the Federal National Council and, then, sent to the President of the UAE who shall forward them for ratification to the Supreme Council. The Federal National Council shall discuss the draft laws brought before it and may approve, amend, or reject them.

Article (90)

During its regular session, the Federal National Council shall examine the Federal Annual General Budget draft law and the final Account draft Law as provided in part eight of the Constitution.

Article (91)

The Government shall notify the Federal National Council of the international treaties and conventions the Government concludes with other states and the different international organizations together with the appropriate explanations. The President of the UAE shall determine by a Resolution, the international treaties and conventions that must be referred to the Federal National Council for consideration before they are ratified.

Article (92)

The Federal National Council may discuss any general issue pertaining to the affairs of the UAE except where the Council of the Ministers notifies the Federal National Council that discussing such issue is against the UAE's high interests. The Prime Minister or the competent minister shall attend the deliberations. The Federal National Council may make recommendations and determine the issues that it shall discuss. If the Cabinet does not approve the recommendations, it shall so notify the Federal National Council of the reasons of disapproval.

Article (93)

The Government of the UAE is represented in the meetings of the Federal National Council by the Prime Minister or one of his deputies, or at least by a member of the Federal Government. The Prime Minister, one of his deputies or the competent minister shall answer questions put to them by any member of the Federal National Council requesting explanation of any matters within their jurisdiction, in conformity with the procedures prescribed in the by-law of the Federal National Council.

Chapter Five

The Judiciary in the UAE and the Emirates

Article (94)

Justice is the basis of government. In performing their duties, judges are independent and are influenced only by the rule of law and their own conscience.

Article (95)

The UAE has a Federal Supreme Court and federal first instance courts as provided in the following Articles.

Article (96)

The Federal Supreme Court shall comprise of the Chief Justice and a maximum of five judges appointed by a Decree issued by the President of the UAE after the ratification of the Supreme Council. The law specifies the number of the circuits of the Supreme Court, its regulations, procedures, the conditions of service, retirement of its members, and the conditions and requirements that they must meet.

Article (97)

The Chief Justice and the judges of the Federal Supreme Court may not be removed from office while they administer justice. Their term of office may not be terminated except for one of the following reasons:

1. Death.
2. Resignation.
3. The expiration of the term of the contract of those who are appointed by contract or the completion of the term of secondment.
4. Reaching the retirement age.
5. Proved disability to perform their duties for health reasons.
6. Disciplinary dismissal for the reasons, and by the procedures, provided in law.
7. Assign other posts to them after their consent.

Article (98)

Before taking up their office, the Chief Justice and the judges of the Federal Supreme Court shall take an oath before the President of the UAE and in the presence of the UAE Minister of Justice that they will render justice without fear or prejudice and that they will be loyal to the Constitution and the laws of the UAE.

Article (99)

The Federal Supreme Court shall undertake deciding on the following matters:

1. Decide on different disputes among the member Emirates of the UAE, or between any one or more Emirates and the Federal government in case that the dispute is referred to the Court upon the request of any of the concerned parties.
2. Consider the constitutionality of a Federal Law if it is appealed by one or more Emirates on the grounds that it is in conflict with the Constitution of the UAE. The Court shall also consider the constitutionality of legislations enacted by an Emirate if it is appealed by a federal authority on the grounds that it is in conflict with the Constitution of the UAE or the Federal Laws.
3. Consider the constitutionality of Laws, Legislations and Regulations in general if it is so requested by any court in the country while hearing a relevant claim. The concerned court shall comply with the resolution of the Federal Supreme Court rendered in this respect.

4. Interpret the provisions of the Constitution, if it is so requested by any federal authority or by the Government of any Emirate. Any such interpretation is binding on everyone.
5. Call into account the ministers and senior officials of the UAE appointed by Decree for their actions while performing their official duties upon the request of the Supreme Council and in accordance with the relevant law.
6. Decide on the crimes which directly affect the interests of the UAE, such as the crimes relating to the UAE's internal or external security, forgery of the official records or seals of a federal authority, and counterfeiting of currency.
7. Hear the claims of conflict of jurisdiction between a federal court and a local court in an Emirate.
8. Hear the claims of conflict of jurisdiction between a court in an Emirate and a court in another Emirate. The rules governing these claims shall be regulated by a federal law.
9. Any other responsibilities provided in the Constitution or which may be referred to the Federal Supreme Court by a Federal Law.

Article (100)

The Federal Supreme Court shall hold its hearings in the capital city of the UAE. The Court may, by way of exception, hold its hearings, when necessary, in the capital city of any Emirate.

Article (101)

A judgment of the Federal Supreme Court shall be final and binding upon everyone. If the Court, when deciding on the constitutionality of a Law, Legislation or Regulation, holds that a federal legislation is in violation of the Federal Constitution, or that local Legislation or Regulation under consideration contains provisions which are in violation of the Federal Constitution or a Federal Law, the concerned authority in the UAE or in the Emirate, as the case may be, shall immediately take the necessary measures to remove or correct the violation of the Constitution.

Article (102)

The UAE shall have one or more Federal Court of First Instance which shall sit in the permanent capital city of the UAE or in certain capital cities of the Emirates. A Federal Court of First Instance has, within the territory of its jurisdiction, the powers to hear the following claims:

1. Civil, commercial and administrative disputes between the UAE and individuals whether the UAE is the plaintiff or the defendant.
2. Crimes committed within the boundaries of the permanent capital city of the UAE, with the exception of the matters reserved for the Federal Supreme Court under Article 99 of the Constitution.
3. Personal status claims, civil and commercial claims and other claims between individuals, which arise in the permanent capital city of the UAE.

Article (103)

The law regulates all matters related to the Federal Courts of First Instance in respect of its class, formation, and chambers; venue jurisdiction; the procedures to be followed before it; the oath to be sworn by its judges and their conditions of service; and the ways of appeal against its judgments.

The law may provide that a judgment of the Federal Court of First Instance may be appealed before a circuit of the Federal Supreme Court in such cases and in accordance with such procedures as may be determined by that law.

Article (104)

The local judicial authorities in each Emirate shall have the jurisdiction in all judicial matters not assigned to the UAE courts under the provisions of the Constitution.

Article (105)

Any or all of the jurisdictions conferred upon a local judicial authority under the preceding Article may be transferred by Federal Law enacted upon the request of the Emirate

concerned, to the Federal Courts of First Instance.

A Federal Law shall determine the claims where a judgment by a local judicial authority in a criminal, civil, commercial or any other claims may be appealed before a Federal Courts. A Federal Court's judgment on such appeal shall be final.

Article (106)

There shall be a Federal General Attorney who is appointed by a federal decree issued with the approval of the Council of Ministers. The Federal Attorney General is assisted by a number of public prosecutors.

The law shall regulate the matters relating to the members of the Federal Public Prosecution Office with respect to the way of their appointment, ranks, promotion, retirement and the qualifications that they must meet.

The Federal Code of Criminal Procedures and trials shall regulate the jurisdictions and procedures of the Federal Public Prosecution Office, and the authority conferred upon the law enforcement and public security officers who assist it in its functions.

Article (107)

The President of the UAE may, upon the proposal made by the Federal Minister of Justice and subject to the approval of a committee formed and chaired by the Minister, pardon a convicted person from the execution of a sentence delivered by a federal judicial authority before the sentence is executed or while the punishment is being served or commute the punishment. The Committee formed for this purpose shall comprise of six members selected by the Federal Cabinet for a renewable term of three years. The members of the committee are selected from citizens known for their wise judgment and efficiency.

The membership of the committee is free of charge. The Committee's deliberations are held in camera and its resolutions are taken by majority vote.

Article (108)

A final death penalty delivered by a federal judicial authority shall only be executed after the

President of the UAE ratifies the sentence. The President of the UAE may substitute a lesser sentence for the death penalty in accordance with the procedures provided in the preceding Article.

Article (109)

A full pardon from a crime or certain crimes shall be granted only by Law.

Pardon Act remits the penalty and releases the convicted person from the execution of the entire penalty or from a part of the penalty that has yet to be served.

Part Five

Federal Legislations and Decrees and the Competent Authorities thereof

Chapter One

Federal Laws

Article (110)

1. A Federal Law shall be enacted in accordance with the provisions of this Article and other relevant provisions of the Constitution.
2. A draft Law becomes a Law after the following procedures are taken:
 - a. The Cabinet shall prepare the draft Law and shall submit it to the Federal National Council.
 - b. The Cabinet shall submit the draft Law for approval to the President of the UAE who shall forward it for ratification to the Supreme Council.
 - c. The President of the UAE shall sign and promulgates the Law after it is ratified by the Supreme Council.
3. (a) If the Federal National Council introduces an amendment to a Draft Law and such amendment is unacceptable to the President of the UAE or the Supreme Council, or if the Federal National Council rejects a Draft Law, the President of the UAE or the Supreme Council may return it to the Federal National Council. If the Federal National Council introduces an amendment to the Draft Law which is unacceptable to the President of the UAE or the Supreme Council, or if the Federal National

Council decides to reject the Draft Law, the President of the UAE may issue the Law after it is ratified by the Supreme Council.

(b) The term "Draft Law" in this paragraph means the draft which is submitted to the President of the UAE by the Cabinet including the amendments, if any, introduced to it by the Federal National Council.

4. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if in the absence of the Federal National Council, a need emerges for enacting a Federal Laws, the Federal Cabinet may take the necessary action for obtain it by the Supreme Council and the President of the UAE, provided that the Federal National Council shall be so notified at its next meeting.

Article (111)

Laws shall be published in the Official Gazette of the UAE within a maximum of two weeks from the date it is signed and issued by the President of the UAE after it is ratified by the Supreme Council. Such Laws shall come into force after one month from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette unless another date is stipulated in the Law itself.

Article (112)

A Law shall only apply from the date it comes into force and shall not apply regressively. In non-criminal matters, a Law may, when necessary, provide otherwise.

Chapter Two

Decrees by Laws

Article (113)

If, while the Supreme Council is in recess, a state of urgency emerges which requires the enactment of Federal Laws, the President of the UAE together with the Cabinet may issue that Law in the form of a Decree that have the force of Law provided that such Law is not in conflict with the Constitution.

Such Decrees by Law shall be submitted within a maximum of a week to the Supreme Council for approval or repeal thereof. If the Decree by Law is approved, it takes the force of

a law and the Federal National Council is so notified at its next meeting.

If the Supreme Council does not approve the Decree by Law, Such Decree shall cease to have the force of law unless the Supreme Council resolved to approve its application in the preceding period or settles in another way the effects resulting from its application.

Chapter Three

Ordinary Decrees

Article (114)

The Decree shall not be issued unless approved by the Cabinet and ratified by the President of the UAE or the Supreme Council, each according to his responsibilities. Decrees shall be published in the Official Gazette after it is signed by the President of the UAE.

Article (115)

The Supreme Council may delegate the President of the UAE together with the Cabinet to issue, in the absence of the Supreme Council, an urgent decree which in the ordinary course of action must have been ratified by the Supreme Council itself provided that the delegation of this power does not include the approval of international treaties and conventions, or the declaration or lifting of martial laws, or the declaration of a defensive war, or the appointment of the Chief Justice or the judges of the Federal Supreme Court.

Part Six

The Emirates

Article (116)

An Emirate shall exercise all the authorities not conferred by the Constitution upon the UAE, and shall participate in the UAE's structure, and benefits from its existence, services and protection.

Article (117)

The regime in each Emirate shall seek, in particular, to keep security and order in its

territories, provide public utilities, and raise the social and economic standards in the Emirate.

Article (118)

All the member Emirates of the UAE shall seek to harmonize their legislation in the different fields to unify that legislation as far as possible.

Two or more Emirates may, subject to the ratification of the Supreme Council, combine together in a political or administrative unit, or unify all or part of their public services, or establish a single or joint administration to run any such service.

Article (119)

Matters pertaining to the execution of judgments, judicial delegation, serving legal documents, and the extradition of criminals from an Emirate of the UAE to another shall be regulated by a Federal Law, for the purpose of facilitating these matters.

Part Seven

Distribution of Legislative, Executive and International Jurisdictions between the UAE and the Emirates

Article (120)

The UAE has exclusive legislative and executive jurisdiction in the following matters:

1. Foreign affairs.
2. Defense and the federal armed forces.
3. Protection of the UAE's security against internal or external threats.
4. Security, order, and government affairs in the permanent capital city of the UAE.
5. Federal officers and the federal judiciary Affairs.
6. Federal finance, taxes, duties and dues.
7. Federal public loans.
8. Post, telegram, telephone, and wireless services.
9. Paving, maintaining, and improving such roads as the Supreme Council may deem main

- roads, and regulating the traffic movement on those roads.
10. Air control and issuing licenses to aircrafts and pilots.
 11. Education.
 12. Public health and medical services.
 13. Cash and currency
 14. Measures, standards and weights
 15. Electricity services.
 16. The federal nationality, passports, residence and immigration.
 17. Federal properties and all matters relating thereto.
 18. Census and statistics for federal purposes affairs.
 19. Federal mass communication.

Article (121)

Without prejudice to the provisions of the preceding Article, the UAE has exclusive legislative jurisdiction in the following matters:

Labor relations and social security; Ownership of real properties and expropriation for the public interest; Extradition of criminals; Banks; All types of insurance; Protection of agricultural and animal wealth; Major legislation relating to the penal, civil, and commercial codes; company law, civil and criminal procedure codes; Protection of intellectual, technical and industrial property rights; copyright; and printing and publishing rights; Import of arms and ammunitions except for use by the security forces of any Emirate; Other aviation matters that do not fall within the federal executive jurisdiction; Determination of the territorial waters and regulation of navigation in the high seas; and regulation of the free financial zones, the manner in which they are established, and how far they are excluded from scope of application of the federal legislative provisions.

Article (122)

The Emirates shall have jurisdiction in all the matters not conferred exclusively upon the federal authorities as provided in the two preceding Articles.

Article (123)

Notwithstanding Article 120, Clause (1), which provides that the UAE has exclusive jurisdiction in the matters of foreign policy and international relations, a member Emirate of the UAE may conclude limited conventions of a local and administrative nature with the neighboring countries provided that such conventions are not be in conflict with the interests of the UAE or the federal laws provided that the Federal Supreme Council be so notified in advance. If the Supreme Council objects to the conclusion of these conventions, the matter shall be put on hold until the Federal Court decides as quickly as possible on such objection.

An Emirate may retain its membership in, or join, the OPEC organization and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Article (124)

Prior to the conclusion of any international treaty or convention, which may affect the status of an Emirate, the competent federal authorities shall consult with that Emirate in advance. In case of disagreement, the matter shall be submitted to the Federal Supreme Court to decide on such dispute.

Article (125)

The Governments of the Emirates shall take the appropriate measures to execute the federal laws and the international treaties and conventions concluded by the UAE including the enactment of the local Laws, Regulations, Resolutions and Orders necessary for such execution. The federal authorities may supervise the execution of the federal laws and resolutions, international treaties and conventions, and the federal court judgments by the Emirates' governments. The competent administrative and judicial authorities in the Emirates shall provide to the federal authorities all possible assistance in this respect.

Part Eight
Financial Affairs of the UAE

Article (126)

The general revenues of the UAE shall consist of the following resources:

1. Taxes, duties and dues imposed by a Federal law in matters within the legislative and executive jurisdiction of the UAE.
2. Fees and wages received by the UAE in return for services provided.
3. Contribution made by member Emirates of the UAE in the Annual Budget of the UAE in accordance with the following Article.
4. UAE revenue from its own properties.

Article (127)

The member Emirates of the UAE shall contribute a specified proportion of their annual resources to cover the annual general budget expenditure of the UAE, in the manner and on the scale to be prescribed in the Budget Law.

Article (128)

The law shall prescribe the method of preparing the general budget of the UAE and the final accounts. The law shall also define the beginning of the financial year.

Article (129)

The draft annual budget of the UAE, comprising estimates of revenues and expenditure, shall be referred to the Federal National Council at least two months before the beginning of the financial year, for discussion and submission of comments thereon, before the draft budget is submitted to the Supreme Council of the UAE, together with those comments, for approval.

Article (130)

The annual general budget shall be issued by a law. In all cases, where the budget law has

not been issued before the beginning of the financial year. Temporary monthly funds may be made by UAE Decree on the basis of one twelfth of the funds of the previous financial year. Revenues shall be collected and expenditures disbursed in accordance with the laws in force at the end of the preceding financial year.

Article (131)

All expenditure not provided for in the budget, all expenditure in excess of the budget estimates and all transfers of sums from one part to another of the Budget shall be covered by a law. However, in cases of extreme urgency, such expenditure or transfer may be arranged by a Decree by Law in conformity with the provisions of Article 113 of this Constitution.

Article (132)

The UAE shall allocate in its annual budget a sum from its revenue to be expended on building, and construction projects, internal security and social affairs according to the urgent needs of some of the Emirates. The execution of these projects and the disbursement thereon shall be drawn from these funds. Accomplished by means of and under the supervision of the competent UAE apparatuses with the agreement of authorities of the Emirates concerned. The UAE may establish a special fund for such purposes.

Article (133)

No federal tax may be imposed, amended or abolished except by virtue of law. No person may be exempted from payment of such taxes except in the cases specified by law. Federal taxes, duties and fees may not be levied on any person except within the limits of the law and in accordance with its provisions.

Article (134)

No public loans may be contracted except by a Federal law. No commitment involving the payment of sums from UAE Public treasury in a future year or years may be concluded

except by means of a Federal law.

Article (135)

The final account of the financial administration of the UAE for the completed financial year shall be referred to the Federal National Council within the four months following the end of the said year, for its comments thereon, before their submission to the Supreme Council for approval, in the light of the Public Auditor report.

Article (136)

An independent Federal department headed by a Public Auditor who shall be appointed by a Decree, shall be established to audit the accounts of the UAE and its organs and apparatuses affiliated thereto, and to audit any other accounts assigned to the said department for that purpose in accordance with the law. The law shall regulate this department and shall define its responsibilities and the powers of those working therein, and the guarantees to be given to it, to its president and the employees working in it in order to carry out their duties in the most efficient manner.

Part Nine

Armed Forces and Security Forces

Article (137)

Every attack upon any member Emirates of the UAE shall be deemed as an attack upon all the Emirates and upon the existence of the UAE itself, which all Federal and local forces shall co-operate to repel by all means possible.

Article (138)

The UAE shall have armed navy and air forces with unified training and command. The Commander in Chief of these forces and the Chief of the General Staff shall be appointed and dismissed from their posts by a Federal Decree. The UAE may have federal Security Forces. The UAE Cabinet shall be responsible directly to the President of the UAE and the

Federal Supreme Council for the affairs of all these forces.

Article (139)

The law shall regulate military service, general or partial mobilization, the rights and duties of members of the Armed Forces, their disciplinary procedures and the special regulations of the Federal Security Forces.

Article (140)

The declaration of defensive war shall be declared by a Decree issued by the President of the UAE after the approval thereof by the Supreme Council. Offensive war shall be prohibited pursuant to the provisions of international charters.

Article (141)

A Supreme Defense Council shall be set up headed by the President of the UAE. Among its members shall be the Vice President of the UAE, the Prime Minister of the UAE, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense, Finance, Interior, the Commander in Chief and the Chief of the General Staff. It shall advise and offer consultations on all matters pertaining to defense, maintenance of the peace and security of the UAE. Forming the armed forces, their equipment and development and the determination of their posts and camps.

The Council may invite any military adviser or expert or other persons it wishes to attend its meetings but they shall have no right to vote in its deliberations. All matters pertaining to this Council shall be regulated by the Law.

Article (142)

The State shall solely have the right to establish ground, navy and air armed forces.

Article (143)

Any Emirate shall have the right to request the assistance of the Armed Forces or the Security Forces of the UAE in order to maintain security and order within its territories whenever it is

exposed to danger. Such request shall be submitted immediately to the Federal Supreme Council for resolution.

The President of the UAE and the UAE Cabinet collectively, may, if the Supreme Council is not in session, take any immediate measure which cannot be delayed and may call the Supreme Council for immediate session.

Part Ten

Final Provisions

Article (144)

- a. If the Supreme Council deems that the high interests of the UAE require the amendment of this Constitution, it shall submit a draft constitutional amendment to the Federal National Council.
- b. The procedure for approving the constitutional amendment shall be the same as the procedure for approving the law.
- c. The approval of the Federal National Council for a draft constitutional amendment shall require the agreement of two-thirds of the votes of members present.
- d. The President of the UAE shall sign the constitutional amendment in the name of the Supreme Council and on its behalf and shall issue the amendment

Article (145)

Under no circumstances, may any of the provisions of this Constitution be suspended, except when Martial Laws are in force and within the limits specified by this law regulating such provisions. Sessions of the Federal National Council may not be suspended during such period nor may the immunity of its members be prejudiced.

Article (146)

In case of necessity defined by law, Martial laws shall be declared by a Decree issued with the ratification of the Supreme Council upon a proposal made by the President of the UAE and the approval of the Cabinet of the UAE. Such Decree shall be notified to the Federal

National Council at its next meeting. Martial laws shall also be lifted by Decree issued with the ratification of the Supreme Council when the need, for which it was imposed, no longer exists.

Article (147)

Nothing in the application of this Constitution shall prejudice treaties or agreements concluded by member Emirates with states or international organizations unless such treaties or agreements are amended or abrogated by agreement between the parties concerned.

Article (148)

All matters established by Laws, Regulations, Decrees, Orders and Resolutions in the various member Emirates of the UAE in effect upon the coming into force of this Constitution, shall continue to be applicable unless amended or repealed in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution. Similarly, the measures and Regulations existing in the member Emirates shall continue to be effective until the issuance of laws amending them in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

Article (149)

Except for the provisions of Article 121 of this Constitution, the Emirates may issue legislations necessary for the regulation of the matters set out in the said Article without prejudice to the provisions of Article 151 of this Constitution.

Article (150)

The federal authorities shall strive to issue the laws referred to in this Constitution as quickly as possible so as to replace the existing legislations and systems, particularly those which are in conflict with the provisions of the Constitution.

Article (151)

The provisions of this Constitution shall prevail over the Constitutions of the member Emirates of the UAE. The Federal Laws which are issued in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution shall have priority over the legislations, Regulations and resolutions issued by the authorities of the Emirates. In case of conflict, that part of the inferior legislation which is in conflict with the superior legislation shall be rendered null and void to the extent that removes the conflict. In case of a dispute, the matter shall be referred to the Federal Supreme Court for deciding thereon.

Article (152)

This Constitution shall come into force from the date to be determined in a declaration to be issued by the Rulers signatories to this Constitution.

Signed in Dubai on this day the 18th of July, 1971,
Corresponding to the 25th of Jumada Al Awwal 1391.

Signature

**Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan
Ruler of the Emirate of Abu
Dhabi**

Signature

**Rashid Bin Said Al Maktoum
Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai**

Signature

**Khalid Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi
Ruler of the Emirate of Sharjah**

Signature

**Hamid Bin Rashid Al Nouaimy
For the Ruler of the Emirate of
Ajman**

Signature

**Rashid Bin Ahmed Al Moualla
For the Ruler of the Emirate of
Umm Al Quwain**

Signature

**Mohammed Bin Hamad Al Sharqi
Ruler of the Emirate of Fujairah**