



THE SYSTEM OF STATE BODIES OF LEBANON

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PLANS

1- The head of the state

2- Legislative power

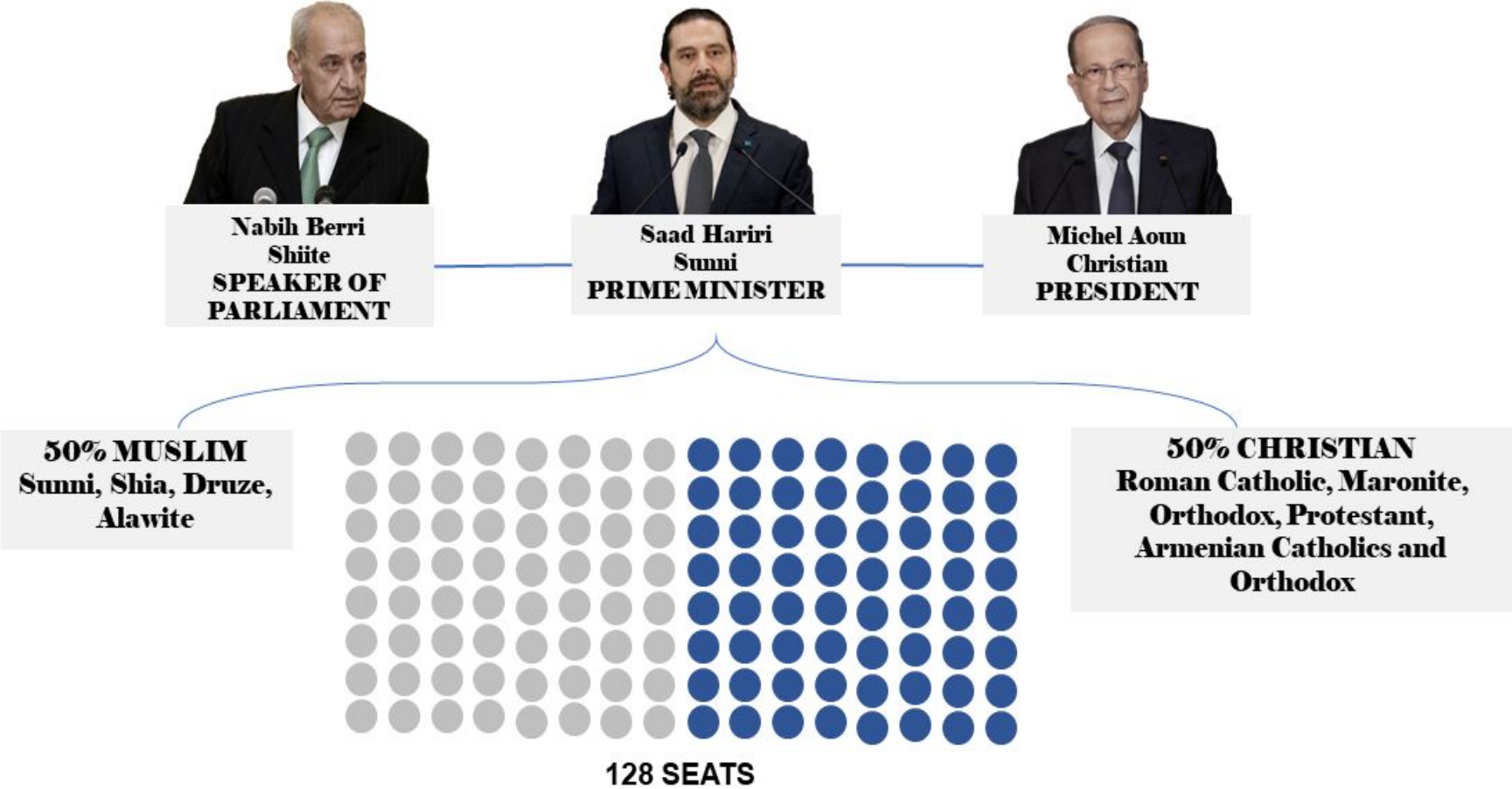
3- Executive power

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LEBANON'S CONFESSIONAL SYSTEM

The confessional system was detailed in the 1989 Taif Agreement, which sets up a proportional and highly inclusive power distribution system calculated based on the relative demographic presence and geographic distribution of the various minorities. The most senior government roles are also distributed to the three main religious factions, with the president being Maronite Christian, the prime minister Sunni and the speaker of the Parliament Shia. The 128 seats of the legislative body are also divided among them.




1 -THE HEAD OF STATE


The president:

The president of the Lebanese Republic is the head of state of Lebanon. The president is elected by the parliament for a term of six years, which is not immediately renewable. By convention, the president is always a Maronite Christian who is at least 21 years old.

Following the end of the Lebanese Civil War, the President lost some powers to the Council of Ministers through the Taif Agreement; being the sole person who appoints it, however, they *de facto* still retains all (or most) of their pre-Taif powers.



Lebanon operates under a strong semi-presidential system. This system is unique in that it grants the president wide unilateral discretion, does not make him accountable to Parliament (unless for treason), yet is elected by the Parliament. The President has the sole power to appoint the Prime Minister, and may dismiss them at any point (without input from the Chamber of Deputies, which can also force the President to resign). In addition, the President has the sole authority to form a government (which must then receive a vote-of-confidence from Parliament) and dismiss it when they wish.



This thus makes Lebanon a president-parliamentary system rather than a premier-presidential system (such as France), as the President does not have to cohabitate with a Prime Minister he dislikes. The historical reason for the broad powers of the President are that their powers were merged with those of the French High Commissioner of Greater Lebanon, thus creating an exceptionally powerful presidency for semi-presidential systems.


Role and responsibilities

- Issue the decree appointing the prime minister (by convention Sunni Muslim) independently.
- Issue the decree forming the government (i.e. the cabinet), co-signed by the prime minister. The government must then receive a vote-of-confidence by the Chamber of Deputies (51%) in order to become active.
- Fire the prime minister (at will, no confirmation needed). This automatically fires the entire government, meaning every minister.
- Fire an individual minister. Requires confirmation of 2/3 of the cabinet and the signature of the PM. If more than 1/3 of the ministers constituting the initial government are fired/resign, then the entire government is considered resign.
- Sign into law and promulgate laws (countersigned by the PM).

- Sign decrees concerning a specific ministry(ies). Countersigned by the PM and ministers involved.
- Negotiate and ratify international treaties. All treaties must be approved by 2/3 of the cabinet before entering into force. Treaties involving spending that cannot be cancelled every new year must also be approved by Parliament (51%).
- Dissolve the parliament. Must be countersigned by the PM, and requires a 2/3 approval of the cabinet.
- Pass "emergency decrees" without the parliament's approval (article 58).^[7] Requires a half + 1 majority of the ministers. To pass emergency decrees without the parliament's approval, the parliament must spend 40 days without taking any action on a bill that was previously declared urgent by the president

2- LEGISLATIVE POWER

Lebanon's national legislature is called the Assembly of Representatives (*Majlis al-Nuwab* in Arabic). Since the elections of 1992 (the first since the reforms of the Taif Agreement of 1989 removed the built-in majority previously enjoyed by Christians and distributed the seats equally between Christians and Muslims), the Parliament has had 128 seats. The term was four years, but has recently been extended to five.



Seats in the Parliament are *confessionally distributed* but elected by *universal suffrage*. Each religious community has an allotted number of seats in the Parliament. They do not represent only their co-religionists, however; all candidates in a particular constituency, regardless of religious affiliation, must receive a plurality of the total vote, which includes followers of all confessions. The system was designed to minimize inter-sectarian competition and maximize cross-confessional cooperation: candidates are opposed only by co-religionists, but must seek support from outside of their own faith in order to be elected.

The opposition Qornet Shehwan Gathering, a group opposed to the former pro-Syrian government, has claimed that constituency boundaries have been drawn so as to allow many Shi'a Muslims to be elected from Shi'a-majority constituencies (where the Hezbollah Party is strong), while allocating many Christian members to Muslim-majority constituencies, forcing Christian politicians to represent Muslim interests. (Similar charges, but in reverse, were made against the Chamoun administration in the 1950s)



Nabih Berri

Assumed office

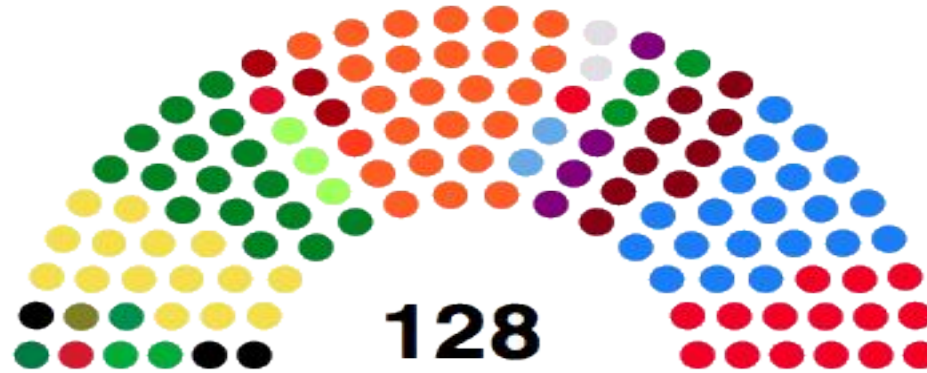
20 October 1992 till forever ☺

The following table sets out the confessional allocation of seats in the Parliament before and after the [Taif Agreement](#):

Parliament of Lebanon Seat Allocation		
Confession	Before Taif	After Taif
Maronite Catholic	30	34
Eastern Orthodox	11	14
Melkite Catholic	6	8
Armenian Orthodox	4	5
Armenian Catholic	1	1
Protestant	1	1
Other Christian Minorities	1	1
Total Christians	54	64
Sunni	20	27
Shi'ite	19	27
Alawite	0	2
Druze	6	8
Total Muslims + Druze	45	64
Total	99	128

Government (68)

- FPM: 24 seats
- Amal: 16 seats
- Hezbollah: 13 seats
- Marada: 3 seats
- ARF: 3 seats
- Dignity Movement: 2 seats
- Al-Ahbash: 1 seat
- Union Party: 1 seat
- LDP: 1 seat
- Ba'ath: 1 seat
- Independence Movement: 1 seat
- Independent: 4 seats



Opposition (60)

- Future: 20 seats
- LF: 15 seats
- PSP: 9 seats
- Azm: 4 seats
- SSNP: 3 seats
- Kataeb: 3 seats
- PNO: 1 seat
- National Dialogue Party: 1 seat
- Independent: 4 seats

3-EXECUTIE POWER

Main office holders:

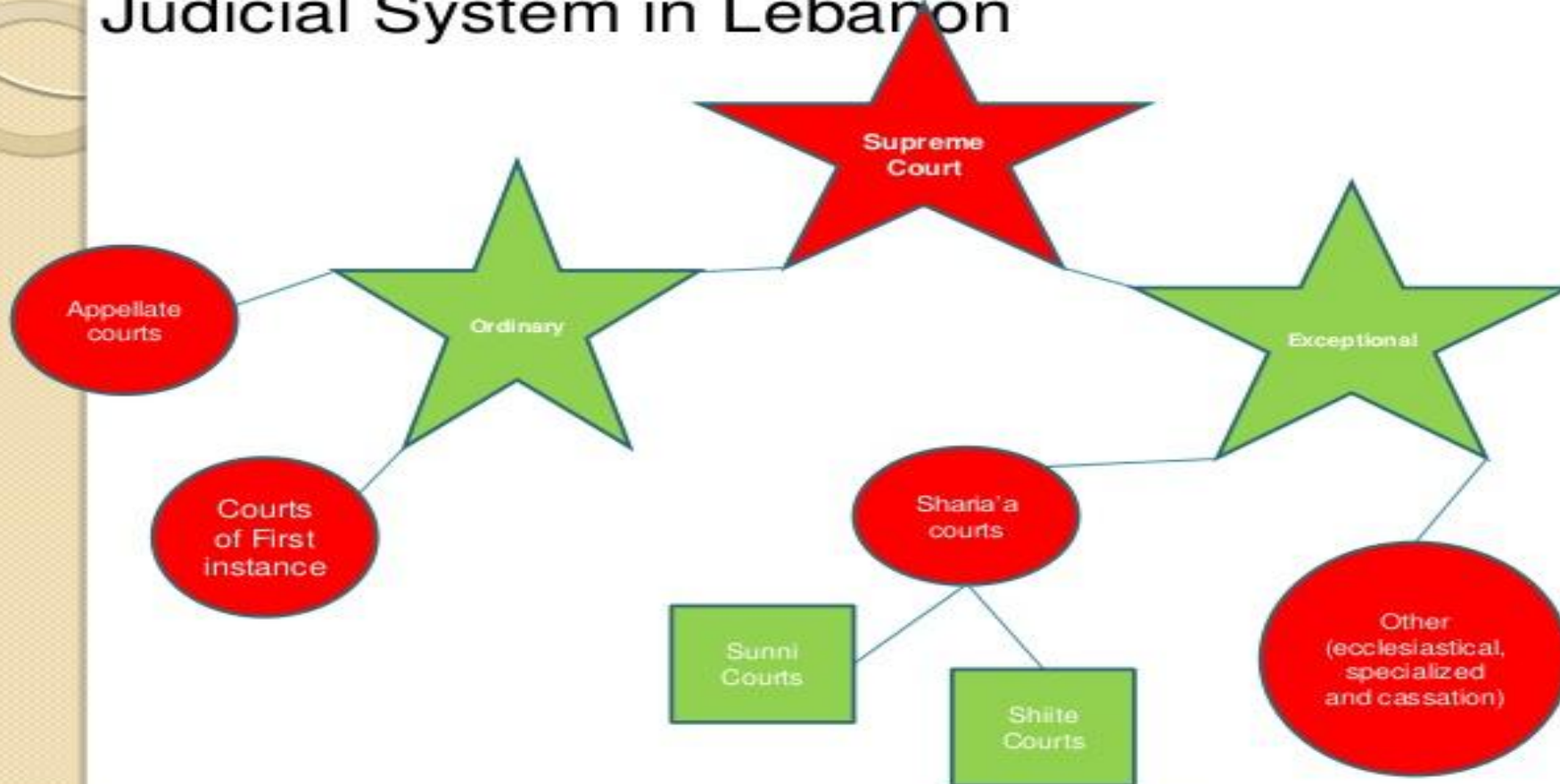
Office	Name	Party	Since
<u>President</u>	<u>Michel Aoun</u>	<u>Free Patriotic Movement</u>	31 October 2016
<u>Prime Minister</u>	<u>Hassan Diab</u>	<u>Independent</u>	21 January 2020
<u>Speaker of the Parliament</u>	<u>Nabih Berri</u>	<u>Amal Movement</u>	20 October 1992

The President is elected by the Parliament for a six-year term and cannot be reelected again until six years have passed from the end of the first term.^[7] The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister are appointed by the President in consultation with the Parliament; the president is required to be a Maronite, the prime minister a Sunni, and the Speaker of the Parliament a Shi'a. (See list of the ministers and their political affiliation for a list of ministers.)

This confessional system is based on 1932 census data which showed the Maronite Christians as having a substantial majority of the population. The Government of Lebanon continues to refuse to undertake a new census.

4- JUDICIAL POWER

LEBANON Continued Judicial System in Lebanon



Lebanon is a civil law country. Its judicial branch is composed of:

- Ordinary Courts:

- One Court of Cassation composed of nine chambers ^[9]
- Courts of Appeal (in the centre of every governorate) ^[9]
- Courts of First Instance ^[9]

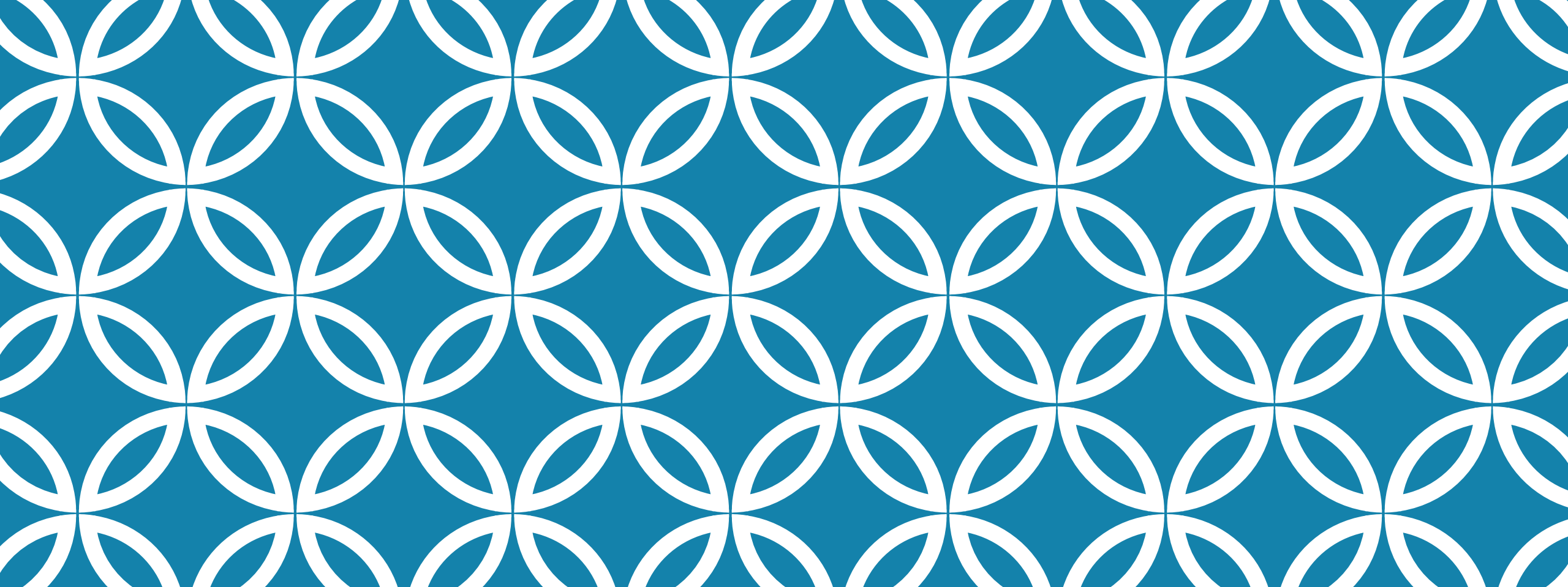


- Special Courts:

- The Constitutional Council (called for in the Taif Agreement) rules on constitutionality of laws
- The Supreme Council hears charges against the president and prime minister as needed.
- A system of military courts that also has jurisdiction over civilians for the crimes of espionage, treason, and other crimes that are considered to be security-related. ^[10]

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**

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