



# A Guide to the Proposed Draft Law



**CIVIL CAMPAIGN FOR  
ELECTORAL REFORM**

# PREFACE

This booklet was designed as a guide to explain in a simple manner the proposed draft law of the National Commission for an Electoral Law headed by ex-Minister Fouad Boutros, as well as the main reforms included in it. The booklet is part of the activities of the “Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform” which was founded by the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA), the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies (LCPS), and in close coordination with the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE).

Special thanks go to Dr. Paul Salem and Mr. Ziyad Baroud, former members of the National Commission for an Electoral Law. Nazih Darwish and Nadine Farghal from the Electoral Law Reform Project – United Nations Development Programme in the Prime Minister’s Office, and Yara Nassar and Abbas Abouzeid from LADE.

# A GUIDE TO THE PROPOSED DRAFT LAW

On August 8th, 2005 Prime Minister Fouad Siniora set up an independent commission headed by ex-Minister Fouad Butros to propose a new electoral law for Lebanon.

The formation of the National Commission for the Reform of the Electoral Law, which is comprised of experts in political science and law and civil society activists, set a new precedent for reforms in the country and marked a departure from past practices of a last-minute election law compromise driven by narrow parochial interests.

The Commission proposed a draft electoral law in May 2006. The draft law represents a comprehensive reform of the electoral system. Specifically, it provides for:

- A mixed electoral system with proportional representation introduced in parallel to the majority system with dual districting;
- An independent electoral commission to oversee the elections;
- Out-of-country voting;
- Regulation of campaign spending;
- Regulation of Media coverage of election campaigns;
- Lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 years;
- Voting from the place of residence;
- Holding the entire national elections on one day;
- Encouraging women candidacy by introducing a women's quota on candidates' lists; and
- Acknowledging the special needs of voters with disabilities.

These reforms will potentially allow a significant expansion of the actual electoral franchise and the ascent to parliament of new political groups and leaders. Reforms such as regulating campaign spending and media coverage are a positive step towards free, fair and democratic elections. Lebanese citizens and voters will have much to gain from the reforms introduced in the Commission's draft law.

Although we recognize the positive step taken by the government and the Commission towards reforming the electoral system, we equally value the role of Lebanese civil society in bolstering democracy in Lebanon and seeing through to completion the passing of the new electoral law.

A democratic electoral law would ensure that parliament is truly representative by guaranteeing accurate representation for all parties and factions. It would also ensure the rise of a legitimate and representative elite accountable to its citizens.

In short, electoral reforms represent a unique opportunity for Lebanon to embrace a healthier and more democratic political life.

Following the release of the draft law, the Lebanese Transparency Association and the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies, in close collaboration with the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections, formed the Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform (CCER).

The CCER seeks to:

- Initiate among major stakeholders (including MPs, Cabinet, community leaders, and others) immediate, open, non-partisan, public examination of the draft law;
- Generate public debate around the draft law; and
- Secure passage of the reform elements of the draft law.

## HOW WILL THE ELECTIONS BE ADMINISTERED?

### A. The Independent Electoral Commission

An Independent Electoral Commission will be set up and will consist of judges, lawyers, experts and civil society actors. Parliamentary elections will be administered under the full supervision of the Independent Commission, which will replace the Ministry of the Interior as the institution responsible for organizing elections.

Independent commissions represent a guarantee and a pledge to both voters and candidates that elections are being administered in a neutral and unbiased way, thus ensuring public confidence in the electoral process.

Because it is independent, the commission has no interest or stake in the outcome of the elections and is hence focused on ensuring that the process takes place in the fairest and most orderly way possible.

### Appointing the Independent Electoral Commission

The draft law presents a mixed approach for appointing the commission:

- 4 people are selected from appointed bodies (Court of Cassation, State Shura Council, National Audit Office and the National Media Council).
- 3 people are selected from elected professional organizations (Beirut Bar Association, Tripoli Bar Association and the Press Syndicate).
- In addition, 3 academics working in relevant fields are selected by the Prime Minister.

## **The Commission's Tenure**

The Commissioners will serve from their appointment until six months after holding parliamentary elections. Their term of office cannot be renewed, extended, or reduced.

## **Other bodies responsible for electoral administration**

The Commissioners will appoint a General Secretary, who will be responsible for managing the electoral process and supervising an administration team assigned to him/her.

The law gives the Commission the authority to request staff members from government ministries to assist with election preparations. These staff members will work under full authority of the Commission while working on elections. The Commission also has the authority to appoint administrative staff to perform the practical duties.

## **B. Regulating Campaign Finance**

The draft law introduces new and important regulations on campaign spending, which guarantee equal and fair competition between candidates. It is one of the ways to limit the influence of money on the voting process.

The draft law obliges a candidate to open a special "Elections Campaign" bank account through which all donations to the electoral campaign are paid. This bank account is not subject to banking secrecy laws. The draft law also contains provisions for the Independent Commission to monitor campaign funding. Candidates and lists must submit periodic financial reports on donations and expenditures before elections and a final comprehensive report after elections.

The draft law details strict provisions relating to campaign spending. These provisions include:

- Limits on the amount of money candidates can spend during the campaign.
- Limits on the size of contributions.
- All income and spending must go through one bank account. This bank account must be declared and candidates will give up banking secrecy for these accounts.
- Every campaign must have a registered financial officer, who is the only person allowed to use the bank account, and an external auditor.

Each campaign must submit full and regular audited accounts to the Commission.

The draft law also defines financial contributions and what items are considered electoral expenses, which must be included in the audited accounts.

The law specifies penalties and sanctions against campaigns that do not comply with these regulations.

### **C. Media Regulation**

The draft law contains several provisions that regulate elections media and advertising, both private and public, to ensure respect for freedom of expression for all political groups in all media outlets and programs. The Independent Commission is the regulatory body which ensures equality and fairness between competing candidates. The draft law also gives the Commission the authority to monitor audiovisual media outlets and decide on issues related to electoral advertising.

#### **Media regulation during election campaigns**

The draft law details regulations governing audiovisual broadcasting during the election campaign period.

##### **Public television and radio**

All candidates and lists should be able to have a share of airtime on public media.

##### **Private television and radio**

All private television and radio stations are allowed to broadcast political coverage, but must provide fair and equal airtime to competing candidates and lists.

Private television and radio are allowed to sell campaign advertising space, but they must fix and declare their price lists to the Commission. They must sell political advertising to all parties and candidates who request advertising space. They cannot refuse advertisements from any registered political candidate or list.

Private television and radio are not allowed to use their own airtime to favour a list or candidate.

#### **Regulations regarding billboards and posters**

Audiovisual media outlets can take part in paid electoral advertising and must declare their price lists to the Commission. Audiovisual media outlets must provide advertising space to any candidate or list and they cannot refuse advertising space to anyone.

Local authorities, in coordination with the Commission, designate the appropriate billposting places for electoral ads and posters during the whole electoral campaign period.

Ads or posters cannot be posted outside the reserved places and candidates or lists cannot post an ad or a poster in places reserved for others.

## HOW THE PROPOSED ELECTORAL SYSTEM WORKS

After studying more than 120 proposals of different electoral systems, the Commission decided on a mixed system which is applied in more than 30 democratic countries in the world. The mixed electoral system preserves the positive aspects of majority systems, while at the same time benefiting from the positive features of the proportional representation system.

In the proposed electoral system, Members of Parliament (MPs) are voted for as follows:

77 Members are elected by voters in each qada via the majority system.

51 Members are elected by voters in each muhafaiza via the PR system.

### **To illustrate this we will use the example of the “North” muhafaiza.**

There are 28 seats available in the North Muhafaiza.

17 of these seats will be elected by voters in each qada via the majority system.

11 of these seats will be elected by all the voters in the muhafaiza via the PR system.

### **STEP 1: Candidates decide which seat they will contest**

Each candidate must decide whether to run for a seat in the majority system or a seat in the PR system, and s/he must indicate the qada they wish to run for.

#### **Example 1:**

I am a Sunni who wants to run in Tripoli. There are 5 Sunni seats available in Tripoli. Three of these seats will be elected by voters in the qada via the majority system and two seats will be elected by voters in the muhafaiza via the PR system. I have two options:

- a) I can run for one of the Sunni seats to be elected by voters in the qada in the majority system; or
- b) I can run for one of the two Sunni seats to be elected by voters in the muhafaiza in the PR system.

## Example 2:

I am a Greek Orthodox who wants to run in Tripoli. In Tripoli there is only one Orthodox seat. This seat will be elected by voters in the qada of Tripoli only in the majority system. I have only one option - I must run for the Orthodox seat to be elected by voters in the qada.

## STEP 2: Candidates running seats for the muhafeza must combine in lists

In all the muhafezas, voters will vote for lists of candidates. Candidates MUST combine in lists if they want to run for muhafeza seats.

In the North Muhafeza there are 11 seats that will be elected by all voters in the muhafeza. Candidates who indicated that they want to run for one of these 11 seats must join other candidates in a list.

Each list of candidates must have at least 4 candidates and must conform to the seats that are available.

**Women's quota:** At least 30% of the candidates of each list must be women.

## Deadlines for candidate and list registration

Candidate Registration	
Closing date for candidate registration	Closing date for candidate withdrawal
60 days before the election	45 days before the election
Deadline for the commission's reply regarding candidacy	The candidate can appeal the rejection in front of the Shura Council within 5 days
The commission must take a decision within 5 days	The Shura council must take a decision within 3 days

List Registration	
Closing date for list registration	Conditions for list registration
45 days before the election	Number of candidates at least 4
	At least 30% of the list should be women candidates
	Compliance with the distribution of seats in qada and in electoral units and the sectarian and confessional distribution of each seat



### **STEP 3: Voting**

Each voter will be able to vote in two ballot boxes:

- One ballot box for candidates running in the qada via the majority system
- One ballot box for candidates running in the mohafeza via the PR system

#### **STEP 3.1: The first vote - Voting for candidates in the qada**

Each voter can vote for as many seats as there are available for election in the qada.

##### **Example 1:**

I am a voter in Tripoli. I can vote for 5 candidates:

- 3 Sunni
- 1 Orthodox
- 1 Allawite

##### **Example 2:**

I am a voter in Koura. I can vote for 2 candidates:

- 2 Orthodox

#### **STEP 3.2: The second vote - Voting in the muhafeza**

All voters in the entire muhafeza vote for lists of candidates.

A voter must make two choices:

First, a voter must decide which list of candidates s/he votes for. The voter makes a mark next to the name of that list.

Second, a voter can indicate which two candidates they would prefer to be elected from the list s/he chose. They must choose candidates from 2 different qadas and not from the same qada. The voter puts a mark next to the names of these two candidates.

## North Electoral District



Kadaa	Seats distribution on the Qada level, Bloc Vote system	Seats distribution on the Mohafaza level, PR system
Akkar	1 Orthodox 2 Sunni 1 Maronite <b>Total: 4 seats</b>	1 Orthodox 1 Sunni 1 Alawite <b>Total: 3 seats</b>
Tripoli	3 Sunni 1 Orthodox 1 Alawite <b>Total: 5 seats</b>	2 Sunni 1 Maronite <b>Total: 3 seats</b>
Minnieh-Dinnieh	2 Sunni <b>Total: 2 seats</b>	1 Sunni <b>Total: 1 seat</b>
Koura	2 Orthodox <b>Total: 2 seats</b>	1 Orthodox <b>Total: 1 seat</b>
Zgharta	2 Maronite <b>Total: 2 seats</b>	1 Maronite <b>Total: 1 seat</b>
Batroun	1 Maronite <b>Total: 1 seat</b>	1 Maronite <b>Total: 1 seat</b>
Bcharreh	1 Maronite <b>Total: 1 seat</b>	1 Maronite <b>Total: 1 seat</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17 seats</b>	<b>11 seats</b>

## **STEP 4: Vote Counting**

### **STEP 4.1: Counting votes in the qada**

The votes for each candidate contesting seats in the qada are counted. The seat is allocated to the candidate(s) who won the most votes for each seat contested.

#### **Example 1: Tripoli**

The Orthodox candidate with the most votes wins the one Orthodox seat.

The Alawite candidate with the most votes wins the one Alawite seat.

The three Sunni candidates with the most votes win the three Sunni seats.

### **STEP 4.2: Counting in the muhafaiza**

The seats in the muhafaiza are allocated using a proportional representation system. It works as follows:

#### **1- Calculate how many seats each list won.**

- a) Calculate the electoral threshold by dividing the number of votes by the number of seats.
- b) Count the number of votes each list received in the muhafaiza.
- c) Lists that do not pass the electoral threshold are discarded.
- d) Divide the total number of votes of each list by the total number of votes required to win a seat. This will indicate how many seats each party won.
- e) Any remaining seats are allocated to the party who has the largest remainder of votes.

#### **Example:**

There are 11 seats available in the North Muhafaiza.

Three lists are competing, and each received the following number of votes:

List A - 53,000 votes

List B - 35,000 vote

List C - 22,000 votes

Total number of votes: 110,000

Number of votes required to win a seat:

$110,000 \text{ (total votes)} / 11 \text{ (number of seats)} = 10,000$

List A:  $53,000/10,000 = 5.3$  - List A wins 5 seats (remainder 0.3)

List B:  $35,000/10,000 = 3.5$  - List B wins 3 seats (remainder 0.5)

List C:  $22,000/10,000 = 2.2$  - List C wins 2 seats (remainder 0.2)

10 of the eleven seats have been allocated (List A - 5; List B - 3; List C - 2)

The 11th seat goes to List B, since it has the largest remainder (0.5).

The final seat allocation is:

List A - 5

List B - 4

List C - 2

## **2 - Allocating candidates to seats:**

To decide which candidates receive the 11 seats, the following steps are followed:

- Count the number of preferential votes each candidate received.
- Rank the candidates from the highest number of preferential votes received, to the lowest number of preferential votes received. All candidates from all lists are ranked in one list.

The candidate with the most preferential votes gets allocated the first seat. The candidate with the next highest number of votes gets allocated the next seat.

To get the next seat, three conditions must be fulfilled:

- There must still be a seat available for the sect and the qada the candidate is running for;
- The list the candidate is running for must still have seats available (if a list won only one seat, and a candidate from that list has already received a seat, no other candidate from that list can win a seat).

If the candidate with the next highest number of seats cannot take a seat because one of the conditions is not fulfilled, that candidate is skipped and the candidate with the next highest number of votes is considered.

This process continues until all the seats for a muhafeza are awarded.

## **STEP 5: The overall results**

The overall results of the election will be calculated by repeating the steps above in each muhafeza and in each qada.

## Electoral Districts and Allocation of Seats for all Lebanon

### North Lebanon

Qada	Total number of seats	Distribution of qada seats	Total number of qada seats	Distribution of muhafazat seats	Total number of muhafazat seats
Tripoli	8	Greek Orthodox 1 Sunni 3 Alawite 1	(5)	Maronite 1 Sunni 2	(3)
Miniye-Danniye	3	Sunni 2	(2)	Sunni 1	(1)
Akkar*	7	Maronite 1 Greek Orthodox 1 Sunni 2	(4)	Greek Orthodox 1 Sunni 1 Alawite 1	(3)
Zghorta	3	Maronite 2	(2)	Maronite 1	(1)
Becharre	2	Maronite 1	(1)	Maronite 1	(1)
Batroun	2	Maronite 1	(1)	Maronite 1	(1)
Koura	3	Greek Orthodox 2	(2)	Greek Orthodox 1	(1)
	(28)		(17)		(11)

### Northern Mount Lebanon

Qada	Total number of seats	Distribution of qada seats	Total number of qada seats	Distribution of muhafazat seats	Total number of muhafazat seats
Jbeil	3	Shiite 1 Maronite 1	(2)	Maronite 1	(1)
Keserwan	5	Maronite 3 Maronite 2	(3)	Maronite 2 Maronite 2	(2)
Metn	8	Greek Orthodox 1 Greek Catholic 1 Armenian Orthodox 1	(5)	Greek Orthodox 1	(3)
	(16)		(10)		(6)

## Beirut

Qada	Total number of seats	Distribution of qada seats	Total number of qada seats	Distribution of muhafazat seats	Total number of muhafazat seats
Ashrafieh Rmeil Saifi Mudawar	8	Minorities 1 Greek Catholic 1 Maronite 1 Greek Orthodox 1 Armenian Orthodox 2	(6)	Armenian Orthodox 1 Armenian Catholic 1	(2)
Mazraa Mousaytby Bashoura	7	Sunni 2	(2)	Sunni 2 Greek Orthodox 1 Shiite 1 Druze 1	(5)
Ras Beirut Daral Mreissy Zkak al Blat Port -Mina al Hosn	4	Shiite 1 Sunni 1	(2)	Sunni 1 Evangelical 1	(2)
	(19)		(10)		(9)

## Southern Mount Lebanon

Qada	Total number of seats	Distribution of qada seats	Total number of qada seats	Distribution of muhafazat seats	Total number of muhafazat seats
Baabda	6	Maronite 2 Shiite 1 Druze 1	(4)	Maronite 1 Shiite 1	(2)
Aley	5	Maronite 1 Greek Orthodox 1 Druze 1	(3)	Maronite 1 Druze 1	(2)
Chouf	8	Maronite 2 Sunni 1 Greek Catholic 1 Druze 1	(5)	Druze 1 Maronite 1 Sunni 1	(3)
	(19)		(12)		(7)

### South Lebanon

Qada	Total number of seats	Distribution of qada seats	Total number of qada seats	Distribution of muhafazat seats	Total number of muhafazat seats
Saida	2	Sunni 1	(1)	Sunni 1	(1)
Zahrany	3	Shiite 1	(1)	Shiite 1 Greek Catholic 1	(2)
Tyr	4	Shiite 2	(2)	Shiite 2	(2)
Jezzine	3	Maronite 1 Greek Catholic 1	(2)	Maronite 1	(1)
Nabatiye	3	Shiite 2	(2)	Shiite 1	(1)
Marjeyoun	3	Shiite 1 Greek Orthodox 1	(2)	Shiite 1	(1)
Hassbaya	2	Druze 1 Sunni 1	(2)		(0)
Bint Jbeil	3	Shiite 2	(2)	Shiite 1	(1)
	(23)		(14)		(9)

### Bekaa

Qada	Total number of seats	Distribution of qada seats	Total number of qada seats	Distribution of muhafazat seats	Total number of muhafazat seats
Zahle	7	Greek Catholic 1 Maronite 1 Greek Orthodox 1 Sunni 1 Shiite 1	(5)	Greek Catholic 1 Armenian Orthodox 1	(2)
Baalbek/ Hermel *	10	Maronite 1 Sunni 1 Shiite 3 Greek Catholic 1	(6)	Sunni 1 Shiite 3	(4)
Western Bekaa/ Rashaya	6	Sunni 1 Druze 1 Shiite 1	(3)	Sunni 1 Maronite 1 Greek Orthodox 1	(3)
	(23)		(14)		(9)

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DRAFT ELECTION LAW

## **What are the main reforms introduced by the draft election law?**

1. The draft law introduces measures that will improve the way elections are administered.
  - An independent election commission will be appointed to run elections. Elections will no longer be run by the Ministry of Interior.
  - The law allows both Lebanese and international observer groups to monitor the way the elections are administered.
  - The draft law introduces reforms to election procedures that will help ensure increased vote secrecy. Voters will vote using a pre-printed ballot, approved by the election commission. Only ballot papers issued by the commission will be valid. All voters will now use the same ballot, and candidates and parties cannot give ballots to voters outside polling stations.
  - Elections will take place in one day all over Lebanon.
2. The draft law makes it possible for more Lebanese to vote and be candidates. In particular:
  - Lebanese abroad will be able to vote in countries abroad if they are registered in the voters' lists.
  - The voting age is lowered from 21 to 18.
  - Lebanese will be able to cast their votes wherever they live in Lebanon to candidates in the districts where they are registered. It will not be necessary to travel back to the place where your family is registered to cast your vote.
  - All formal lists of candidates participating in the elections must include 30% women.
3. The draft law makes competition between candidates and political groups fairer. In particular:
  - The law limits the amount of money candidates can spend during election campaigns. The way money can be spent is regulated in detail. The law also stipulates penalties if candidates do not follow these rules.
  - The law gives all candidates and political groups access to television broadcasts. It also regulates in detail how candidates can advertise their campaigns.



# QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION

## **Do other countries also have independent electoral commissions?**

Yes, the international trend is for countries to appoint independent commissions to run their elections. There are still countries where governments run elections, but even among those countries there is a movement towards appointing independent electoral commissions. Currently, at least 79 countries appointed independent electoral commissions. This includes well established democracies such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, all of whom moved away from government-run elections to elections run by independent commissions. Most newly democratized countries in Latin America and Eastern Europe also chose to appoint independent electoral commissions.

## **Some people say that the National Media Commission and the Press Syndicate are not professional, neutral and competent. Is it a good idea to include them in the commission?**

The National Media Council and the Press Syndicate are the official representatives of the media in Lebanon. The IEC must cooperate with state institutions in line with proper practices. Attention should focus on reforming these institutions, rather than excluding them.

## **How can we be sure that the commission would be independent?**

- The commission will have representatives from various sectors of society.
- The question is whether the commission as a whole will act independently and not be influenced by politicians in the way they conduct the elections.
- The draft law allows domestic and international observers to observe the entire electoral process; independent verification of the way elections have been conducted is very often a mechanism that helps ensure that the commission conducts elections fairly and impartially.
- Experience in deeply divided societies indicate that independent election commissions often become one of the most trusted institutions of government.

## **How can only 10 people run elections in Lebanon?**

- The 10 Commissioners will oversee the running of elections and will not run the elections themselves.
- The 10 Commissioners will appoint a Secretary General, who will be responsible for managing the practical organization of the elections. The Secretary General will have an administrative team to help.
- One can compare the work of the Commission with that of the

Council of Ministers, which includes only a small number of ministers, but they govern the country.

### **Will it be possible to conduct elections in one day all over Lebanon?**

- Most countries in the world do elections in one day, including countries that are much larger and have many more voters than Lebanon.
- It is important to do elections in one day to ensure that the results from earlier rounds do not influence results in later rounds.

### **How much will all of this cost?**

- The cost of appointing the 10 commissioners is very small compared with the overall running of elections.
- Large cost-items of elections include voter registration, printing of ballots, purchasing of election material such as ballot boxes, payment of administrative staff, etc. All of these items must be paid for, irrespective whether the government or an independent commission runs elections.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

### **What is the main difference between the electoral system used during the 2000 and 2005 elections and the proposed system?**

- The main difference between the electoral system of the electoral law and the proposed electoral system is that the latter introduces a proportional representation system parallel to the majority system. Some candidates are elected on the qada level, while others are elected on the muhafaiza level.
- Another main difference is that there is a quota for women candidates. For lists contesting the elections on the muhafaiza level, 30 percent of candidates must be women. Since each list must contain at least 4 candidates, every list must have at least one woman candidate.

### **Do other countries in the world use similar systems?**

- Parallel systems are used in 30 nation states, including Japan, South Korea, Lithuania and the Palestinian Authority.
- The system, as developed here, is a distinctive Lebanese solution. The system shares many characteristics with systems used in other countries, but the combination of characteristics is unique.

## **Is this system better than the system used according to the 2000 electoral law?**

- The 2000 electoral law used the majority system in large districts.
- The majority system leads to disproportionate outcomes in medium-sized and large districts. The opposite is true of proportional representation, which is better applied to large districts.
- Thus, applying the majority system to small districts (the qada) and proportional representation to large districts (the muhafaiza) is the better solution.
- Applying the PR system to large districts like the muhafaiza allows a greater opportunity for new candidates and lists to win seats, which reflects their representation in society. Applying the majority system in small districts allows candidates with a narrow popular base to be elected.

## **Isn't this system too complicated?**

The proposed system is not complicated to the extent that voters and candidates will not understand it. The mixed electoral system was used in the recent Palestinian elections, and candidates and voters understood it without difficulty.

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTING FOR CITIZENS IN OTHER COUNTRIES**

### **Will all Lebanese who live in other countries be allowed to vote?**

- Lebanese who hold Lebanese passports will be allowed to register to vote in other countries. People of Lebanese origin who do not hold Lebanese citizenship will not be able to vote.
- All voters will have to specially register to be able to vote in other countries.

### **Where will the Lebanese vote outside of Lebanon?**

- The Commission will determine where voting will take place, but it will mostly be at embassies.

# QUESTIONS ABOUT POLITICAL FINANCE REGULATIONS

## **Is the limit that candidates can spend the same for all candidates?**

- No, the limit depends on how many voters there are in the district where a candidate is contesting the elections.

## **Does the draft law only regulate money? What if someone gives a contribution in kind, such as advertising space, or gives a candidate a loan?**

- The draft law regulates the spending of money and also other kinds of contributions that have a material or monetary value such as free advertising space and loans.

## **What happens if a candidate or list did not report all their expenses or if they spent more than what the law allows?**

- If the commission finds that the candidates did not report all their expenses, or if they spent more than what is allowed, severe penalties can be imposed on such candidates through the Lebanese courts.

## **Does the law regulate all the money candidates may spend, or only money spent during the election campaign?**

- The law only regulates money spent during the election campaign. The law stipulates that the election campaign starts 60 days before an election.

# QUESTIONS ABOUT MEDIA REGULATIONS

## **Why should the electronic media be regulated?**

- If one group or a few groups dominate the electronic media, they often have an unfair advantage compared with other groups who do not have access to electronic media. To ensure that all candidates and political groups get a fair chance of airing their views to voters, many countries, particularly in Europe, decide to regulate broadcasting of election campaign material during election campaigns.

## **Why should private media outlets be regulated? Shouldn't one only regulate public media outlets?**

- Some countries do decide to regulate only the public media, while others have different regulations for public and private media. Examples of this include Italy and Venezuela, where the public broadcaster is obliged to broadcast free advertisements, while private broadcasters are obliged to accept paid advertisements from all groups, including opponents. This is the option decided upon by the commission. This option ensures that all groups, not only the big players who own media outlets, get a chance to air their views.



**The Lebanese Transparency Association**  
Bank El Rif Roundabout, Baaklini Center, 4th Floor  
P.O.Box: 50-552 Ein el Remaneh, Baabda, Lebanon  
**Tel.:** + 961-1-293 045  
**Fax:** + 961-1-282 238  
**Website:** [www.transparency-lebanon.org](http://www.transparency-lebanon.org)  
**E-mail:** [info@transparency-lebanon.org](mailto:info@transparency-lebanon.org)



المركز اللبناني للدراسات  
**The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies**

**The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies**  
P.O.Box: 55-215 Sin El Fil, Beirut, Lebanon  
**Tel.:** + 961-1-486 429 / 486 430  
**Fax:** + 961-1-490 375  
**Website:** [www.lcps-lebanon.org](http://www.lcps-lebanon.org)  
**E-mail:** [info@lcps-lebanon.org](mailto:info@lcps-lebanon.org)



الجمعية اللبنانية من أجل ديموقراطية الانتخابات  
**Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections**

**The Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections**  
Sanayeh, Spears Street  
Yamout Building, First Floor  
**Telefax:** + 961-1-741 412  
**Website:** [www.ladeleb.org](http://www.ladeleb.org)  
**E-mail:** [info@ladeleb.org](mailto:info@ladeleb.org)

First Edition 2007

The Lebanese Transparency Association©  
All Rights Reserved  
ISBN: 1-886604-63-0