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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW

(VENICE COMMISSION)

BELARUS

CONSTITUTION

(WITH AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY REFERENDUM OF 27 FEBRUARY 2022)[1]

[1] Unofficial translation

CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

(as amended by republican referendums on 24 November 1996, 17 October 2004 and 27 February 2022)
Amendments and additions: Law of the Republic of Belarus of October 12, 2021, No. 124-3 (National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus, 14.10.2021, 2/2844)

We, the people of the Republic of Belarus (Belarus),

based on responsibility for the present and future of Belarus,

acknowledging itself as a full-fledged actor in the global community and conforming our adherence to values common to all mankind,

proceeding from our inalienable right to self-deter, the preservation of national identity and sovereignty,

based on the centuries-long history of the development of Belarusian statehood, cultural and spiritual traditions,

by upholding human rights and freedoms of every person and citizen, founding of a state governed by the rule of law and a socially just society,

desiring to maintain peace and civic concord, the well-being of citizens, the inviolability of the rule of the people, the independence and prosperity of the Republic of Belarus,

adopt this Constitution, the Basic Law of the Republic of Belarus.

CHAPTER I
FUNDAMENTALS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

Article 1. The Republic of Belarus is a unitary democratic social state governed by the rule of law.

The Republic of Belarus exercises supreme control and absolute authority over the whole of its territory, and implements an independent internal and foreign policy.

The Republic of Belarus shall protect its independence and territorial integrity, its constitutional order and shall ensure legality and legal order.

Article 2. An individual, his/her rights, freedoms and guarantees of their realisation shall be the supreme value and purpose of society and the State.

The state is responsible to the citizen to create the conditions for the free and dignified development of the individual. The citizen is responsible towards the State to discharge unwaveringly the duties imposed upon him by the Constitution

Article 3. The people are the sole source of State power and the repository of sovereignty in the Republic of Belarus. The people exercise their power directly, through representative and other organs in the forms and within the bounds specified by the Constitution.

Any action to change the constitutional order and to seize state power by forcible means, as well as through other violation of the laws of the Republic of Belarus, are prosecuted in accordance with the law.

Article 4. Democracy in the Republic of Belarus is exercised based on the ideology of the Belarusian state as well as the diversity of political institutions and opinions.

The ideology of political parties, religious or other public associations or social groups cannot be established as mandatory for citizens.

Article 5. The political parties and other public associations, acting within the framework of the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Belarus, shall promote the realisation and protection of the rights, freedoms and interests of a person and a citizen.

Political parties and other public associations have the right to use the state media according to the procedures determined by law.

The establishment and activities of political parties, as well as other public associations aimed at changing the constitutional order by force; or conducting propaganda for war, social, national, religious and racial enmity shall be prohibited.

Article 6. State power in the Republic of Belarus shall be exercised based on its division between the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. The state bodies within the limits of their powers shall be independent: they shall co-operate with one another, check and balance each other.

Article 7. The Republic of Belarus shall be governed by the principle of the rule of law.

The Constitution has supreme legal force and direct effect on the entire territory of the Republic of Belarus. Other legal acts are issued on the basis of and in accordance with the Constitution.

The State, all its organs and officials, organisations and citizens shall act within the limits of the Constitution and the laws adopted in accordance therewith.

Legal acts or individual provisions thereof which are deemed under procedure specified in law to be contrary to the provisions of the Constitution have no legal force.

Normative legal acts shall be officially published or made available to the public by other means provided for by law.

Article 8. The Republic of Belarus recognises the supremacy of universally recognised principles of international law and shall ensure that laws comply with such principles.

The Republic of Belarus, in accordance with the norms of international law, may on a voluntary basis join interstate formations and withdraw from them.

The conclusion of international treaties that are contrary to the Constitution shall not be permitted.

Article 9. The territory of the Republic of Belarus is the natural condition of existence and the spatial limit of the self-determination of the people, the basis of their prosperity and the sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus.

The territory of Belarus is united and inalienable.

The administrative-territorial organisation of the state is determined by law.

Article 10. A citizen of the Republic of Belarus shall be guaranteed the protection and patronage of the State both in and outside the territory of Belarus.

No one may be deprived of citizenship of the Republic of Belarus or of the right to change citizenship.

A citizen of the Republic of Belarus may not be extradited to a foreign state, unless otherwise stipulated by international treaties of the Republic of Belarus.

The acquisition and termination of citizenship shall be in accordance with the law.

Article 11. Foreign citizens and stateless persons in the territory of Belarus shall enjoy the rights and freedoms and fulfil the obligations equally with citizens of the Republic of Belarus, unless otherwise provided by the Constitution, laws and international treaties.

Article 12. The Republic of Belarus may grant the right of asylum to persons persecuted in other states for political, religious beliefs or national affiliation.

Article 13. Property may be public and private.

The state grants everyone equal rights to conduct economic and other activities, except for those prohibited by law, and shall guarantee equal protection and equal conditions for the development of all forms of property.

The state guarantees everyone equal opportunities for the free use of abilities and property for entrepreneurial and other economic activities not prohibited by law.

The state regulates economic activity in the interests of individuals and society; ensures the direction and coordination of public and private economic activity for social purposes.

Subsoil, water and forests are the exclusive property of the state. Agricultural land is owned by the state.

The law may also define other objects which are the property of the State alone, or establish a special procedure for their transfer to private ownership, as well as grant the state's exclusive right to carry out certain activities.

The state guarantees workers the right to participate in the management of organisations in order to improve their efficiency and social and economic living standards.

Article 14. The State shall regulate relations between social, national and other communities based on the principles of equality before the law and respect for their rights and interests.

The relations in the social and labour sphere between the organs of State management, employers' associations and trade unions are based on the principles of social partnership and cooperation between the parties.

Article 15. The State is responsible for the preservation of the historical, cultural and spiritual heritage and the free development of the cultures of all national communities residing in the Republic of Belarus.

The State shall ensure the preservation of the historical truth and the memory of the heroic deed of the Belarusian people during the Great Patriotic War.

Article 16. Religions and faiths are equal before the law.

The relationships between the State and religious organizations are regulated by law, taking into account their influence on the formation of the spiritual, cultural and State traditions of the Belarusian people.

The activities of religious organizations, their bodies and representatives which are directed against the sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus, its constitutional order and civil harmony, or which involve the violation of the rights and freedoms of citizens, or prevent citizens from fulfilling their state, social or family obligations, or are harmful to their health and morals, shall be prohibited.

Article 17. The official language of the Republic of Belarus shall be Belarusian and Russian.

Article 18. The Republic of Belarus shall base its foreign policy on the principles of the equality of states, non-use of force or threat of force, inviolability of borders, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in internal affairs, and on other universally recognised principles and norms of international law.

The Republic of Belarus excludes military aggression from its territory against other states.

Article 19. The symbols of the Republic of Belarus as a sovereign state shall be its State Flag, State Emblem and State Anthem. The description of state symbols and the procedure for their use shall be determined by law.

Article 20. The capital of the Republic of Belarus is the city of Minsk.

The status of the city of Minsk is determined by law.

CHAPTER II.
INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY, STATE

Article 21. Ensuring the rights and freedoms of the citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall be the supreme goal of the State.

Everyone has the right to a decent standard of living, including adequate food, clothing, housing and the continuous improvement of the conditions necessary for this.

Everyone should be socially responsible, make a feasible contribution to the development of society and the state.

The state guarantees the rights and freedoms of the citizens of Belarus enshrined in the Constitution, laws and international obligations of the state.

Article 22. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of rights and legitimate interests.

Article 23. Restrictions on the rights and freedoms of individuals shall be permitted only in cases provided for by law, in the interests of national security, public order, protection of morals, public health or the rights and freedoms of others.

No one may enjoy advantages and privileges contrary to the law.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to life.

The state protects human life from any unlawful encroachment.

Until its abolition, the death sentence may be applied in accordance with the law as an exceptional penalty for especially grave crimes and only in accordance with the verdict of a court.

Article 25. The State shall safeguard the liberty, inviolability and dignity of the person. Restriction or deprivation of personal liberty is possible in the instances and under the procedure specified by law.

A person who has been taken in custody shall have the right to judicial review of the lawfulness of his detention or arrest.

No one shall be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment or, without his or her consent, to medical or other experiments.

Article 26. No one shall be held guilty of a crime unless his guilt is proved in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law and established by a court verdict that has entered into legal force. The accused is not obliged to prove his innocence.

Article 27. No one shall be compelled to give evidence or testify against himself or herself, his/her family members or close relatives. Evidence obtained in violation of the law shall have no legal force.

Article 28. Everyone shall have the right to protection against unlawful interference with his privacy, including interference with the privacy of his correspondence, telephone and other communications, and with his honour and dignity.

The state creates conditions for the protection of personal data and the security of individuals and society in the use of such data.

Article 29. The inviolability of the home and other legal possessions of citizens shall be guaranteed. No one has the right to enter a citizen's home or other lawful possessions against his or her will without legal grounds.

Article 30. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus have the right to move freely and choose their place of residence within the Republic of Belarus, to leave it and return to it without hindrance.

Article 31. Everyone shall have the right to independently determine his attitude towards religion, to profess individually or together with others any religion or profess none, to express and disseminate beliefs related to the attitude towards religion, to participate in religious worship, rituals and ceremonies which are not prohibited by law.

Article 32. Marriage as the union of a woman and a man, the family, maternity, paternity and childhood shall be protected by the State.

A woman and a man, on reaching marriageable age, have the right to marry voluntarily and to create a family. Spouses have equal rights in marriage and family.

Parents or persons in loco parentis have the right and the duty to bring up their children, care for their health, development and education, prepare them for socially useful work, instil in them a culture of respect for the law and for the historical and national traditions of Belarus. A child must not be subjected to cruel treatment or humiliation or to work which may be harmful to his/her physical, mental or moral development. Children are obliged to take care of and assist their parents and persons in loco parentis.

The state provides support for families with children, orphans and children left without parental care.

The state ensures the priority of raising children within the family. Children may be separated from their family against the will of their parents and other persons in loco parentis only based on a court order if the parents or other persons in loco parentis fail to fulfil their obligations.

Women and men shall be ensured equal opportunities in education and training, in employment and promotion, in social, political, cultural and other spheres of activity, as well as the creation of conditions for the protection of their work and health.

Article 32[1]. The State shall promote the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical development of young people, create the necessary conditions for their free and effective participation in public life and the realisation of their potential in the interests of the whole society.

Article 33. Everyone shall be guaranteed freedom of opinion, belief and expression.

No one may be forced to express his or her beliefs or to deny them.

Monopolisation of the media by the state, organisations or individual citizens and censorship are not permitted.

Article 34. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall be guaranteed the right to receive, keep and disseminate complete, reliable and timely information on the activities of state bodies, on political, economic, cultural and international life and on the state of the environment.

State bodies and officials are obliged to provide a citizen of the Republic of Belarus with an opportunity to become acquainted with materials affecting his or her rights and legitimate interests.

The use of information may be restricted by law in order to protect the honour, dignity, private and family life of citizens and the full exercise of their rights.

Article 35. Freedom of assembly, rallies, street processions, demonstrations and pickets that do not violate law and order or the rights of other citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall be guaranteed by the state. The procedure for conducting the above-mentioned events shall be determined by law.

Article 36. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association.

Citizens have the right to form political parties and other public associations and to participate in their activities in order to pursue and satisfy their political, social, economic, cultural and other interests.

Political parties and other public associations shall be established and act in accordance with the law.

Judges, prosecutors, employees of the State Control Committee, paramilitary organisations and members of the armed forces may not be members of political parties.

Article 37. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall have the right to participate in public affairs both directly and through freely elected representatives.

The direct participation of citizens in the management of the affairs of society and the State is ensured by holding referendums, discussing draft laws, other normative legal acts and issues of national and local importance, and by other means defined by law.

In accordance with the procedure established by law, citizens of the Republic of Belarus take part in the discussion of questions of state and public life at national and local assemblies.

Article 38. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall have the right to elect freely and be elected to state bodies on the basis of universal, equal, direct or indirect suffrage by secret ballot.

Article 39. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus, in accordance with their abilities, professional training shall have the right of equal access to any public office.

Article 40. Everyone shall have the right to submit personal or collective appeals to public authorities.

State authorities and officials are obliged to consider the application and give a reply on the merits within a time limit specified by law. The refusal to consider a submitted application must be justified in writing.

Article 41. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall be guaranteed the right to work as the most dignified means of self-assertion, i.e., the right to choose a profession, occupation and work in accordance with one's vocation, abilities, education, vocational training and in accordance with social needs, as well as to healthy and safe working conditions.

The state creates conditions for full employment. If a person is unemployed for reasons beyond his or her control, he or she is guaranteed training in new occupations and further training in accordance with social needs, as well as unemployment benefits in accordance with the law.

Citizens have the right to protect their economic and social interests, including the right to form trade unions, to enter into collective agreements and the right to strike.

Forced labour is prohibited, except for work or service on the basis of a court order or in accordance with the laws on states of emergency and martial regulations.

Article 42. Employees are guaranteed a just share of remuneration for the economic results of their labour in accordance with the quantity, quality and social significance of such work, but not less than the level which ensures them and their families an existence of independence and dignity.

Women and men, adults and minors, have the right to equal pay for work of equal value.

Article 43. Workers have the right to rest. For wage earners, this right is ensured by the establishment of a working week not exceeding 40 hours, reduced night work, paid annual leave and weekly rest days.

Article 44. The State shall guarantee everyone the right to property and shall facilitate its acquisition.

The owner has the right to own, use and dispose of property both individually and jointly with others. The inviolability of property and the right to inherit it shall be protected by law.

Legally acquired property is protected by the state.

The state encourages and protects the savings of citizens and creates guarantees for the repayment of deposits.

Forced alienation of property is permitted only on grounds of public necessity, subject to the conditions and procedures defined by law, with timely and full compensation for the value of the alienated property, and in accordance with a court order.

The exercise of property rights must not be contrary to public benefit and safety, cause damage to the environment, historical and cultural treasures, or infringe on the rights and legally protected interests of others.

Article 45. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall be guaranteed the right to health care, including free treatment at the expense of the state funds in the manner prescribed by law. Citizens shall take care and maintain their own health.

The state creates the conditions for health care that is accessible to all citizens.

The right of citizens of the Republic of Belarus to health protection is also ensured by the development of physical education and sport, measures to improve the environment, the possibility of using recreational facilities and the improvement of occupational safety.

Article 46. Everyone has the right to a favourable environment and to redress for the violation of that right.

The state monitors the sustainable use of natural resources in order to protect and improve living conditions and to protect and restore the environment.

The Republic of Belarus develops nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and ensures safety in the production and use of nuclear energy.

Article 47. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus shall be guaranteed the right to social security on the basis of age, in the event of illness, disability, loss of capacity to work, loss of a breadwinner and in other cases provided for by law.

The state takes special care of war and labour veterans, persons who have lost their health while defending state and public interests, as well as disabled and elderly people.

Persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities to exercise their human and civil rights and freedoms. The State implements a policy of social integration of persons with disabilities, creation of an accessible environment and improvement of their quality of life, and support for families with disabled members.

Article 48. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus have the right to housing. This right is ensured by the development of the public and private housing stock and by assisting citizens in acquiring housing.

Citizens in need of social protection are provided with housing by the state and local government free of charge or at an affordable fee in accordance with the law.

No one can be arbitrarily deprived of housing.

Article 49. Everyone shall have the right to education.

General secondary and vocational education shall be accessible and free of charge.

Specialised secondary and higher education is available to everyone according to their abilities. Everyone can, on a competitive basis, receive appropriate education free of charge at state educational institutions.

Article 50. Everyone shall have the right to maintain his national identity and no one shall be compelled to determine and declare his national identity.

Insult to national dignity is punishable under the law.

Everyone shall have the right to use his or her mother tongue and choose the language of communication. The state shall guarantee, in accordance with the law, the freedom to choose the language of upbringing and education.

Article 51. Everyone has the right to participate in cultural life. This right is ensured by universal access to the values of national and world culture, which are in the state and public funds, and by the development of the network of cultural and educational institutions.

Freedom of artistic, scientific, technical creativity and teaching is guaranteed.

Intellectual property is protected by law.

The state promotes culture, scientific and technical research and innovation for the benefit of the common interest.

Article 52. Everyone who is in the territory of the Republic of Belarus shall be obliged to observe its Constitution, laws and to respect the state symbols and national traditions of Belarus.

Article 53. Everyone shall respect the dignity, rights, freedoms and lawful interests of others.

Article 54. Everyone is obliged to safeguard the historical, cultural and spiritual heritage and other national values.

Preservation of the historical memory of the heroic past of the Belarusian people, patriotism is the duty of every citizen of the Republic of Belarus.

Article 55. Protection of the natural environment and careful use of natural resources is everyone's duty.

Article 56. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus are obliged to participate in financing public expenditure by paying state taxes, duties and other payments.

Article 57. It is the obligation and sacred duty of every citizen of the Republic of Belarus to defend the Republic of Belarus.

The procedure for military service, the grounds and conditions for exemption from military service or its replacement with alternative service shall be determined by law.

Article 58. No one shall be compelled to perform duties not provided for in the Constitution and the law or to renounce his rights.

Article 59. The State shall be obliged to take all measures available to it to create the internal and international order necessary for full exercise of the rights and freedoms of citizens of the Republic of Belarus provided for in the Constitution.

State bodies, officials and other persons entrusted with the performance of public functions shall, within the limits of their competence, take the measures necessary for the exercise and protection of the rights and freedoms of the individual.

These bodies and individuals are responsible for acts that violate individual rights and freedoms.

Article 60. Everyone shall be guaranteed protection of his or her rights and freedoms by a competent, independent and impartial court in the manner and within the time limits prescribed by law. Decisions and actions (inaction) of state bodies and officials that infringe rights and freedoms may be appealed in court.

In order to protect their rights, freedoms, honour and dignity, citizens are entitled by law to recover in court both pecuniary damage and material compensation for moral damage.

Article 61. Everyone shall have the right, in accordance with international treaties of the Republic of Belarus, to apply to international organisations for the protection of his rights and freedoms if all available domestic remedies have been exhausted.

Article 62. Everyone shall have the right to legal assistance for the exercise and protection of rights and freedoms, including the right to benefit at any time from the assistance of lawyers and other representatives in court, other state bodies, other organisations and in relations with officials and citizens. In cases prescribed by law, legal assistance shall be provided at the expense of state funds.

It is prohibited to oppose the provision of legal aid in the Republic of Belarus.

Article 63. The exercise of the rights and freedoms of the individual enshrined in this Constitution may be suspended only in conditions of state of emergency or martial law in the manner and within the limits determined by the Constitution and the law.

In the exercise of special measures during a state of emergency, the rights provided for in Article 24, part three of Article 25, Articles 26 and 31 of the Constitution may not be restricted.

CHAPTER III.
ELECTORAL SYSTEM. REFERENDUM

SECTION 1. ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Article 64. Elections of deputies and other persons elected to public office by the people shall be universal: citizens of the Republic of Belarus who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote.

Citizens who have been declared incompetent by a court and those held in places of deprivation of liberty shall not have the right to vote or be elected.

Age requirement and other conditions for deputies and other persons elected to public office shall be determined by the relevant laws, unless otherwise provided by the Constitution.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the electoral rights of citizens in other cases is unacceptable and punishable by law.

Article 65. Elections are free: the voter personally decides whether to stand for election and for whom to vote.

The preparation and conduct of elections are open and transparent.

Article 66. Elections are equal: voters have an equal number of votes.

Candidates running for public office participate in the election on an equal basis.

Article 67. The election of deputies is direct: deputies are elected directly by citizens.

Elections of deputies are held on a single voting day on the last Sunday of February.

Article 68. Voting in elections is secret: control of voters' will during voting is prohibited.

Article 69. The political parties, labour collectives and citizens have the right to nominate candidates for deputy in accordance with the law.

Article 70. Expenses for the preparation and conduct of elections shall be incurred at the expense of the state within the limits of funds allocated for these purposes. In cases stipulated by law, expenses for preparation and conduct of elections may be incurred at the expense of political parties, other organisations and citizens.

It is prohibited to finance the costs of preparing and conducting elections by foreign states and organizations, foreign citizens, as well as in other cases provided for by law.

Article 71. Elections shall be administered by the election commissions, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution.

The system of electoral commissions is headed by the Central Election Commission. The Central Election Commission organizes elections of the President, delegates to the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, members of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic, deputies of local Councils of Deputies, holds republican referendums, exercises control over the execution of the legislation on elections and referendums, and exercises other powers prescribed by law.

The Chairman and members of the Central Election Commission are elected for five years and dismissed by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly.

The system, formation procedure, competence of election commissions and guarantees of their independence are defined by law.

The procedure for elections is determined by law.

Elections are not held during a state of emergency or martial law.

Article 72. The recall of deputies shall be carried out on the grounds provided for by law.

A vote to recall a deputy shall be held in the manner prescribed for the election of a deputy, at the initiative of at least twenty per cent of the citizens eligible to vote and residing in the respective territory.

The grounds and procedure for the recall of members of the Council of the Republic shall be prescribed by law.

SECTION 2. REFERENDUM (POPULAR VOTE)

Article 73. Republican and local referendums may be held to decide the most important issues of state and public life.

Article 74. Republican referendums shall be ordered by the President of the Republic of Belarus on his own initiative, on the proposal of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, and also on the proposal of the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic, which shall be passed at their separate sessions by a majority of votes of the composition (full composition) of each chamber as specified by the Constitution, or on the proposal of not less than 450 thousand citizens with the right to vote, including not less than 30 thousand citizens from each of the regions and the city of Minsk.

Issues submitted to a republican referendum shall be subject to constitutional review.

The President shall appoint a republican referendum after the proposals of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic or citizens to hold a referendum have been submitted to him in accordance with the law.

The date of the republican referendum shall be fixed no later than three months from the date of the presidential decree appointing the referendum.

Decisions adopted in a republican referendum shall be signed by the President of the Republic of Belarus.

Article 75. Local referendums shall be appointed by the relevant local representative bodies on their own initiative or on the proposal of at least ten per cent of citizens having the right to vote and residing on the respective territory.

Article 76. Referendums shall be held by universal, free, equal, and secret ballot.

Citizens of the Republic of Belarus who have the right to vote participate in referendums.

Article 77. Decisions taken by referendum may only be repealed or amended by referendum, unless otherwise determined by referendum.

Article 78. The procedure for holding republican and local referendums, as well as the list of issues that cannot be put to referendum, shall be determined by law.

CHAPTER IV.
PRESIDENT, ALL-BELARUSIAN PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, PARLIAMENT, GOVERNMENT, COURTS

SECTION 3. PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

Article 79. The President of the Republic of Belarus shall be the Head of State, the guarantor of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, human and citizen's rights and freedoms.

The President shall personify the unity of the people, guarantee the implementation of the main guidelines of the domestic and foreign policy, represent the Republic of Belarus in relations with other states and international organisations. The President shall take measures to protect the sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus, its national security and territorial integrity, shall ensure political and economic stability, continuity and interaction of bodies of state power, shall mediate between bodies of state power.

Article 80. A citizen of the Republic of Belarus by birth, not younger than 40 years of age, who is eligible to vote, has been permanently resident in the Republic of Belarus for at least 20 years immediately prior to the election, and who has not previously held a foreign citizenship or residence permit or other document of a foreign state entitling him to privileges and other advantages may be elected President.

Article 81. The President shall be elected directly by the people of the Republic of Belarus for a term of five years by universal, free, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. The same person may not serve more than two terms as President.

Candidates for the office of President shall be nominated by citizens of the Republic of Belarus in the presence of at least 100,000 signatures of voters.

The election of the President shall be appointed by the House of Representatives at least five months in advance and shall be held at least two months before the expiry of the term of the previous President.

If the office of President falls vacant, an election shall be held no sooner than 30 days and no later than 70 days from the date of the vacancy.

Article 82. The presidential election shall be deemed to have taken place if more than half of the citizens of the Republic of Belarus on the electoral roll have taken part in the voting.

The President shall be deemed to have been elected if more than half of the citizens of the Republic of Belarus who took part in the voting have voted for him.

If no candidate obtains the required number of votes, a second round of voting shall be held within two weeks between the two candidates who obtained the highest number of votes. The presidential candidate who obtains more than half of the votes of those who took part in the second ballot is deemed to have been elected.

The procedure for presidential elections is determined by law.

Article 83. The President shall take office after taking the following Oath of Office:

"On assuming the office of President of the Republic of Belarus, I solemnly swear to faithfully serve the people of the Republic of Belarus, to respect and protect human and civil rights and freedoms, to observe and protect the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, to faithfully and conscientiously perform the high duties entrusted to me.

The Oath shall be administered in a ceremonial setting in the presence of members of the Presidium of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, members of the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic, judges of the Constitutional and Supreme Courts no later than two months after the election of the President. The powers of the previous President shall terminate the moment the President-elect takes the Oath.

Article 84. The President of the Republic of Belarus shall:

1) appoint republican referendum;

2) appoint regular and extraordinary elections to the House of Representatives, the Council of the Republic and local representative bodies;

3) dissolve the chambers in the cases and in the manner prescribed in the Constitution;

4) removed;

5) form, abolish and reorganise the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus, other state bodies and other organisations as well as consultative, advisory and other bodies under the President and determines their status;

6) with the prior approval of the House of Representatives, appoint the Prime Minister;

7) determine the structure of the Government of the Republic of Belarus, appoint and dismiss Deputy Prime Ministers, ministers and other members of the Government, decide on the resignation of the Government or its members;

8) removed;

9) with prior consent of the Council of the Republic, appoint and dismiss the Prosecutor General, the Chairman of the State Control Committee, the Chairman and members of the Board of the National Bank on the grounds stipulated by law;

10) appoint and dismiss judges of courts of general jurisdiction on the grounds provided by law, unless otherwise specified by the Constitution;

11) removed;

12) removed;

13) addresses the people of the Republic of Belarus on the situation of the state and the main directions of domestic and foreign policy;

14) addresses annual messages to the Parliament, which shall be heard at the All-Belarusian People's Assembly; has the right to participate in the work of Parliament and its bodies and to address them at any time with a speech or message;

15) have the right to preside at meetings of the Government of the Republic of Belarus;

16) appoint the President's representatives to Parliament, assistants, commissioners and other officials whose positions are defined by law, unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution;

17) decide on matters of admission to and termination of the citizenship of the Republic of Belarus and grant asylum;

18) grant state awards, confer class ranks and ranks, deprive of state awards, class ranks and ranks on grounds stipulated by law;

19) grant pardon to convicted persons;

20) negotiate and sign international treaties, appoint and recall ambassadors and permanent representatives to international organisations;

21) accept the credentials and letters of recall of diplomatic representatives of foreign states accredited to it;

22) In the event of a natural disaster, catastrophe, attempts to change the constitutional order by force, seizure or appropriation of State power, armed rebellion, mass and other disturbances accompanied by violence or threat of violence from a group of persons or organisations, which endanger peoples' lives and health or the territorial integrity and existence of the State, introduce a state of emergency on the territory of the Republic of Belarus or in individual areas

with the introduction of a decision adopted within three days for approval by the Council of the Republic;

23) in cases provided for by law, have the right to postpone the strike or suspend it, but not for more than three months;

24) sign laws; has the right, in the manner prescribed by the Constitution, to return a law or certain of its provisions with its objections to the House of Representatives;

25) has the right to revoke acts of the Government;

26) directly or through bodies established by it, exercise control over the observance of legislation by local government and self-government bodies; has the right to suspend the decisions of local councils of deputies and annul the decisions of local executive and administrative bodies in case they do not comply with legislation;

27) Form and head the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus; appoint and dismiss the State Secretary of the Security Council;

28) be the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces; appoint and dismiss the highest command of the Armed Forces;

29) introduce martial law in the territory of the Republic of Belarus in the event of a military threat or attack, declare full or partial mobilisation with the decision to be submitted within three days to the Council of the Republic for approval;

30) exercise other powers established by the Constitution and laws necessary for the implementation of the constitutional functions assigned to him.

Article 85. The President, on the basis of and in accordance with the Constitution, shall issue decrees and orders which are binding on the entire territory of the Republic of Belarus.

Decrees and orders of the President must not contradict laws.

Article 86. The President may not hold other positions, unless otherwise stipulated by the Constitution, and may not receive monetary remuneration other than his salary, with the exception of author's remuneration for works of science, literature and art.

The President suspends membership in political parties for the entire term of office.

Article 87. The President may resign at any time. The resignation of the President shall be accepted by the House of Representatives.

Article 88. The President may be prematurely removed from office for persistent incapacity to discharge his/her duties on account of ill health. The decision to prematurely discharge the President shall be taken by a majority of no less than two-thirds of the whole House of Representatives and a majority of no less than two-thirds of the whole Council of the Republic, based on a conclusion by a commission specially created by the Chambers.

The President may be removed from office by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly in the event of systematic or gross violations by the President of the Constitution or the commission of high treason or other serious crimes.

The proposal to bring charges against the President and to remove him from office shall be presented to the All-Belarusian People's Assembly on the initiative of not less than one third of the full House of Representatives or not less than 150,000 citizens of the Republic of Belarus who have the right to vote. The investigation of the accusation shall be organised by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly.

The decision of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly to remove the President from office shall be taken after receiving the opinion of the Constitutional Court on the presence of facts of systematic or gross violation of the Constitution by the President if the President is accused of such a violation of the Constitution.

The decision of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly to remove the President from office is considered adopted if a majority of the full composition of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly has voted in favour of it.

The failure of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly to take a decision on the removal the President from the office within two months from the date of the proposal to bring charges means the dismissal of the accusation. A proposal to bring charges against the President and to remove him from office may not be initiated while the issue of the premature termination of the powers of Parliament is being considered in accordance with the Constitution.

If the President is removed for an offence, the case is heard on the merits by the Supreme Court.

Article 88[1] . In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President or his inability to perform his duties on the grounds stipulated in the Constitution, his powers shall pass to the President of the Council of the Republic until the newly elected President is sworn in.

In the event of the death of the President as a result of an attempt on his life, an act of terrorism, military aggression or other acts of a violent nature:

meetings of the Security Council are chaired by the President of the Council of the Republic;

immediately on the basis of a decision of the Security Council, a state of emergency or martial law shall be declared in the territory of the Republic of Belarus in accordance with the established procedure;

state authorities and officials act in accordance with the decisions of the Security Council.

Article 89. The President shall have immunity and his honour and dignity shall be protected by law.

The provisions of the first part of this Article shall apply to a President who has ceased to exercise his powers due to the expiration of his term in office or early termination of office in the event of his resignation or persistent inability for health reasons to exercise the duties of the President.

A president who has ceased to exercise his powers may not be held accountable for acts committed in connection with the exercise of his presidential powers.

The status of the President who has ceased to exercise his powers shall be determined by law.

SECTION 3[1]. ALL-BELARUSIAN PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

Article 89[1] The All-Belarusian People's Assembly is the highest representative body of the people's power of the Republic of Belarus which determines the strategic directions of the development for society and the state, that ensures the inviolability of the constitutional system, the continuity of generations and civil accord.

Article 89[2] The delegates to the All-Belarusian People's Assembly are:

The President of the Republic of Belarus;

The President of the Republic of Belarus, who has ceased to exercise his powers in connection with the expiry of his term in office or in the event of his early resignation;

representatives of the legislative, executive and judicial branches;

representatives of local councils of deputies;

representatives of civil society.

Representatives of local councils of deputies and civil society to the All-Belarusian People's Assembly shall be elected from each region and the city of Minsk in the manner prescribed by law.

The maximum number of delegates to the All-Belarusian People's Assembly is 1,200.

The term of office of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly is five years.

The All-Belarusian People's Assembly shall be convened for its first meeting by the Central Election Commission no later than 60 days after the election of deputies.

A delegate of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly shall take part in the work of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly without interruption from his or her working (official) activities.

The Presidium is the collegiate body that ensures the operative resolution of issues falling within the competence of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly in accordance with the procedure established by law.

The Chairman of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, his deputies and other members of the Presidium shall be elected by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly by secret ballot.

Article 89³ . All-Belarusian People's Assembly:

1) approves the main directions of domestic and foreign policy, the military doctrine and the national security concept;

2) approves the programmes of social and economic development of the Republic of Belarus;

3) hears the Prime Minister on the implementation of social and economic development programmes of the Republic of Belarus;

4) proposes amendments and additions to the Constitution;

5) proposes the holding of republican referendums;

6) has the right to consider the legitimacy of elections;

7) decides on the removal of the President from office in the event of systematic or gross violations of the Constitution or if he has committed high treason or another serious crime;

8) may declare a state of emergency or martial law in the territory of the Republic of Belarus on the grounds specified in the Constitution and in the event of inaction by the President on such matters; the declaration of a state of emergency or martial law shall be considered by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly on the initiative of the Presidium of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly or the Council of the Republic;

9) on the proposal of the President, previously agreed upon with the Presidium of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly:

elects the President, the Vice-President and the judges of the Constitutional Court and dismisses them from office on the grounds stipulated by law;

elects the President, Vice-Presidents and judges of the Supreme Court and dismisses them from office for reasons prescribed by law;

elects the Chairman and members of the Central Electoral Commission and dismisses them from office for reasons prescribed by law;

10) on the proposal of the President, decides on the possibility of sending servicemen, members of paramilitary organisations and other persons outside the Republic of Belarus to participate in ensuring collective security and activities to maintain international peace and security;

11) establishes public holidays and vacation days;

12) awards the President with state honours and proposes persons for state honours;

13) gives binding instructions to state bodies and officials, receives information from state bodies and officials, and exercises other powers prescribed by the Constitution and law necessary for the exercise of the constitutional functions vested in it.

Article 89[4] The All-Belarusian People's Assembly meets at least once a year.

The All-Belarusian People's Assembly may be convened for an extraordinary meeting at the initiative of the President, the Presidium of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, both chambers of the National Assembly (by joint decision), as well as upon the initiative of not less than 150 thousand citizens of the Republic of Belarus who have the right to vote.

Article 89[5] The All-Belarusian People's Assembly takes decisions to implement the constitutional functions entrusted to it.

Decisions of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly shall be binding and may annul legal acts, other decisions of state bodies and officials contradicting the interests of national security, with the exception of acts of judicial bodies.

Article 89[6] The competence, formation and activities of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly are determined by the Constitution and the law.

SECTION 4. PARLIAMENT - NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Article 90. The Parliament - National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus is the representative and legislative body of the Republic of Belarus.

Parliament consists of two chambers, the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic.

Article 91. The Composition of the House of Representatives is 110 deputies. The deputies of the House of Representatives shall be elected in accordance with the law based on universal, free, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

The Council of the Republic is a chamber of territorial representation. Eight members of the Council of the Republic are elected from each region and the city of Minsk by secret ballot at meetings of deputies of local councils of deputies of the basic level of each region and the city of Minsk. Eight members of the Council of the Republic are appointed by the President of the Republic of Belarus. The President of the Republic shall be a member of the Council of the Republic for life with his consent and shall terminate his term of office in connection with expiry of his term of office or in the event of his earlier resignation.

Elections of new parliamentary chambers are scheduled no later than three months before the single voting day.

Extraordinary elections of the chambers of Parliament shall be held within three months of the early termination of the powers of the chambers of Parliament.

Article 92. A citizen of the Republic of Belarus who has reached the age of 21 may be a deputy of the House of Representatives.

A member of the Council of the Republic may be a citizen of the Republic of Belarus who has reached the age of 30 and has lived in the territory of the respective region or the city of Minsk for at least five years.

Members of the House of Representatives exercise their powers in Parliament on a professional basis.

The same person may not be a member of two chambers of Parliament at the same time. A member of the House of Representatives may not be a member of the Government or a member of a local Council of Deputies. A member of the Council of the Republic may not simultaneously be a member of the Government. A deputy of the House of Representatives or a member of the Council of the Republic may not simultaneously hold the office of the President or a judge.

Article 93. The term of office of Parliament shall be five years, unless otherwise provided by the Constitution. The powers of Parliament may be renewed by law only in the event of war.

The first session of the chambers of Parliament after the elections shall be convened by the Central Election Commission and begins its work no later than 30 days after the elections. The thirty-day period for the convocation and commencement of the first session of the House of Representatives shall commence on the day of the elections. The thirty-day period for convocation and commencement of the first session of the Council of the Republic shall be counted down from the day of the first meeting of the deputies of local councils of deputies of the basic level for the election of the members of the Council of the Republic from the region or the city of Minsk.

In cases and as prescribed by the Constitution, the powers of the House of Representatives or the Council of the Republic may be terminated prematurely. With the termination of the powers of the House of Representatives or the Council of the Republic, the powers of the Council of the Republic or the House of Representatives, respectively, may also be terminated by decision of the President.

Article 94. The powers of the House of Representatives may be terminated prematurely upon a refusal of confidence in the Government, a vote of no confidence in the Government, or a double refusal to give preliminary consent to the appointment of the Prime Minister.

The powers of the House of Representatives or the Council of the Republic may also be prematurely terminated based on an opinion of the Constitutional Court in the case of systematic or gross violations of the Constitution by the Chambers of Parliament.

The President decides on these matters no later than two months after official consultations with the presidents of the chambers.

The chambers may not be dissolved during a state of emergency or martial law, during the last six months of the President's term of office, during the period when the chambers decide on the premature removal of the President from office or during the period when the All-Belarus People's Assembly decides on the removal of the President from office.

It is not allowed to dissolve the chambers within a year from the date of their first sittings and in the last year of the powers of the Parliament.

In the event of the dissolution of the chambers of Parliament, the new composition of the respective Chamber shall exercise its powers until the beginning of the powers of the Parliament elected on a single voting day.

Article 95. The chambers shall meet in session, which opens on the third Tuesday of September and closes on the last working day of June of the following year.

The House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic shall, in case of special necessity, be convened in extraordinary session by the presidents of the chambers at the initiative of the President or a majority of the deputies of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic of the full composition of each chamber, on an agenda and at a time determined by the initiator.

Article 96. The House of Representatives shall elect from among its members the President of the House of Representatives and his deputies.

The Council of the Republic shall elect from among its members the Chairman of the Council of the Republic and its deputies.

The Presidents of the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic and their deputies preside over the meetings and internal order of the chambers.

The House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic shall elect from among their members permanent commissions and other bodies to conduct legislative work and preliminary consideration and preparation of questions falling within the competence of the chambers.

Article 97. House of Representatives:

1) considers, on the proposal of the President, the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, at least one third of the full composition of each chamber of Parliament or on the initiative of at least 150,000 citizens of the Republic of Belarus with the right to vote, draft laws on amendments and additions to the Constitution;

2) considers draft laws on the ratification and denunciation of international treaties; on the basic content and principles of the exercise of the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens; on citizenship, the status of foreigners and stateless persons; on the rights of national minorities; on the establishment of republican taxes and fees; on the principles of the implementation of property relations; on the principles of social protection; on the principles of labour and employment regulation; marriage, family, children, motherhood, fatherhood, parenthood, education, culture and health care; environmental protection and rational use of natural resources; determination of the procedure for resolving administrative-territorial structure of the state; about local self-government; the judicial system, the judiciary and the status of judges; on criminal liability; on amnesty; on the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace; on the legal regime of martial law and state of emergency; on the establishment of state awards; on the interpretation of laws; other draft laws;

2[1]) considers draft laws on the national budget and on approval of the report on its execution. Draft laws on the national budget and on approval of the report on its execution are submitted to the House of Representatives by the Government in agreement with the President;

3) calls for the election of the President;

4) gives prior consent to the President for appointment to the post of the Prime Minister;

5) hears the Prime Minister's report on the programme of the Government and approves or rejects the programme; a repeated rejection of the programme by the Chamber shall constitute a vote of no confidence in the Government;

5[1]) annually hears the information of the Prosecutor General, the Chairman of the State Control Committee and the Chairman of the Board of the National Bank on the results of their activities;

6) considers, on the initiative of the Prime Minister, the question of confidence in the Government;

7) on the initiative of at least one third of the full composition of the House of Representatives, passes a vote of no confidence in the Government; the question of the Government's responsibility may not be raised within one year after its programme of activities has been approved;

8) accepts the resignation of the President;

9) removed;

10) revokes the orders of the President of the House of Representatives.

The House of Representatives may decide on other matters if the Constitution so provides.

Article 98. Council of the Republic:

1) approves or rejects draft laws adopted by the House of Representatives on amendments to the Constitution; drafts of other laws;

2) gives prior consent to the President for the appointment and dismissal of the Prosecutor General, the Chairman of the State Control Committee, the Chairman and members of the Board of the National Bank;

2[1]) annually hears the information of the Prosecutor General, the Chairman of the State Control Committee and the Chairman of the Board of the National Bank on the results of their activities;

3) removed;

4) removed;

5) analyses the activity of local Councils of Deputies, takes measures for the development of local self-government; cancels decisions of local Councils of Deputies that do not comply with the law;

6) decides to dissolve the local Council of Deputies in case of systematic or gross violations of legal requirements and in other cases prescribed by law;

7) removed;

8) examines presidential decrees proclaiming state of emergency, martial law, total or partial mobilisation and, no later than three days after their submission, adopts the relevant decision.

The Council of the Republic may decide on other matters if the Constitution so provides.

Article 99. The right of legislative initiative shall belong to the President, the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, deputies of the House of Representatives, the Council of the Republic, the Government, as well as citizens with the right to vote of not less than 50,000 and shall be exercised in the House of Representatives.

Bills which may result in a reduction of public funds, or the creation or increase of expenditure, shall be submitted in the House of Representatives in the presence of the opinion of the Government.

The President, or upon his instructions the Government shall have the right to submit proposals to the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic to declare a bill urgent. The House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic shall in such a case consider the draft within ten days from the date of submission for their consideration.

At the request of the President or, with the consent of the Government, the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic shall, at their meetings, vote in favour of all or part of a draft submitted by the President or the Government, retaining only those amendments proposed or passed by the President or the Government.

Article 100. Any bill, unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution, shall first be considered by the House of Representatives and then by the Council of the Republic.

A bill, except as provided for in the Constitution, becomes law when it is passed by the House of Representatives and approved by the Council of the Republic by a majority vote of the full composition of each chamber.

The law on the republican budget for the next fiscal year is adopted before the beginning of the fiscal year. If the law on the republican budget is not adopted within the stated period, the republican budget is administered temporarily.

Bills passed by the House of Representatives are transmitted within five days to the Council of the Republic, where they may be considered for a maximum of twenty days, unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution.

A law shall be considered approved by the Council of the Republic if a majority of the full composition of the Council of the Republic has voted for it or if it has not been considered by the Council of the Republic within twenty days or, if the draft law is declared urgent, within ten days from the date of its submission. In the event the Council of the Republic rejects a draft law, the Chambers may set up a conciliation commission formed on a parity basis to overcome the disagreement. The text of the bill worked out by the conciliation commission shall be submitted to both chambers for approval.

If the conciliation commission fails to adopt the agreed text of a bill, the President or upon his instructions the Government may require the House of Representatives to make a final decision. A law shall be deemed to have been passed by the House of Representatives provided that at least two-thirds of the full composition of the House of Representatives has voted in favour of it.

A law passed by the House of Representatives and approved by the Council of the Republic, or passed by the House of Representatives as provided for in this Article, shall be submitted within ten days to the President for signature. If the President agrees with the text of the law, he shall sign it within two weeks.

If the President applies to the Constitutional Court with a proposal to verify the constitutionality of a law within the specified period, the deadline for signing such a law shall be suspended while the proposal is being examined by the Constitutional Court. The opinion of the Constitutional Court must be adopted no later than ten days from the date of submission of the proposal by the President. If the Constitutional Court confirms the constitutionality of a law, the President shall sign it within five days of the adoption of the opinion by the Constitutional Court. If the Constitutional Court finds a law to be unconstitutional, the President shall return it to the House of Representatives.

If the President does not return a law within two weeks of its submission to the President or, if the Constitutional Court has issued an opinion on the constitutionality of a law, within five days

of the adoption of the opinion, the law is considered signed. A law is not considered signed and does not enter into force if it could not be returned to Parliament at the end of the session.

If the President disagrees with the text of the law, he returns it with his objections to the House of Representatives, which must consider the law with the President's objections within thirty days. If the law is passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of the full composition of the House of Representatives, it together with the President's objections, shall be sent within five days to the Council of the Republic, which must also reconsider it within twenty days. A law shall be passed if it is approved by a majority of at least two-thirds of the full composition of the Council of the Republic. The law, after overcoming the objections of the President by the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic, is signed by the President within five days. The law also comes into force if it is not signed by the President in this period.

In the same order, the chambers shall consider the President's objections to certain provisions of the law, which shall be returned for a second vote. In this case, before the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic take a decision, the law shall be signed by the President and come into force, except for those provisions to which there are objections from the President.

Article 101. removed.

Article 102. Deputies of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic shall enjoy immunity when expressing their opinions and exercising their powers. This shall not apply to accusations of slander and insult against them.

During their term of office, Members of the House of Representatives and Members of the Council of the Republic may be arrested, otherwise deprived of personal liberty only with the prior consent of the respective Chamber, except for committing high treason or another grave crime as well as being detained in the act of committing a crime.

A criminal case against a member of the House of Representatives or a member of the Council of the Republic is heard by the Supreme Court.

Article 103. Sessions of the chambers shall be public. The Chambers, if the interests of the state so require, may decide to hold a closed session by a majority vote of their full membership. During sessions, including those held in private, the President, his representatives, the Prime Minister and the members of the Government may speak out of turn for as many times as they request.

The Chambers may meet jointly to hear the annual information of the Prosecutor General, the Chairman of the State Control Committee and the Chairman of the Board of the National Bank on their activities, as well as to deal with other issues within the competence of the Parliament.

One sitting per month shall be reserved for questions from deputies of the House of Representatives and Members of the Council of the Republic and answers from the Government.

A deputy of the House of Representatives, a member of the Council of the Republic has the right to make an enquiry to the Prime Minister, members of the Government, heads of state bodies. The request must be included in the agenda of the Chamber. The response to the request must be given within twenty sessional days in the manner prescribed by the chamber of the Parliament.

A sitting of the House of Representatives shall be deemed competent if a majority of the members of the House of Representatives or of the Council of the Republic is present at the meeting.

Voting in the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic shall be open and shall be conducted in person by a deputy, a member of the Council of the Republic by casting a vote "for" or "against". Voting by secret ballot shall take place only in relation to personnel matters.

Article 104. Decisions of the House of Representatives shall be adopted in the form of laws and resolutions. Resolutions of the House of Representatives shall be adopted on matters of an administrative and supervisory nature.

Decisions of the Council of the Republic shall be adopted the form of resolutions.

Decisions of the chambers are considered adopted if they are supported by a majority of the full composition the chambers voted in favour, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution.

Laws are subject to immediate official publication upon signature and enter into force ten days after publication, unless the law itself sets a different deadline.

The law does not have retroactive effect, except in cases where it reduces or abrogates responsibility of citizens.

Article 105. The procedure for the activities of the House of Representatives, the Council of the Republic, their bodies, deputies of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic shall be determined by law and the rules of procedure of the chambers to be signed by the presidents of the chambers.

SECTION 5. GOVERNMENT - COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

Article 106. Executive power in the Republic of Belarus is exercised by the Government - the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus is the central body of state administration.

The Government in its activities is accountable to the President of the Republic of Belarus and is responsible to the Parliament of the Republic of Belarus.

The Government shall resign its powers to the newly elected President of the Republic of Belarus.

The Government of the Republic of Belarus consists of the Prime Minister, his deputies and ministers. The Government may also include heads of other state bodies and organisations.

The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President of the Republic of Belarus with the prior consent of the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives shall decide on the matter no later than within two weeks from the date of submission of the nomination of the Prime Minister. In the event of a two-time refusal to give consent to the appointment of the Prime Minister by the House of Representatives, the President of the Republic of Belarus has the right to appoint an acting Prime Minister, dissolve the House of Representatives and call new elections.

The work of the Government is led by the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister:

1) directly manages the activities of the Government and shall be personally responsible for its work;

2) signs the government resolutions;

3) within two months of his/her appointment, submits to Parliament a programme of activities of the Government and, if rejected, submits a second programme of activities of the Government within two months;

4) informs the President of the main activities of the Government and of all its major decisions;

4[1]) informs the All-Belarusian People's Assembly annually on the implementation of the socio-economic development programmes of the Republic of Belarus;

5) exercises other powers related to the organisation and operation of the Government.

The Government or any member of the Government shall have the right to declare their resignation to the President if they consider it impossible to continue performing their duties. The Government shall submit its resignation to the President if the House of Representatives passes a vote of no confidence in the Government.

The Prime Minister can put in front of the House of Representatives the question of confidence in the Government on a presented programme or on a specific matter. If the House of Representatives refuses confidence, the President has the right to decide within ten days to dismiss the Government or to dissolve the House of Representatives and call for new elections. If the resignation is rejected, the Government shall continue to exercise its powers.

The President has the right, on his own initiative, to decide on the resignation of the Government and to dismiss any member of the Government.

In the event of the resignation or terminating the powers, the Government of the Republic of Belarus shall continue, at the request of the President, to exercise its powers until a new Government is formed.

Article 107. Government of the Republic of Belarus:

directs the system of republican bodies of state administration and other organisations subordinate to him, as well as the system of local executive and administrative bodies in matters within his competence;

develops the main directions of domestic and foreign policy and takes measures for their implementation;

drafts and submits, in agreement with the President, to the House of Representatives, draft laws on the national budget and approval of the report on its execution; ensures the execution of the national budget;

ensures a unified economic, financial, credit and monetary policy, public policy on science and innovation, culture, education, health, environment, social security and wages, public-private partnership;

takes measures to safeguard the rights and freedoms of citizens, protect State interests, national security and defence, protect property and public order, and combat crime;

acts on behalf of the owner in relation to the property owned by the Republic of Belarus, organises the management of state property;

ensures implementation of the Constitution, decisions of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, laws and acts of the President;

revokes the acts of ministries and other subordinate republican bodies of state administration;

makes proposals to the President to revoke the decisions of local executive and administrative bodies if they do not comply with the law;

exercises other powers vested in it by the Constitution, laws and acts of the President.

Article 108. The Government adopts decrees which shall be binding on the entire territory of the Republic of Belarus.

The Prime Minister issues orders within his competence.

Government decrees and Prime Minister's orders must not contradict laws and decisions of the President.

The competence, the procedure for the organization and activities of the Government shall be determined on the basis of the Constitution by the Law on the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus.

SECTION 6. COURTS

Article 109. Judicial power in the Republic of Belarus is exercised by the courts.

The court system is based on the principles of territoriality and specialisation.

The judiciary in the Republic of Belarus is determined by the Constitution and the law.

The creation of emergency courts is prohibited.

Article 110. Judges shall be independent in the administration of justice and shall be subject only to the law.

Any interference in the work of judges in the administration of justice is inadmissible and punishable by law.

Article 111. Judges may not engage in entrepreneurial activity, perform other paid work other than teaching and research.

The grounds for the election (appointment) of judges and their dismissal are determined by law.

Article 112. Justice shall be administered by courts on the basis of the Constitution and other normative legal acts adopted in accordance with it.

If, during the hearing of a case the court has doubts as to the constitutionality of a legal act to be applied, it shall, before issuing a judgment, raise before the Constitutional Court the issue of reviewing the constitutionality of the legal act in question, in accordance with the procedure established by law.

Article 112[1] . The Supreme Court heads the system of courts of general jurisdiction and is the highest judicial body which administers justice through civil, criminal and other forms of legal proceedings provided for by law.

The President, Vice-Presidents and judges of the Supreme Court are elected and dismissed by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly. The President and Vice-Presidents of the Supreme Court shall be elected from among the judges of the Supreme Court.

Article 113. The cases in courts shall be heard by judges individually and in cases prescribed by law, collegially.

Article 114. Proceedings in all courts shall be public.

Cases may be heard in camera only where so stipulated by law, in compliance with all the rules of legal proceedings.

Article 115. Justice shall be administered based on equal and adversarial arms.

A judicial act shall be binding for all government bodies, other organisations, officials and citizens.

The parties and the persons involved in the proceedings shall have the right to appeal against decisions, judgements and other judicial acts.

Article 116. The Constitutional Court shall exercise control over the constitutionality of normative legal acts in the state by means of constitutional judicial proceedings in order to protect the constitutional order of the Republic of Belarus, human and citizen's rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, to ensure the supremacy of the Constitution and its direct action in the territory of the Republic of Belarus.

The Constitutional Court is made up of 12 judges who are highly qualified specialists in the field of law and who usually hold academic degrees.

The President, Vice-President and judges of the Constitutional Court are elected and dismissed by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly. The President and Vice-President of the Constitutional Court are elected from among the judges of the Constitutional Court.

Judges of the Constitutional Court are elected for a term of 11 years.

The competence, organisation and procedure of the Constitutional Court are defined by the Constitution and by law.

Article 116[1] . The Constitutional Court shall give opinions on proposals by the President, the Presidium of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, the Chamber of Representatives, the Council of the Republic, the Supreme Court and the Council of Ministers:

on the interpretation of the Constitution;

on the constitutionality of laws, presidential decrees, decrees of the Council of Ministers and the regulations of other state bodies.

The Constitutional Court issues opinions on the President's proposals:

on the constitutionality of draft laws amending and supplementing the Constitution;

on the constitutionality of laws passed by Parliament before they are signed by the President;

on the constitutionality of questions submitted to a republican referendum;

on the conformity with the Constitution of the international treaties of the Republic of Belarus which have not entered into force.

In cases provided for in the Constitution, the Constitutional Court shall issue opinions within two weeks:

on the proposal of the Presidium of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly that there are facts of systematic or gross violations of the Constitution by the President;

on the proposal of the President on the existence of a systematic or gross violation of the Constitution by the Houses of Parliament.

The Constitutional Court, on the proposal of the Presidium of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, shall issue opinions on the constitutionality of the elections of the President, members of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic.

The Constitutional Court shall rule in the manner prescribed by law:

upon complaints by citizens of violations of their constitutional rights and freedoms by verifying the constitutionality of the laws applied in a particular case, where all other judicial remedies have been exhausted;

upon requests from the courts, checking the constitutionality of legal acts to be applied in specific cases before the courts.

The opinions and judgments of the Constitutional Court are final and cannot be appealed or contested.

CHAPTER V.
LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

Article 117. Local administration and self-government shall be exercised by citizens through local councils of deputies, executive and administrative bodies, bodies of territorial public self-government, local referendums, meetings and other forms of direct participation in public and social affairs.

Article 118. Local Councils of Deputies are elected by the citizens of the respective administrative-territorial units for a period of five years, unless otherwise stipulated by the Constitution.

In the event of the dissolution of a local Council of Deputies, the newly elected members of that Council of Deputies shall exercise their powers until the beginning of the powers of the local Councils of Deputies elected on a single voting day.

Article 119. The heads of local executive and administrative bodies shall be appointed to office and dismissed from office by the President of the Republic of Belarus or as prescribed by him and approved in office by the relevant local councils of deputies.

Article 120. Local councils of deputies, executive and administrative bodies shall, within the limits of their competence, resolve issues of local significance on the basis of national interests and the interests of the population living in the respective territory, and shall implement the decisions of higher state bodies.

Article 121. The exclusive competence of local councils of deputies includes:

approval of socio-economic development programmes, local budgets and reports on their implementation;

Establishing local taxes and fees in accordance with the law;

determine, within the limits prescribed by law, the management and disposal of communal property;

the appointment of local referendums.

Article 122. Local councils of deputies, executive and administrative bodies shall, based on the legislation in force, adopt decisions that are binding in the respective territory.

Decisions of local Councils of Deputies that do not comply with the law are repealed by higher representative bodies.

Decisions of local executive and administrative bodies that do not comply with the law shall be repealed by the respective Councils of Deputies, higher executive and administrative bodies, as well as by the President of the Republic of Belarus.

Decisions of local councils of deputies, executive and administrative bodies that restrict or violate the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of citizens, as well as in other cases provided for by law may be appealed in court.

Article 123. In case of systematic or gross violations of the requirements of legislation by a local Council of Deputies it may be dissolved by the Council of the Republic. Other grounds for early termination of powers of local Councils of Deputies shall be determined by law.

Article 124. The competence and procedure for the establishment and operation of local government and self-governing bodies shall be determined by law.

CHAPTER VI.
PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE. STATE CONTROL COMMITTEE

SECTION 7. PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Article 125. Supervision of the precise and uniform implementation of laws, decrees and other normative legal acts by ministries and other bodies subordinate to the Council of Ministers, local representative and executive bodies, public associations, other organisations, officials and citizens shall be entrusted to the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus and his subordinate prosecutors.

The Procurator's Office supervises the enforcement of laws during the investigation of crimes and the compliance with the law of court decisions in civil, criminal and administrative cases; in cases provided for by law, it conducts preliminary investigations and supports the public prosecution in the courts.

Article 126. The unified and centralised system of the prosecutor's office is headed by the Prosecutor General, who is appointed and dismissed by the President with the prior consent of the Council of the Republic.

Subordinate prosecutors are appointed by the Prosecutor General.

Article 127. The Prosecutor General and subordinate prosecutors are independent in the exercise of their powers and are governed by law. In his activities, the Prosecutor General is accountable to the President.

Article 128. The competence, organisation and procedure for the activities of the prosecution service shall be defined by law.

SECTION 8. STATE CONTROL COMMITTEE

Article 129. The State Control Committee shall exercise state control over the execution of the republican budget, the use of state property, the execution of acts of the President, the Parliament, the Government and other state bodies regulating state property relations, economic, financial and tax relations.

Article 130. The State Control Committee shall be constituted by the President.

The Chairman of the State Control Committee shall be appointed and dismissed by the President with the prior consent of the Council of the Republic.

Article 131. The competence, organisation and procedures of the State Control Committee shall be defined by law.

CHAPTER VII.
FINANCIAL AND CREDIT SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

Article 132. The financial and credit system of the Republic of Belarus includes the budget system, the banking system, and the financial resources of extra-budgetary funds, organisations and citizens.

Belarus has a unified fiscal, tax, monetary and currency policy.

Article 133. The budget system of the Republic of Belarus includes the republican and local budgets.

Budget revenues are derived from taxes determined by law, other compulsory payments and other revenues.

The general government expenditure is incurred from the national budget in accordance with its expenditure part.

In accordance with the law, extra budgetary funds may be created in the Republic of Belarus.

Article 134. The procedure for the preparation, approval and execution of budgets shall be determined by law.

Article 135. The report on the execution of the republican budget shall be submitted to the Parliament for consideration not later than five months after the end of the financial year.

Reports on the implementation of local budgets are submitted to the respective Councils of Deputies within the time limit stipulated by law.

Reports on the execution of national and local budgets are published.

Article 136. The banking system of the Republic of Belarus consists of the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus and other banks. The National Bank regulates credit relations and monetary circulation, determines the procedure for settlements and has the exclusive right to issue money.

CHAPTER VIII.
PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE CONSTITUTION

Article 137. removed.

Article 138. The question of amending or supplementing the Constitution shall be considered by the Chambers of Parliament at the initiative of the President, the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, no less than one thirds of the full composition of each of the chambers of the Parliament or no less than 150,000 citizens of the Republic of Belarus who have the right of suffrage.

Article 139. A law amending and supplementing the Constitution may be adopted after two debates and approvals by Parliament, with an interval of at least three months.

The Constitution shall not be amended or supplemented by Parliament during a state of emergency or martial law, or during the last six months of the term of office of the House of Representatives.

Article 140. Laws on amendments and additions to the Constitution, on enactment of these laws are considered adopted if at least two thirds of the full composition of each chamber of the Parliament have voted for them.

Amendments and additions to the Constitution may be made through a referendum. The decision to amend and supplement the Constitution through a referendum shall be deemed adopted if more than half of the citizens who took part in the voting have voted for it. It is considered that a referendum took place if more than half of the citizens included in the voting lists took part in it.

Chapters I, II, IV, VIII of the Constitution can only be amended by referendum.

CHAPTER IX.
FINAL AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Article 141. Amendments and additions to the Constitution shall enter into force ten days after the official publication of such amendments and additions, unless otherwise specified in this Chapter.

Article 142. Laws, presidential decrees and other acts in force before the entry into force of amendments and additions to the Constitution shall be applied to the extent that they do not contradict the Constitution.

Within two years of the entry into force of the amendments to the Constitution, the laws stipulated in the Constitution, decrees and orders of the President shall be brought into conformity with the Constitution.

Presidential decrees issued prior to the entry into force of amendments to the Constitution shall apply until they are repealed by laws. The provisions of the respective decrees shall take priority over the provisions of laws adopted before their issuance.

Article 143. State bodies (officials) shall carry out their activities for the term for which they were formed (elected, appointed) or until their powers are terminated in accordance with the established procedure.

Amendments to the Constitution, which limit the number of terms a person may serve as President, shall enter into force from the day on which the newly elected President assumes office.

Article 144. The law determining the competence, formation and activities of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly shall be adopted within a year from the day the amendments to the Constitution come into force. The person holding the office of President on the date when the amendments to the Constitution come into force may simultaneously serve as President and President of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly.

Article 145. Until the formation of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, the election (appointment) and dismissal of the President, Vice-President and judges of the Constitutional Court, the President, Vice-Presidents and judges of the Supreme Court, the President and members of the Central Election Commission as well as other powers transferred to the All-

Belarusian People's Assembly shall be exercised in the manner which was in force before the amendments to the Constitution came into force.

Article 146. Members of the Central Commission for Elections and National Referendums shall be recognised as members of the Central Election Commission and shall retain their powers for the duration of their election (appointment).

The Central Election Commission shall exercise the powers to organise the election of delegates to the All-Belarusian People's Assembly after the entry into force of the law determining the competence, formation and activities of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly.

Article 147. The chambers of the Seventh National Assembly shall retain their powers until the beginning of the powers of the Eighth National Assembly.

Local Councils of Deputies of the twenty-eighth convocation shall exercise their powers until the beginning of the powers of local Councils of Deputies of the twenty-ninth convocation.

Elections of deputies to the House of Representatives of the eighth convocation and of deputies to local Councils of Deputies of the twenty-ninth convocation shall be held on a single voting day on the last Sunday of February 2024.

Article 148. Paragraph five of Article 116 [1] of the Constitution shall enter into force after the legislation on constitutional justice has been brought into line with the amendments and additions to the Constitution and shall apply in respect of laws and other normative legal acts applied (to be applied) in a specific case after its entry into force.

President of the Republic of Belarus **A. Lukashenko**