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About Saudi Arabia

Saudi Government

The Basic Law of Governance

Last updated: 9/20/2011 10:31 AM

The Government

Principles of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The reform mission, upon which the Saudi state was founded, represents the main core of the government. This mission is based on the realization of Islamic rules, implementation of Islamic law (Shari'a), and enjoining good and forbidding evil, as well as to reform the Islamic creed and purify it from heterodoxies. Therefore, it adopts its doctrine from the true Islamic principles that were prevailing at the very beginning of Islam.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious and The Most Merciful

No: a/90

Date: 27/8/1412 h.

By the help of Allah Almighty

We, Fahd bin Abdul Aziz, the king of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, consistent with the public interest, and in view with the development of the state in different fields, in addition to our enthusiasm to achieve our prospected objectives, we ordered the following:

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First: Issue the basic law of governance according to the context herein below.

Second: Act in accordance with all the systems, orders, and resolutions that are currently adopted, until they are amended pursuant to the basic system of governance.

Third: The basic law of governance shall be published in the official Gazette and shall be enforceable as of the date of its publication.

First section: General Principles

Article 1:

The kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab Islamic state. Its religion is Islam, and its constitution is the Holy Qur'an and the prophet's (peace be upon him) Sunnah (traditions). Its language is the Arabic language, and its capital city is Riyadh.

Article 2:

Its national holidays are Eid al-Fitr (a religious feast celebrated on the 1st of Shawwal, the 10th month of the Islamic calendar), and Eid al-Ad'ha (a religious feast celebrated on the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah, the 12th month of the Islamic calendar), and its calendar is the Hijra (lunar).

Article 3:

The color of its National Flag is green, and the width of the flag is equal to two thirds of its length. An article written in the middle of the flag translated as "there is no god but Allah, Muhammad is Allah's messenger" with a drawn sword underneath. The flag can't be put at half-mast, and its related regulations shall be determined by the law.

Article 4:

The state's emblem consists of two intersecting swords with a date palm in the upper space between them. Both the national anthem and the badges of honor shall be determined by the law.

Second section: Law of governance

Article 5:

- (a) The Regime in Saudi Arabia is Monarchy.
- (b) The dynasty right shall be confined to the sons of the founder, King Abdul Aziz bin Abdurrahman Al Faisal Al Saud and the sons of sons. The most eligible among them shall be recognized as king, to rule in accordance with the Holy Qur'an and the prophet's Sunnah.
- (c) The king appoints the crown prince and may relieve him of his duties by royal decree.
- (d) The crown prince shall devote full time to his job and to any other duties assigned to him by the king.
- (e) The powers of the king shall be assumed by the crown prince on the king's death
- (e) The crown prince shall assume the powers of the king on the king's death until the Bai'ah "Allegiance" is set.

Article 6:

Citizens shall pledge allegiance to the king on the basis of the Holy Qur'an and the prophet's Sunnah, as well as on the principle of hearing and obeying both in straitened circumstances and prosperity & in pleasant and unpleasant times.

Article 7:

The authority of the regime is derived from the Holy Qur'an and the prophet's Sunnah which rule over this and all other state laws.

Article 8:

The system of governance in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on justice, consultation "Shoura" and equality according to the Islamic Shari'ah (the law of islam).

Third section: constituents of Saudi society

Article 9:

The family is the nucleus of Saudi society. Its members shall be raised and adhere to the Islamic creed which calls for obedience to god, his messenger and those of the nation who are charged with authority; for the respect and enforcement of law and order; and for love of the motherland and taking pride in its glorious history.

Article 10:

The state shall put great attention to strengthen the bonds which hold the family together and to preserve its Arab and Islamic values. Likewise, it is keen on taking good care of all family members and creating proper conditions to help them in developing their skills and abilities.

Article 11:

The Saudi society shall cling to the Allah's Shari'ah. Its citizens shall cooperate to bolster benevolence, piety and mutual assistance; and to avoid dissension.

Article 12:

Fostering national unity is a must, and the state shall forbid all that may lead to disunity, sedition and division.

Article 13:

The goal of education is to instill the Islamic faith in the brains of the young generation and to impart them with knowledge and skills so that they become useful members in building their society, who love their homeland and be proud of its history.

Section four: Economic Principles

Article 14:

All natural resources bestowed by god, both under or above ground, of the country or in its territorial waters, or within its terrestrial and maritime limits, as well as the revenues of these resources shall be owned by the state as specified by the law. The law, also, shall specify the means to be employed for the utilization, protection and development of these resources in a manner conducive to the promotion of the state's interest, security and economy.

Article 15:

Not any concession or any permission shall be given for the utilization of any of the country's natural resources, except as permitted by the law.

Article 16:

Public property has its own sanctity. It shall be protected by the state and preserved by both citizens and expatriates.

Article 17:

Ownership, capital and labor are basic fundamentals of the kingdom's economic and social entity. They are private rights that perform a social function in conformity with Islamic Shari'ah.

Article 18:

The inviolability of private property shall be guaranteed by the state. Private property shall not be expropriated unless in the public interest, and the owner shall be fairly compensated.

Article 19:

Collective confiscation of properties shall be prohibited. Confiscation of private properties shall only be punished in accordance with a judicial verdict.

Article 20:

Taxes and fees shall be imposed only on the basis of fairness and when it is needed. They shall only be imposed, amended, abolished or remitted in accordance with the law.

Article 21:

Zakat shall only be levied and spent to its legitimate beneficiaries.

Article 22:

Economic and social development shall be achieved in accordance with a systematic and fair plan.

Section five: Rights and Duties

Article 23:

The state shall protect the Islamic creed and shall apply Islamic Shari'ah. The state shall enjoin good and forbid evil, and shall undertake the duties of the call to Islam.

Article 24:

The state shall maintain and serve the two holy mosques. It shall ensure the security and safety of all those who call at the two holy mosques so that they may be able to visit or perform the pilgrimage and "Umrah" (minor pilgrimage) in comfort and ease.

Article 25:

The state shall be keen to realize the aspirations of the Arab and Muslim nations with regard to solidarity and unity while enhancing its relations with friendly states.

Article 26:

The state shall protect human rights in accordance with Islamic Shari'ah.

Article 27:

The state shall guarantee the right of its citizens and their families in an emergency or in case of disease, disability and old age. Likewise it shall support the social security system and encourage individuals and institutions to contribute to charitable pursuits.

Article 28:

The state shall provide job opportunities to all able-bodied people and shall enact laws to protect both the employee and

the employer.

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