A decree issued by a law number ( ) of 2007, pertaining the general elections

Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee
President of the Palestinian National Authority
According to the amended Basic Law of 2003 and its amendments, namely article (43),
And according to the powers invested in us,
And in pursuant of the general interest,
We issued the following decree by a law:

Chapter One: Definitions
Article (1)

The following terms and expressions, mentioned in this law, shall have the following meanings as specified herein, unless specified otherwise:

The National Authority: The Palestinian National Authority.
The Basic Law: The amended Basic Law of 2003 and its amendments.
The President: President of the Palestinian National Authority.
The Council: The Palestinian Legislative Council.
President of the Council: President of the Palestinian Legislative Council (the Speaker).
The Commission: Central Elections Commission.
Absolute Majority: It is the majority (fifty % plus one vote) of the valid votes of electors
Voter: Every person who is eligible to elect the president and/or the members of the council according to this law.
Elector: Every voter who practices his/her right to elect.
Candidate: Every person whose candidacy for presidency and/or council membership has been officially accepted.
The list: The electoral list which is composed by a party or a coalition of parties or a group of voters in order to participate in the election of the president and/or the council membership.
Preliminary Voters Registry: The registry which includes the names and data of the voters that is prepared for exhibition and challenge.
Final Voters Registry: The final registry includes the names and data of the voters who are eligible to vote and shall be published after the filing appeals period ends and adjudication thereof.
Final List of Candidates: The final list includes the names of the candidates nominated for the position of President or membership of the council within the electoral lists as approved at the end of the electoral appeals.
Electoral Areas: Each specified geographical area for which a number of polling centers have been allocated according to the number of voters.

Polling Center: The location assigned by the Commission for the purpose of conducting polling therein.
Resident: A Palestinian, with at least one year residence in Palestine.
The Court: The Election Appeals Court formed in accordance with the provisions of this law to consider electoral appeals.

Chapter two: General Provisions

Article (2): *The Call for Elections*

The President shall, within at least three months prior to the expiry of his/her term or of the council's term in office, issue a decree calling for presidential or legislative elections throughout Palestine indicating the date thereof. The decree shall be published in the Official Gazette, in addition to publication in the daily press.

Article (3): *Electing the President*

1. The President shall be elected via secret balloting in general, free and direct elections. The winner shall be the person who acquired the absolute majority of correct electors' votes. If none of the candidates acquires such majority the top two candidates shall run for another round of elections within fifteen days from the day the final results were published. The winner shall be the candidate who acquires the highest number of votes in this round.

2. The presidential office term shall be four years. He/she shall not be elected for more than two terms.

Article (4): *Electing the Council Members*

1. The Council members shall be elected via secret balloting in general, free and direct elections according to the complete proportional representation system (list system) which treats the whole Palestinian Territory as one electoral constituency

2. The Council shall serve for a four-year-term commencing from the election date thereof. Elections shall be held periodically every four years.

3. The council shall be composed of (132) members.

4. The electoral list shall be composed of a party or a coalition of parties, or a group of voters for the purpose of elections provided it meets the requirements of candidacy according to the provisions of this law.

5. Through a decree a number of the Council seats shall be allocated to Christian Citizens.

6. The elected Legislative Council members shall serve as members of the Palestinian National Council by virtue of their post during their term immediately after taking the legal oath according to the Basic Law of the PLO.

Article (5): *Women's Representation*

Each electoral list nominated for the elections shall include a minimum limit for the representation of women that is not less than one woman in:
1. The first three names in the list;
2. The next four names that follow;
3. Each five names that follow.

Article (6): *Proportional Allocation of Seats*

1. Each electoral list shall provide the Commission with a list of its candidates before the candidacy deadline ends.

2. The electoral list shall be considered closed in terms of the order of names, and the seats each list wins shall be distributed over the candidates in accordance with the order of names in the list, (the first, the second and so on).

3. Each electoral list that receives 1.5% or more of the valid votes shall be allocated a number of seats proportional to the total number of votes that it receives.

Article (7): *The Electoral Areas*

1. The Palestinian Territories shall be considered as one electoral constituency for the purpose of electing the President and the Council members. For this purpose, it shall be divided into sixteen electoral areas according to the following manner:
a. Jerusalem area
b. Jericho area
c. Hebron area
d. Bethlehem area
e. Jenin area
f. Khan Younis area
g. Deir Al Balah area
h. Rafah area
i. Salfit area
j. North Gaza area
k. Tubas area
l. Tulkarem area

m. Qalqiliyah area
n. Ramallah and Al Bireh area
o. City of Gaza area
p. Nablus area

2. The Commission, in consultation with the Higher Council for Planning, shall put forth a bylaw that defines the boundaries of each electoral area and the population centers affiliated hitherto. The bylaw shall be issued by the Council of Ministers.

Article (8): *Candidacy and Holding of Public Services*

1. The following categories of employees shall not run as candidates for membership of the Council or the position of the President unless they resign prior to the date set for the announcement of the final list of candidates. Their resignation shall be deemed acceptable from that date without prejudice to the right of any of the employees to apply when there is a vacancy in the department of the Authority or institutions from which they resigned. To be re-employed, they shall submit to the competition and selection conditions, like other competitors, in accordance with the provisions of the civil service law and the service law in the Palestinian Security Forces, or, the employment regulations in the public authorities and institutions:
a. Ministers.
b. Palestinian National Authority employees (civil and military) and/or those who are paid a salary or monthly allowance by the State treasury or public funds affiliated thereto or under the supervision thereof.
c. Employees of public institutions and international organizations and heads of local authorities.
d. Chairpersons, directors and employees of NGOs.

2. The heads and members of local authorities and elected heads and members of other institutions and authorities may not run as candidates unless they resign. An individual shall not return to his/her position unless he/she has been reelected at the end of the period in which he/she submitted his/her resignation, according to the provisions of the election law specified for those councils or authorities.

3. The following person/s shall be excluded from the terms outlined in paragraph (1): the President who is applying for a new term of candidacy, and PLC members in the term prior to the elections.

4. A candidate who is running for the presidential position or Council membership shall attach to their candidacy applications the acceptance letter of their resignation if they belong to any of the categories listed in paragraphs (1) and (2).

5. In accordance with the provisions of paragraph (1), judges, security and military personnel, police officers, governors and their equivalents who do not win the elections shall not return to their posts.

Chapter Three: Administration and Supervision of Elections

Article (9): *Formation of the Elections Commission*

1. The Commission shall be formed by a presidential decree in order to administer and supervise the elections. The Commission shall be responsible for the preparation and organization of elections and shall take all required actions to ensure integrity and freedom thereof.

2. The Commission shall be composed of nine members to be selected from the Palestinian judiciary, academics and experienced lawyers and others. The duration of the term of office for members of the commission shall be four years from the date of the formation, unless the President decided to reform the Commission before the end of its term.

3. The chairperson and secretary general of the Commission shall be appointed by the President from among the nine members and by the same presidential decree.

4. The Commission shall appoint the appropriate administrative body to enable the commission to carry out its respective mandates and tasks as per this law. Such a body shall be composed of:
a. Central Elections Office.
b. Electoral Areas Offices

Article (10): *Prerequisites of the Chairperson and Members of the Commission*

The chairperson or members chosen for the Commission shall be:
1. Palestinian.
2. Above 35 years of age.
3. Holds a bachelors degree, or at least the equivalent thereof.
4. Highly competent and experienced.
5. Honest and well reputed.
6. Not convicted in any election-related crime, or felony affecting honor or trust.
7. Not an employee or member of any charity, or NGO.
8. He/she shall not nominate his/herself in any of the general or local elections, or participate in any election campaign for any candidate through out his/her term of office in the Commission.
9. He/she must not reveal any confidential information in relation to the elections.

Article (11): *Vacancy of the Commissions Chairperson or Member post*

In accordance with the provisions in Article (9) paragraph (3), if the position of the chairperson or member of the Commission becomes vacant due to resignation, death, illness or any other reason, the chairperson shall appoint a new member within a maximum of two weeks from when the position becomes vacant.

Article (12): *The Independence of the Commission*

1. The Commission shall have the privilege of being a body with corporate personality and administrative and financial independence.

2. The Commission shall be allocated a budget as an independent financial center in the State's budget.

3. The Commission shall publish an administrative and financial report on the activities of the Commission three months after the announcement of the final election results. A copy shall be submitted to the President and the Council.

Article (13): *The Tasks and Mandates of the Commission*

The tasks and mandates of the Commission shall be as follows:
1. Implementing the provisions of this law and bylaws issued in accordance to it, in such a way that achieves its respective purposes.

2. Preparing draft bylaws in accordance with the provisions of this law paving the way for its promulgation.

3. Adopting a code of ethics for the observers and agents that identify the principles, conduct and methods they should follow while in the committees and polling centers.

4. Adopting its own internal regulations that regulates its work

5. Appointing personnel and consultants in the central office and other offices in the various electoral areas.

6. Undertaking all appropriate procedures necessary for the preparation of the elections and organizing the methods of supervision.

7. Supervising the administration and work of the electoral areas offices, and the Central Elections Office, as well as monitoring the compliance thereof to the provisions of this law.

8. Appointing the members of the registration centers and the polling centers.

9. Approving the locations of the registration and polling centers upon recommendation of the electoral districts offices.

10. Registration of the electoral lists and the signs referring thereto and approving the logos of the electoral lists.

11. Approving the applications of candidacy for presidency and membership in the Council, as well as preparing the final lists of candidates and publishing thereof in at least one daily local newspaper.

12. Organizing media and public educational campaigns for the voters.

13. Adjudicating challenges related to the registrations of the voters and candidates.

14. Issuing cards accrediting local and international observers, and co-operating therewith in all the stages of the process, including in the registration of the voters.

15. Approving the accreditation of the agents of the electoral lists.

16. Re-conducting elections in any polling center in which it has been proven that violations have taken place, and where such violations affect the results of the elections.

17. Announcing the preliminary and final results of the elections.

18. Take all measures necessary in order to conduct referendums according to the related decrees.

19. Exercising any other mandate stipulated by the provisions of this law and other laws.

Article (14): *Appeals against the Commission's Decisions*

1. Every decision that is issued by the commission shall could be appealed before the Court concerning:
a. Approval or disapproval of the candidacy applications for the presidential or council membership posts.
b. Whether or not to conduct re-elections in any polling center.
c. Approval or disapproval of the registration requests submitted by any electoral list.
d. Approval of the logo of each electoral list.

2. The appeal shall be submitted to the Court's Secretariat within three days of notification, and the court shall decide on the appeal within five days from the date of the submission thereof.

3. The appeal submitted according to this article shall be exempted of any fees.

Article (15): *Central Elections Office*

The Central Elections Office shall be considered as the executive instrument of the Commission, and shall function under its administration and supervision.

Article (16): *Formation of the Electoral Areas Offices*

1. The Commission shall form the Electoral Areas Offices in each of the electoral areas in order to manage the electoral process.

2. The Commission shall appoint for each of its offices the needed administrative staff in order to run the office according to the professional standards it deems suitable without prejudice to the provisions of Article (18) paragraph (4) of this law.

Article (17): *The Tasks and Mandates of the Electoral Areas Offices*

The Electoral Areas Offices hold the responsibility of administrating, organizing and monitoring the electoral process within the relevant areas. Their mandate includes:

1. Supervising the preparation of the preliminary voters registry and submitting it to the Commission for approval and publication in due form.

2. Reviewing the minutes of election results issued by polling center staff and verifying their accuracy and compliance with the provisions of this law and submitting thereof to the Commission.

Article (18): *Appointment of Polling Center Staff Members*

1. The staff of polling and registration center staff shall be appointed by the Commission based on recommendation by the Electoral Area Office.

2. The polling and registration center staff members are deemed the basic unit for the election process.

3. Regulations and bylaws issued by the Commission shall determine the responsibilities of polling and registration center staff.

4. The members of the polling and registration center staff must have the following requirements:
a. Hold at least a secondary school certificate
b. Be no less than 23 years of age.
c. Never been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor that affects honor and integrity.
d. Have the professional standards and requirements set by the Commission.

Article (19): *Objecting the Commission Decisions*

1. Unless the law provides otherwise, each voter has the right to challenge before the Commission any decision issued by it within three days from the day he/she is notified of such a decision. He/she shall illustrate the reasons behind the objection and submit any supporting documents and data.

2. The Commission shall decide upon the objection within three days from its submission. Its decision related to the objection is subject to appeal before the Court.

Article (20): *The Election Cases Court*

The Election Cases Court shall be composed by virtue of a presidential decree of a President and eight judges, upon the recommendation of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article (21): *Convening of the Court*

The court shall be duly convened of at least three judges, and at least five judges in the crucial cases according to what the Court's President decides.

Article (22): *Court Seat*

1. Jerusalem the Capital of the State of Palestine shall be the permanent official seat of the Election Cases Court and it has the right to have two seats one in Ramallah and one in Gaza.

2. The Court's President may decide to have the Court convened in a place other than its official seats mentioned in paragraph one.

Article (23): *Postponing the Trial*

The trial may not be postponed unless required by necessity to maintain the right of defense. Such a postponement may not exceed twenty four hours.

Article (24): *Court Jurisdiction*

1. The court shall have the competence of hearing appeals filed for cancellation or amendment of the decisions passed by the Commission, or appeals which may be challenged according to this law before the Election Cases

2. The Court's Jurisdiction shall not include the elections crimes stipulated in this law which fall under the jurisdiction of the regular courts.

Article (25): *Schedule of Appeals Filing and Adjudication Thereof*

1. Unless otherwise stipulated by the law, an appeal shall be submitted to the Court within two days of notification of the appealed decision. The court shall not hear any appeal or challenge filed after the aforesaid period.

2. The appeals shall be directly submitted to the Court's Secretariat. The court shall settle the challenges submitted thereto within a maximum period of five days from the date of submitting the challenges.

3. Except for the final results, no appeal shall be submitted before the Court unless the right of objection before the Commission has been exhausted and the person had been notified of the Commission's decision.

Article (26): *Representation before Court*

1. The court shall not accept any statement of appeal or challenge unless signed by a practicing lawyer.

2. The Commission shall be represented before the Court by a practicing lawyer chosen by the Commission.

Chapter Four: The Right to Elect

Article (27): *The Electoral Eligibility*

1. A person who fulfills the following requirements shall be deemed eligible to vote:
a. To be Palestinian.
b. To be at least 18 years of age on polling day.
c. To be enlisted in the final voters registry.
d. Not to be deprived of the right to vote in accordance with Article (29) of this law.

2. For the purposes of this law, a person shall be considered Palestinian:
a. If he/she was born in Palestine with borders defined in the British Mandate, or was entitled to acquire the Palestinian nationality under the applicable laws during that era.
b. If he/she was born in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank, including Holy Jerusalem (Alquds Alshareef)
c. If one of his/her ancestors falls under the application of paragraph (1) above irrespective of where he/she was born.
d. If he/she is a spouse of a Palestinian as defined above.

Article (28): *The Elections Scope*

1. Every Palestinian in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including Holy Jerusalem (Alquds Alshareef), who meets the requirements in this law, shall enjoy the right to vote, regardless of religion, political affiliation, social, financial or educational status.

2. Every voter shall exercise his/her voting right in a free, secret, direct and individual manner. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

3. A voter shall not be registered in more than one center. A voter can only vote in the center in which he/she is registered.

Article (29): *Disfranchisement*

1. An individual shall be deprived of the electoral right if he/she:
a. Was deprived of that right by virtue of a final judicial decision throughout the term of such a ruling.
b. Was declared incapacitated by a final judicial ruling.
c. Was convicted of a felony which violates honor and integrity and not reinstituted as per the provisions of law.
d. Acquired the Israeli citizenship.

2. The Commission shall take appropriate measures and coordinate with the competent judicial bodies to apply the conditions outlined in paragraph (1) above.

Article (30): *Register in the Voters Registry:*

1. Enrolment is a right for each Palestinian who fulfills the requirements of eligibility in accordance with the provisions of this law.

2. The Commission shall register voters according to the provisions of this law.

3. Any person who fulfills the requirements for voter eligibility may apply for enrolment in the preliminary voters registry, and he/she shall be entitled to check his/her name registration, should it be missing.

4. No voter shall be registered in another area's voters registry other than that where he/she resides unless otherwise by a decision of the Commission.

5. Registration of any person in the voters registry shall not be possible unless he/she is qualified for voter eligibility. Registration shall be conducted in person, through an officially authorized proxy, or through relative up to the second degree.

6. Any Palestinian who has lived for at least one year in the Palestinian Territories and is not registered in the preliminary voters registry may request to add his/her name to the registry.

Article (31): *Updating the Preliminary Voters Registry:*

1. The Commission shall update the preliminary voters registry annually and/or before every elections by auditing the registry, opening the registry for new voters and declaring the registry for challenge as per the provisions of this law.

2. The Commission may ask the help of the Civil Status Departments or the Central Statistics Bureau, in order to audit the preliminary voters registry in accordance with the law, provided that it includes the following data on each voter:
a. Full name.
b. Gender.
c. Date and place of birth.
d. Place of permanent residence.
e. Number of identification card or passport.

3. The process of organizing the preliminary voters registry shall be conducted in public and open to the scrutiny of international and local observers, to journalists and representatives of the media.

Article (32): ***Challenge on the Preliminary Voters Registry***

1. Any person whose name has not been included in the preliminary voters registry, or whose registration data is incorrectly recorded, may appeal to the registration center staff members for the inclusion of the person's name or correction of data pertaining thereto. Any person may object to the enrollment of another person who is not an eligible voter.

2. Written appeals, with all the supporting documentation, shall be submitted within five days from the publication of the preliminary voters registry.

3. If the appeal pertains to the enrollment of another person in the voters registry, he/she should be informed in person or via proxy of that appeal so as to present a defense prior to making an appeal.

4. The registration center staff shall decide on the appeal within three days commencing from the date of the submission thereof. Its decision shall be subject to appeal before the electoral area office within three days from the date of notification, which shall also be decided on within three days from the date of submission.

5. The decision of the electoral area office is subject to appeal before the Commission.

6. The preliminary voters registry shall be modified in light of the decisions made by the relevant electoral area office with respect to the filed appeals; in the case of appealing the decision, modification of the registry shall be made upon the decisions of the Commission.

Article (33): *Registration of Non-enrolled Voters in the Preliminary Voters Registry*

1. Any eligible voter whose name is not registered in the preliminary voters registry may, within the time limit specified for objection, apply to the relevant registration center staff for enrollment to register his/her name provided that the application shall include, in addition to the information required by Article (31), paragraph (2) above, the following information:
a. Acknowledgement that the submitted information is true and correct.
b. The date of the submission of the application.
c. The signature of the applicant.

2. Any of the official documents currently used in the Palestinian Territories may be endorsed for the purpose of verifying the place of residence.

3. The polling and registration center staff, having verified the correctness of the information included in the application and mentioned in paragraph (1), shall enter the name of the applicant in the preliminary voters registry.

Article (34): *Challenging the Electoral Areas Office Decisions*

1. Any person having interest may appeal any decision made by the electoral area office before the Commission within three days commencing from the date of notification of the decision.

2. The Commission shall adjudicate on appeals within three days of their submission to the Commission. The Commission's decisions shall be subject to appeal before the Court.

Article (35): *Final Voters Registry*

1. After the period specified to file appeals has expired and all appeals filed against the preliminary voters registry have been finally adjudicated, this registry shall be deemed final and voting shall take place accordingly.

2. Each electoral area office shall publish each relevant final voters registry at the seat thereof.

Chapter Five: Candidacy for the Presidency

Article (36): *Eligibility for Candidacy*

The candidate for the position of President must meet the following requirements:

1. To be Palestinian, born of Palestinian parents.

2. To be at least 40 years of age on polling day.

3. To be a permanent resident in the Palestinian Territories.

4. To be registered in the final voters registry and meet the requirements for exercising the electoral right.

5. To uphold the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the Declaration of Independence Document in addition to the provisions of the Basic Law.

Article (37): *Deprivation of Candidacy*

An individual shall be deprived of the right to run for President when he/she:
1. Has been disfranchised.

2. Has been denied the right to candidacy by virtue of a final judicial ruling passed by a competent court throughout the term of its validity.

3. Has been convicted by a competent court for a felony or misdemeanor against honor or honesty.

Article (38): *Application for Candidacy*

1. The candidacy application for the position of the President shall be submitted to the Commission by any person registered in the final voters registry and who meets the candidacy requirements stated in Article (36,37) of this law.

2. Each presidential candidate must submit with his/her candidacy application a list that includes the support in a written form of at least 5 000 voters and this does not apply to a candidate who has held the position of President in the term prior to the elections.

Article (39): *Registration of Candidates*

1. Presidential candidates shall be registered at the Commission.

2. The registration of candidates shall commence on the date specified in the presidential decree calling for elections and shall remain open for twelve days.
No candidacy applications shall be accepted after the end of that period.

3. Every presidential candidate shall pay a deposit of three thousand USD or equivalent in the locally circulated currency as a guarantee to the account of the Commission. The amount shall be refunded if:
a. The candidate withdraws his/her candidacy within the legal period.
b. His/her candidacy was refused.
c. He/she wins the Presidential post.

4. Candidacy applications shall be submitted to the Commission on official forms prepared by the Central Elections Office. The application shall include: the full name of the candidate, his/her age, address, registration number in the voters registry, the name of his/her election campaign's manager, and signature.

5. The candidacy application shall be accompanied by a copy of the candidate platform and a colored electronic copy of his/her logo and electoral symbol , in addition to a good behavior certificate and a letter from the list or party representative if he/she represents a party or a list.

6. The Commission shall register the presidential candidates and provide them with a certificate of registration stating the date, time and serial number of the registration.

7. The Commission shall decide upon the acceptance of the application if it fulfils all the requirements stated herein. Applications that fail to comply with the candidacy requirements shall not be accepted. In case of rejection of any application, the Commission shall present, in writing, detailed reasons for such a rejection.

8. An application shall be deemed acceptable if the Commission does not communicate a decision of rejection to the applicant within ten working days of submission thereof.

Article (40): *Objections against the Candidates for the President Post*

Any voter has the right within three days from the day of publishing the preliminary candidates list to submit a written objection to the Commission concerning any candidate, he/she has to illustrate the reasons behind such an objection and attach the documents and information supporting the objection. The Commission has the right to decide upon the objection within three days from its submission.

Article (41): *Appealing the Commission Decisions regarding the Candidacy for the President's Post*

1. Any presidential candidate whose application has been rejected by the Commission, and any person who has objected to the nomination of any other candidate and whose objection has been rejected by the Commission, may file an appeal against this decision before the Court within three days of communicating the Commission's decision thereto. The Court shall decide upon the appeal within five days of the date of the filing thereof.

2. The decision of the Court shall be communicated to the Commission for Implementation.

Article (42): *Publishing of Presidential Candidates' Names*

1. The candidate for the President's post has the right to withdraw his/her nomination one day before the publication of the final candidates list. He/she is eligible for the refund of the candidacy and election campaign's money deposited for the benefit of the Commission.

2. The Commission shall publish the list of candidates for the position of President twenty two days at most prior to the assigned polling day. The list shall include the full names of candidates and the lists or parties each candidate is affiliated with.
3. Publication shall be in the daily press.

Article (43): *Representatives of the Candidates.*

1. Every candidate running for the position of President may submit a list of his/her representatives to the Commission at least seven days prior to polling day.

2. The abovementioned representatives shall be entitled to represent their candidates before the polling center staff in any issue related to elections.

Article (44): *Candidates' Agents*

1. Every independent candidate running for the position of President may appoint agents as observers of the different phases of the electoral process, particularly polling and the counting of votes.
2. The names of such agents shall be registered at the Commission, it shall issue every approved agent a certificate indicating the agent's name, at least seven days prior to the polling day.

Chapter Six: Candidacy for Legislative Council Membership

Article (45): *Eligibility for Candidacy for the Council*

The candidate for the Legislative Council membership must meet the following requirements:
1. To be Palestinian.
2. To be at least 28 years of age on polling day.
3. To be registered in the final voters registry.
4. Never convicted of a felony or misdemeanor which violates honor and honesty.
5. Be a permanent resident of the Palestinian territory.
6. To uphold the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the Declaration of Independence Document in addition to the provisions of the Basic Law.

Article (46): *Prohibitions upon the Candidate for the Council's Membership*

1. A candidate is prohibited from running on more than one electoral list at the same time.
2. It is prohibited to be a member of the Council and run for the President's post; a member shall resign from the Council before running for the presidency.

Article (47): *Lists of Candidates*

1. Electoral lists shall submit their candidacy to the Commission according to the procedures established by it.

2. The Commission shall keep a special record where it registers the electoral lists, which fulfill all the requirements stipulated by this law.

3. The list of candidates is deemed closed, and the names of the candidates shall be organized according to the registration priority for each candidate.

Article (48): *Electoral Lists Candidacy Application:*

1. The electoral list candidacy application shall be submitted to the Central Elections Office provided that the application is accompanied by a closed list that includes the candidates' names and confirmation of their acceptance of candidacy.

2. The number of the electoral list candidates in the closed list shall not be less than sixteen candidates.

Article (49): *Candidacy Surety*

Each electoral list nominated for the Council's membership shall deposit into the account of the Commission a nonrefundable guarantee of ten thousand USD or equivalent in the officially circulated currency. The guarantee shall be refunded in the following two occasions:
a. If the list withdraws its candidacy within the legal period.
b. If the application was rejected.

Article (50): *Electoral Lists Registration Requirements*

1. Each electoral list wishing to register shall submit a written application that is prepared by the Commission and which shall include the following:
a. The name of the electoral list, and its designated slogan or logo.
b. Name of the electoral list's coordinator and authorized representative, and the name of its election campaign's manager.
c. The address of the Headquarters of the electoral list.
d. The amounts spent on the campaign and the sources of such amounts.
e. The list application shall be signed by the commissioner and the coordinator of the electoral list.

2. The following documents shall be attached to the registration application:
a. A list containing the signatures of at least three thousand voters who have the right to vote indicating their support thereof.
b. A copy of the platform of the electoral list.
c. A colored electronic copy of the list's slogan or logo.
d. A closed listing with names of candidates of the electoral list attached to candidacy applications relating to the list's candidates, its enclosures and their consent of their candidacy.

Article (51): *The Submission of the Candidacy Applications*

1. Candidacy applications shall be submitted within the period specified in the presidential decree calling for the elections, according to Article (2) of this law. The reception of the application shall continue for twelve days and application shall not be accepted after the expiry of the stated period.
2. The Commission shall register all the applications it receives and issue a certificate for each applicant containing the time and date of his/her application in addition to his/her registration number at the Commission.

3. The list's names on the ballot shall appear according to its registration's time and date.

4. The application shall be accompanied by an affidavit from each candidate that he/she upholds PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in addition to upholding the Declaration of Independence and the Basic Law.

Article (52): *Withdrawal of Candidacy*

1. A list can withdraw its candidacy no later than a day before the start of the legal period of the elections campaign. The candidacy and campaign guarantee amounts which were deposited at the Commission shall be refunded

2. Any person who is a candidate in a list can withdraw his/her candidacy from the list through a written statement submitted by the list's representative no later than two days before the deadline of the legal period for submitting candidacy applications.

3. The Electoral list has the right to nominate another candidate before of the end of the period. In case the withdrawal would affect the order of the candidates on the list, it has to notify the Commission of the new order within the same period; it shall also include the consent of all candidates on the new order.

4. In case the withdrawal of one candidate or more leads to the violation of the list's registration procedures stipulated in this law, and the list could not fill in the empty slots during the candidacy period, the registration of the list shall be invalidated.

5. It is prohibited to change or amend the order of the candidates' names in the closed list after the expiry of candidacy period.

Article (53): *Rejecting the Lists Candidacy Applications*

No list's candidacy application shall be registered if:
1. The application does not fulfill all the conditions stipulated in this law.

2. The Commission discovered that the information or the documents attached to the application were false.

3. The application was submitted after the expiry of the candidacy period.

4. The electoral list application was submitted under the logo and slogan of another registered electoral list or none registered. But a known list in the Palestinian Territories.

5. The electoral list application was submitted under the name or logo implying that it is the National Authority or that it belongs to it.

Article (54): *The Decision of Accepting or Rejecting the Application*

1. The Commission shall issue its decision of accepting or rejecting the candidacy application within five working days from the date of its submission.

2. An application is considered accepted if it is not rejected by the Commission within ten working days from the date of its submission.

Article (55): *Objections to the Commission:*

Any person has the right within three days from the publication of the list that contains the names of the electoral lists and its candidates, to submit a written objection against any list or candidate. The objection shall be accompanied with the reasons behind it and any supporting information. The Commission has to decide upon the objection within three days from the date of its submission.

Article (56): *Appealing the Decision Rejecting Candidacy Application*

1. Any electoral list which its candidacy or registration application was rejected and also any person whose objection was rejected , has the right to appeal the Commission decisions before the Court within three days from the date of notifying the decision to the list's representative or delivering the note to its main address or notifying it to the objector accordingly .

2. The court has to decide upon the appeal within seven days from its submission.

3. The appeals submitted according to this Article are exempted from any fees.

Article (57): *Appealing the Commission Decisions Regarding Candidacy Applications*

1. Any candidate whose application for candidacy within an electoral list for Council membership has been rejected by the Commission, and any person who has objected to the nomination of any other candidate and whose objection has been rejected by the Commission, may file an appeal against this decision before the Court within three days from the date of notifying the decision. The Court shall decide on the appeal within five days from the date of its filing.

2. The decisions of the Court shall be communicated to the Commission for implementation.

Article (58): *Final List Publication With Names of Lists and their Candidates:*

1. The Commission shall publish a final list with names of lists and their candidates for Council membership at least twenty two days prior to the designated polling day. This list shall include the full names of candidates as well as the electoral lists to which they belong.

2. The Commission shall publish the final list with names of electoral lists and their candidates in at least one local daily newspaper.

Article (59): *Lists Representatives*

1. Each electoral list registered at the Commission may submit to the same Commission a list with names of its representatives. The Commission shall issue a certificate on the name of each of the said representatives.

2. Each of the said representatives may represent the list before the Commission and electoral areas offices in any matter related to the elections.

Article (60): *Lists Agents*

1. Every electoral list may appoint an agent or agents to monitor the different phases of the electoral process, particularly during polling and counting votes. Those agents shall be approved officially by the Commission at least seven days
before the polling day.

2. The names of the said agents should be registered at the Commission which will issue a certificate on the name of each approved agent.

Chapter Seven: *Organizing the Election Campaign*

Article (61): *Electoral Campaign*

1. Every candidate running for the position of President or Council membership, has the right to perform all kinds of legal activities to explain his/her electoral program to voters in the appropriate manner without violating any of the laws or regulations in force.

2. Official media shall maintain an impartial position during all the phases of the electoral process. Official media, or any of the bodies affiliated thereto, shall not perform any electoral or campaigning activity that might be construed as favoring one candidate or electoral list over another for the Presidential position or the Council membership.

3. The Executive branch and its different bodies shall maintain an impartial position during all of the phases of the electoral process and shall not perform any electoral or campaign activity that might be construed as favoring one candidate or electoral list over another.

Article (62): *Period Assigned For Electoral Campaign*

1. The electoral campaign shall start twenty two days prior to the polling day and shall end twenty four hours before that date.

2. Any campaign activities shall be prohibited after the date designated in paragraph (1).

Article (63): *Organizing the Electoral Campaign Activities*

1. Each of the electoral area offices shall compile a list of all available locations and public place within its area designated for holding rallies, public gatherings and electoral processions. It shall also specify in the same list the places and public sites designated for displaying electoral posters and banners.

2. Electoral areas offices shall submit those lists to the Commission for ratification and approval. They shall be, subsequently, distributed by the Central Elections Office to all electoral areas offices.

Article (64): *Commissionn Informative Leaflets and Advertisements*

The Commission shall publish informative leaflets and advertisements urging the voters to participate in the elections, in particular that Commission shall publish:
1. A leaflet on the Elections Law, how to register, vote, and challenge addressed to the voters.

2. A leaflet for the Police force on how to act during electoral campaign period, voting and counting.

3. A leaflet for the observers about the polling stations, their number and distribution, and how to behave in case of any irregularity in the electoral process.

4. A leaflet for presidential candidates and lists for Council membership indicating public venues in electoral areas where posters and banners are allowed.

Article (65): *Electoral Programs in the Official Media*

1. The Commission shall, in coordination with the official Palestinian media, prepare a special program stating times and dates designated for free and unpaid advertising for all candidates and electoral lists in the elections.

2. In preparing the program referred to in paragraph (1), all candidates and electoral lists shall be given equal and appropriate opportunities.

3. Any objection filed against the said program shall be submitted to the Commission, which shall adjudicate on it within a maximum of twenty four hours.

Article (66): *Electoral Campaign Restrictions*

Without prejudice to the right of presidential candidates or Council membership candidates to promote their programs and candidates in the manner, place and time they deem fit, any election campaign must take into account the following:
1. Non-defamation or insulting of any of the other candidates;

2. Abstaining from organizing festivals and holding public meetings in mosques, churches or near hospitals, buildings or premises used by government or public institutions;

3. Abstaining from placing electoral posters or banners in locations or public venues other than those assigned by the Commission;

4. Abstaining from using the Palestinian National Authority logo in any of their election leaflets, advertisements, writings, logos or pictures;

5. Abstaining from using governmental cars and equipment in electoral campaign;

6. Abstaining from any electoral propaganda that includes incitement or humiliation against other candidates or which may lead to tribal, domestic, or sectarian conflict;

7. Abstaining from placing electoral posters or signs on properties belong to individuals or companies without having their prior consent;

8. The electoral campaign, speeches, writings, leaflets, advertisements, pictures shall not include any incitement or defamation of other candidates on the basis of sex , religion ,sect, profession, disability, or any provocation that could violate the unity of the Palestinian people.

9. Mosques' preachers shall not, neither explicitly nor implicitly, call in their speeches or classes for boycotting the elections or call on others to vote or not to vote for a certain candidate.

10. The manager, coordinator or coordinators of the presidential or Council membership election campaign assume collectively the full responsibility of relevant activities and campaign.

11. The Commission may refer any person that breaches this Article to the competent court.

Article (67): *Removal of Electoral Campaign Visual Signs*

1. The electoral lists and presidential candidates are obliged to remove all their electoral campaign signs within two weeks after the end of the electoral process.

2. The Commission should impose a guarantee amount not less than ten thousand USD or its equivalent of the circulated currency in order to guarantee the adherence of the list or the candidate of the presidency to the electoral campaign provisions stipulated in this law and also the regulations and directives issued by the Commission.

3. The Commission shall have the power, in case the list or the candidate for the presidency did not adhere to paragraph (1) of this Article, to remove all the electoral campaign posters and signs on the expense of the related candidate or list and deduct the cost from the guarantee amount stated in paragraph (2) of the Article.

Article (68): *Sources of Fund for the Election Campaign*

1. Any electoral list or candidate participating in the elections is prohibited from receiving any funds for his/her campaign from any foreign or external non Palestinian source whether directly or indirectly.

2. Each electoral list or candidate participated in the elections has to submit within one month of announcing the final results a detailed statement of all funding sources and the amounts spent during the election campaign.

3. The Commission may request the auditing of the financial statements stated above by a certified auditor.

Article (69): *Limits on campaign spending*

Any electoral list or candidate for the presidency is allowed to spend no more than one million USD or its equivalent of the circulated currency on the election campaign.

Article (70): *Observing the Elections and Media Coverage*

1. The electoral process with all its phases stipulated in this law shall be conducted publicly and transparently in a manner that enables the observers and the media to observe the process in all its phases and also enables the local and international media representatives from covering it.

2. All local and international observers and media representatives shall be accredited by the Commission. The Commission shall issue a card for such observers and representatives upon request according to the relevant procedures.

3. All persons and bodies implementing the provisions of this law, and Police Force shall provide all necessary help and facilitation to any person holds such accreditation card stipulated in paragraph (2) above.

Chapter Eight: Voting

Article (71): *Ballot Papers*

1. The Commission shall prepare special distinctive ballot papers that are difficult to imitate. The papers must be clear and easy to understand.

2. All ballot papers for presidential and lists voting shall have their unique specifications.

3. Each ballot paper for the presidency shall have the full names of all candidates and the nom de guerre if applicable and their electoral logo and slogan.

4. Each ballot paper assigned for the electoral lists must contain the names of the lists and/or their electoral logo they choose and their nomination capacity.

5. Ballot papers stated in paragraphs (3) and (4) above must contain next to the name of every candidate for the presidency or list for the Council membership a space where voter can mark in order to choose.

6. The names of candidates for the presidency or the Council membership shall be arranged in ballot papers according to the submission dates of their respective candidacy applications.

Article (72): *Deposit of Ballot Papers*

1. At least twenty four hours prior to the date assigned for conducting the elections, the areas office shall deposit, at each of the polling centers a number of ballot papers for the election of the

President and members of the Council with an average not exceeding 20% of the number of the voters registered in that center.

2. The abovementioned ballot papers shall be delivered to the polling center staff under official protocol which shall include the delivery details, number of ballot papers delivered and the signatures of the polling center staff members.

Article (73): *Ballot Boxes Specifications*

Ballot boxes shall be made according to the specifications set by the Commission. The ballot boxes assigned for the presidential elections shall be distinguished from those assigned for the lists, in case the elections for both posts were conducted simultaneously.

Article (74): *Secrecy of Polling in the Polling Centers*

1. A number of separate and secluded booths shall be allocated within each polling center so that every voter is able to vote in privacy.

2. The Commission shall set the booth specifications in order to ensure that they are standardized at all polling centers.

3. The Commission shall determine the number of booths required at each polling center.

Article (75): *Copies of the Voters Registry at the Polling Centers*

1. Each polling center shall have four copies of the final voter registry.

2. One of those copies shall be posted ostensibly inside the polling center to make it known to the voters, observers and candidates and the other copies are to be used by the polling center staff for the purpose of conducting, organizing, and auditing the polling process.

Article (76): *Protocols of Electoral Facts*

1. The Commission shall set the specifications of the forms of protocols that shall be available at the electoral areas offices.

2. Those protocols shall accurately record in detail all the electoral occurring throughout all the phases of the electoral process. Those protocols shall be signed by the competent officials each in his/her electoral office.

Article (77): *Stamps*

1. The Commission shall decide on the shape and type of stamps to be used by all offices throughout the electoral process.

2. The aforementioned stamps shall be designed in such a manner that renders imitation difficult and shall be safeguarded by the relevant offices.

Article (78): *Polling Time*

1. Polling day shall be considered an official holiday.

2. Polling shall commence at 7 AM on the specified election day and close at 7 PM on the same day.

3. The Commission, upon the request of the polling centre chairperson, may extend the polling time provided that the polling time shall not exceed two hours. The extension shall only be permitted to allow voters in the polling center to cast their votes.

4. The Commission shall put forth a special regulation to enable Police and Security Forces to cast their votes within a maximum of 48 hours prior to the designated polling date, according to paragraph (2), provided that their votes shall be counted alongside with the ballot boxes in the general elections, considering the electoral process as one indivisible.

5. Police and Security Forces are not allowed to bear their arms inside their polling centers.

Article (79): *Supervising the Polling Process*

1. The polling center staff, which is appointed by the Commission, shall supervise the polling.

2. On polling day, the members of the polling center staff shall be present at the polling center by 6 AM.

3. If the chairperson or any of the members of the staff fail to attend, the relevant electoral area office shall delegate a substitute of those members appointed in that capacity. In the event that all of staff members fail to attend, the Commission shall then appoint a new polling center staff composed of standby members.

4. The staff shall immediately report to the electoral area office any matter that pertains to the formation thereof.

Article (80): *Accreditation of Candidates and Electoral Lists Agents*

1. The polling center staff shall admit the presence of candidates and electoral lists agents at suitable places inside the polling centers and shall record their names and state their attendance in the protocol, allow them to observe the polling, record any remarks or objections raised by any agent in regards to the polling process and adopt appropriate decisions in this respect.

2. It is prohibited to have more than one agent for each presidential candidate at a polling center, with respect to the electoral list candidates; the attendance of one agent for each list shall be sufficient.

Article (81): *Polling Minutes*

1. Before the commencement of polling, the polling center staff shall draw up minutes stating the names of the present staff members, the approved candidates' and lists' agents, and their respective approval certificates.

2. The minutes shall be stamped with the polling center stamp and signed by the members of the polling center staff and the attending agents.

Article (82): *Observing the Ballot Boxes*

1. Before commencing the polling process, the chairperson of the polling center staff shall open the ballot boxes in the presence of the staff members and the candidates' agents to ensure that they are empty and free of ballot papers.

2. The chairperson of the polling center staff shall, subsequently, close the ballot boxes. They shall not be opened until vote counting commences.

Article (83): *Polling Procedures*

1. The chairperson of the polling center staff or the member of the staff appointed thereby shall verify the identity of the voter and verify whether his/her name is entered in the final voters' registry of the relevant polling center.

2. The chairperson of the polling center staff, or the member of the staff appointed thereby shall hand the voter one ballot paper after stamping it with the polling center's stamp.

3. The voter must then proceed to one of the separate and secluded polling booths and mark each ballot paper in the printed box adjacent to the candidate's name.

4. Every voter must then place each ballot paper in the relevant ballot box in the presence of the polling center staff, the agents and the observers.

5. The chairperson of the polling center staff or one of its members shall cross out the name of the voter from the voters registry and return his/her identification card after stamping it to verify that he/she has cast his/her vote and put the voting ink on the voter's finger.

6. In the event, due to force majeure, that it is impossible to conduct polling at a certain polling center, voting shall be postponed until the following day by virtue of a decision by the Commission.

Article (84): *Identification of Voters*

The polling center staff may verify the voter's identity by means of the relevant election card issued by the Commission, in addition to the voter's identity card or any other official document with his/her photo ID, which is acceptable to the polling center staff, provided that the voter's name is registered in the final voter's registry.

Article (85): *Voting for the Presidential Post and for the Council Membership*

1. Voting shall be done by choosing one of the presidential candidates.

2. Voting shall be done by choosing only one of the lists running for the Council Mem-bership.

Article (86): *Ballot Paper Marking*

1. The voter must mark the box adjacent to the name of the candidate and/or the electoral list by a sign decided upon by the Commission. The voter shall not mark more than one presidential candidate and/or one electoral list.

2. In case the voter makes a mistake in the marking of a ballot paper, the voter may return the erroneous ballot paper to the chairperson of the polling center staff and request a new one. No new ballot paper shall be given before crossing out the paper which the voter has requested to replace. It shall be placed in a special envelope.

3. Special minutes shall be prepared for the erroneous ballot paper and signed by the chairperson and the members of the polling center staff, placed with other canceled papers in a special envelope and returned to the electoral area office.

4. In case the voter is illiterate or disabled in a manner that renders him/her unable to mark the ballot paper personally, the voter may seek the assistance of any other trusted voter after

permission has been granted to him/her by the polling center staff. The chairperson of the polling center staff shall observe the voter's polling to make sure that his choice has been fulfilled.

Article (87): *Close of Polling*

1. When the time assigned for polling ends, the chairperson of the polling center staff shall order its closure and allow only those who are queued in front of the polling center to cast their votes.

2. When voters complete their voting, members of the polling center shall be allowed to vote and must register their names at the bottom of the voters registry and sign next to their names. The chairperson shall verify that they did not practice their voting right in any other polling center.

3. Once the vote has been finalized, the polling center staff shall, without any delay, count the votes in the same center.

Article (87): *Securing the Voting Process*

1. The chairperson of the polling center staff shall be responsible for preserving security and order within the premises of the polling center.

2. A number of Police Force personnel in official uniform shall be stationed outside and in the surrounding area of the polling center to ensure that the orders of the chairperson are followed. Police personnel shall not be admitted inside the polling center unless instructed by the chairperson and only for a time that is necessary for preserving security and order as deemed fit by the polling center staff.

3. Security forces shall preserve the safety and security of citizens and of the electoral process without affecting the integrity of elections, violating the elections law or impairing the rights of voters.

4. It is prohibited for any person other than Police personnel in official uniform to carry a firearm, weapon or any other tool that is subject to punishment by law either inside a polling center or at its entrance.

5. Police personnel may not access the polling center on polling day or during vote counting except upon request from the chairperson of the polling center staff as stated in paragraph (2).

6. Police personnel who are assigned to preserve election security shall work in full and direct coordination with the Commission, electoral area offices and polling center staff members.

Chapter Nine: Counting Votes

Article (89): *Starting the Counting Process*

1. The counting of votes shall be conducted in the presence of all the members of the polling center and whoever whishes from the electoral area office members, candidates and lists agents, international and local observers, and press and media personnel within the spatial limits, in a manner that does not violate security and order, and does not impede counting votes in any way whatsoever.

2. Each polling center shall start by counting the number of crossed out votes from the electoral registry in the same center, and register their number in the record, and start the counting process.

Article (90): *Counting of Votes for the Election of the President*

1. The process of counting votes shall be conducted by the chairperson and members of the polling center staff in accordance with the following:
a. The chairperson of the polling center staff shall read the content of the ballot paper, and the reading thereof shall be confirmed by another member of the staff.
b. Two other members of the polling center staff shall individually record what is being dictated for them.

2. The candidates or their agents, and the international observers shall, upon the request of any of them, be entitled to view any ballot paper after it has been read.

3. Upon the completion of the counting of votes, it must be verified that the number of ballot papers, including the invalid and blank ones, is identical to the number of voters whose names were crossed out on the voters registry during the process of voting. Three copies of the record shall be completed.

4. When a discrepancy of numbers exists, the counting of votes shall be conducted a second time using the same procedures. If the number of the ballot papers appears greater than the number of voters in that center, or less than their number by more than 2%, in a manner that is enough to affect the final result of the elections, polling shall be re-conducted at the same polling center upon the decision of the Commission.

5. The objections raised by the candidates and their agents during the process of counting votes, as well as the respective decisions of the Commission, shall be documented in the respective records..

6. The candidates or their agents, or observers, are entitled to take knowledge of the records after signing by the chairperson and the members of the staff according to due form.

Article (91): *Counting Votes for the Election of the Council Membership*

Counting the votes of the Council membership lists shall be done according to the procedures stipulated in article (90) of this law.

Article (92): *Invalid and Blank Ballot Papers*

1. The ballot paper shall be deemed invalid:
a. If the ballot paper is not an official ballot paper prepared by the Commission.
b. If the ballot paper does not bear the stamp of the polling center.
c. If the ballot paper for the election of the President marks more than onecandidate, or if the ballot paper for the electoral lists marks more than one list.
d. If the ballot paper includes any change whatsoever in the names or order of candidates.
e. If the ballot paper contains signs or writings by which the voter can be identified.
2. The ballot paper shall be deemed blank if it does not contain any marking.

Article (93): *Preparation and Deposit of the Minutes and Ballot*

1. The polling center staff shall, upon completing the counting of votes, draw up and organize final minutes.

2. Four copies of the final minutes shall be produced.

3. The minutes shall include:
a. The name and the number of the polling center.
b. The names of the candidates or lists agents or the accredited representatives who attended the counting of votes.
c. The number of voters registered in the polling center.
d. The number of voters according to voters registry in that polling center.
e. The number of ballot papers that were found in the polling boxes in that polling center.
f. The number of invalid, blank, substitute and unused ballot papers.
g. The date and time of counting votes.

4. In addition to what has been mentioned in paragraph (3):
a. The minutes on the election of the post of President shall include the names of the candidates nominated for the presidential post, and the number of votes obtained by each, written in letters and numbers.
b. The minutes on lists elections shall include the names of the electoral lists, and the number of votes obtained by each, written in letters and numbers.

5. Each of the minutes aforementioned shall be signed by the chairperson and members of the polling center staff, or any of the candidates or lists or their agents or representatives, if they so desire..

6. Copies of the mentioned minutes shall be sent to the electoral area office, and the final copy shall be posted at the polling center. All minutes shall be officially stamped by the polling center stamp.

Article (94): *Counting Minutes of the Polling Centers*

1. The chairmen of each respective polling center shall, immediately after completing all the procedures set forth in Articles 89,90, 91 and 93 herein, personally submit all the minutes.

2. The following persons are entitled to monitor to the process of compiling and preparing the results in the electoral area:
a. The members and personnel of the electoral areas offices.
b. Candidates.
c. Accredited agents and representatives of the candidates and electoral lists..
d. Officially accredited local and international observers.
e. Accredited journalists.

3. The polling center shall submit the counting minutes to the electoral area office, which has to compile the results and publish them as the elections results in the electoral areas

Article (95): *Compiling Votes at the Electoral Areas Offices*

1. The electoral area office shall, upon receiving the election minutes from every polling center, compile and count the votes in the electoral area thereof, provided that the process of compilation is conducted in public at the Headquarters of the electoral area. No one except those persons specified in Article (94) paragraph (2) together with the Police personnel, if the chairperson of the electoral area office has requested the presence thereof, shall be present during the process of compiling the votes.

2. The compilation of votes at the electoral area office shall include an examination of all the election minutes submitted thereto, and consideration of the objections, and the results of all votes registered therein.

3. The electoral area office shall, in the case of discovering any violations whatsoever in the voting process in any of the polling centers which could affect the results of the elections and the allocation of seats among electoral lists, indicate such matters in a report to the Commission recommending new elections in polling centers where such violations took place. The announcement of the results of the elections in such polling centers shall be suspended until the Commission further decides on this matter.

4. The electoral area office shall consider the objections of all candidates and electoral lists, or their agents and representatives. It shall decide on each objection and publish the results of the elections in its electoral area.

5. The candidates and the electoral lists, or their agents and representatives, shall be entitled to request the Commission reconsideration of the decisions adopted by the electoral area office concerning the objections submitted thereto.

Article (96): *Submission of Minutes and Elections Papers and Materials to the Commission*

The chairperson of the electoral area office and the staff members shall , upon the completion of all the procedures set forth in Article (95) of this law, submit to the Central Elections Office all minutes, papers, and election-related material together with a report of the results.

Article (97): *Preliminary Results of the Elections*

1. Once the Commission receives all the minutes and preliminary results from the various electoral areas, the Central Elections Office shall, under the supervision of the Commission, compile the results and prepare the general preliminary results of the elections of the President and Council membership.

2. The Commission shall publish the general preliminary results of the elections in the media within 24 hours of preparation.

Article (98): *The Final Counting of Votes Procedures*

1. Upon receiving all minutes, papers and materials attached thereto, and the reports made by the electoral areas offices, the Commission shall verify the accuracy of the vote counting in polling centers and electoral areas, and shall declare the final results accordingly.

2. The final votes counting shall be conducted in public, within a maximum time no greater than twenty four hours after polling day at the Headquarters of the Commission. No other than those specified in Article (94) paragraph (2) of this law shall be permitted to be present during this process.
3. The Commission shall review all the reports of the electoral area offices, and the decisions adopted in respect of the objections submitted by the candidates and electoral lists, or their agents or representatives, and pay attention their statements.

4. Upon the discovery of any violation which could affect the results of the elections whether for the President’s post or Council membership in any of the polling centers, the Commission may conduct new elections in such centers within a maximum time of no later than ten days from the

date of completing the final counting. In such cases, re-election shall be confined to the polling center or centers where the violation occurred. The right to vote shall be confined to those registered in any of the aforementioned polling center or centers.

Article (99): *Final Results*

1. Upon the completion of the procedures mentioned in articles (97, and 98) of this law, the Commission shall immediately announce the final results of the elections.

2. The announcement of the final results of Presidential and Legislative elections shall include the following:
a. The total number of voters registered in the final voters registry.
b. The number of voters who cast their votes according to the voters registry.
c. The number of ballot papers collected in the ballot boxes.
d. The respective numbers of valid ballot papers for the election of the President and Council membership lists.
e. The respective numbers of invalid ballot papers for the election of the President and Council membership lists.
f. The respective numbers of blank ballot papers for the election of the President and Council membership lists.
g. The names of the presidential candidates and the number of votes obtained by each in a descending order.
h. The electoral lists nominated for Council membership and the votes and seats obtained by each list in a descending order.
i. The date and time of the final counting of votes.
j. The signatures of the chairperson and members of the Commission.

Chapter Ten: Final Results Announcement

Article (100): *The Elected President*

1. The candidate who obtains the absolute majority of correct votes shall be considered the President. If none of the candidates obtains the absolute majority, the top two candidates who obtained the highest numbers of votes shall run in the second round which shall be held after fifteen days from the day the results are announced. The winner shall be the candidate who obtains the highest number of votes in this round.

2. The Commission shall issue an official certificate to the candidate who has been elected as President.
3. The elected President shall commence his/her duties as President of the Palestinian National Authority one month after the announcement of the final election results by the Commission and after taking an oath in accordance with the provisions of the Basic Law.

Article (101): *Proportional Allocation of Seats amongst Lists*

Seats are distributed in accordance with the number of votes obtained by each list. The allocation is distributed as per the Sainte-Laguë method, in the following manner:
1. The number of votes obtained by each list is divided by 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, et seq. for the allocation of seats.

2. The numbers resulting from these series of divisions shall be the "quotients.", which shall be sorted in a descending order.

3. Seats shall be distributed in order to the highest quotient until all the seats have been distributed.

4. In case the results of two or more of the divisions are equal during the distribution process, each of the lists which have equal results shall acquire a seat and the next seat shall be allocated to the next list.

5. In case the lists scored equally regarding the final seat, it shall be allocated to the list which scored the highest number of valid votes.

6. In case the list reaches the number of seats equal to the number of its candidates, it shall not acquire more seats and the allocation of seats shall be moved to other lists.

Article (102): *Council Membership Wining Lists*

The Commission shall issue official certificates for the wining lists in the Council membership.

Article (103): *Publishing and Viewing the Final Results*

The final elections results shall be published in the Palestinian Official Gazette and in the daily press. The public shall be able to obtain detailed tables of the final results for the electoral areas within two weeks from the Election Day.

Article (104): *Challenges against the Commission Decisions Related to Results*

1. Any electoral list, candidate, candidate agent or representative may appeal the decisions issued by the Commission within two days as from the announcement of the final results of the elections.

2. The Court shall adjudicate on the appeal within five days as from the filing thereof, and immediately communicate the decisions taken by the Court to the Commission for implementation.

Chapter Eleven: Vacancy of the President's Position and Council Membership

Article (105): *Vacancy of the Position of President*

1. The position of the President shall be considered vacant in cases of:
a. Death;
b. Resignation submitted to the Palestinian Legislative Council, if accepted in accordance with the provisions of the Basic Law.
c. Loss of legal capacity, as per a ruling issued by the High Constitutional Court and subsequently approved by a majority of two-thirds of the members of the Legislative Council.

2. If the position of President becomes vacant for any of the reasons stated in paragraph (1), the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council shall assume the responsibilities of the Presidency provisionally for a period that does not exceed sixty days provided that free and direct elections to elect the President, in accordance with the provisions of this law, shall be organized. The provisional presidential term shall finish after the announcement of the final election results and immediately after the elected President takes a legal oath in accordance with the provisions of the Basic Law.

3. In the event that the Speaker of the Council wishes to run for the position of President, he shall convene a session immediately after the position of the President becomes vacant, and submit his resignation in order for a new Speaker to be elected and execute the presidential duties provisionally.

Article (106): *Calling for Presidential Elections*

1. The call for by-elections for the position of President shall be made by virtue of a presidential decree issued by the provisional President (Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council).

2. By-elections for the presidential position shall take place within sixty days commencing from the date the position becomes vacant, in accordance with the provisions established by this law.

3. The final voter registry compiled in accordance with the provisions of this law shall be endorsed and used for the purpose of conducting the by-elections provided that the registers are updated and modified in the following cases: Death, reaching the legal age of voting and candidacy eligibility and changing a place of residence.

Article (107): *Vacancy of Council Membership*

1. The Council shall issue a decision declaring the seat of a member of the Council vacant in the following cases:
a. Death;
b. Loss of legal capacity, as per a final judicial ruling.

2. Resignation of members shall be submitted to the speaker of the Council and shall come into effect two weeks from the date of presentation thereof.

3. In the event that the seat of Council member of the electoral list becomes vacant three months prior to the end of the Council term, the vacant seat shall be occupied by the next candidate of the electoral list.

Chapter Twelve: Electoral Crimes and Punishment

Article (108): *Acts Constituting Electoral Crimes*

1. Any person who commits one of the following actions is considered as committing a crime:
a. Assumes the personality or name of another person for the purpose of voting in elections.
b. Uses his/her right to vote more than once.
c. Illegitimately keeps, appropriates, hides, or destroys the election card of another person.
d. Pretends to be illiterate or unable to write and abused that.
e. Carries a firearm or any other tool which poses a danger to security and public safety in any polling or counting center on Election Day.
f. Influences the right of the voter to cast his/her ballot, or obstructs the electoral process in any way whatsoever.
g. Tampers with any ballot box, voter registries or paper prepared for voting, or steals or destroys any of the registries or papers, or fails to put them in the box, or undertakes any action that is intended to damage the integrity of electoral procedures and confidentiality thereof. Such offences are punishable by the maximum punishment as stipulated in this article.
h. Forces any voter by any means to disclose the name of the candidate or electoral list which he/she voted for, or the content of the ballot paper according to which he/she voted.
i. Encourages or helps any other person to vote knowing that he/she is legally ineligible to vote.
j. Commits any of the prohibited actions stipulated by Articles (66) of this law.

2. Any person who commits any of the actions stipulated in paragraph (1), shall – upon indictment – be punished with one or both of the following penalties:
a. Imprisonment for no less than six months.
b. A fine that does not exceed one thousand USD or its equivalent in the officially circulated currency.

Article (109): *Bribery*

1. Any person who commits any of the following actions shall be considered as committing a crime:
a. Any person, who gives, lends, offers, or commits himself/herself to give, directly or indirectly, money or any other benefit to a voter in order to force him/her to vote in a specific manner, or to abstain from voting.
b. Any person who accepts or asks, directly or indirectly, for money or a loan, or any other benefit, for himself or herself or for any other person, in order to vote in a specific manner, or to abstain from voting, or to influence any other person to vote in a specific manner, or to abstain from voting.

2. Any person who commits any of the actions stipulated by paragraph (1) above, shall – upon indictment and confiscation of the items of bribery – be punished with one or both of the following penalties:
a. Imprisonment for a period that does not exceed three years.
b. A fine that does not exceed three thousand USD or its equivalent in the officially circulated currency.
c. The Court may order the exclusion of the person's name from the lists of candidates.

Article (110): *Electoral Crimes Materials*

1. Any person who commits any of the following actions shall be considered as committing a crime:
a. Any person, who moves, destroys, hides, or helps to move, destroy, or hide any electoral material described in this law, without being authorized by the Commission or in violation of this law.
b. Any person who prints, makes or prepares any electoral material described in this law without a written authorization from the Commission.

2. Any person who commits any of the actions stipulated by paragraph (1) above, shall – upon indictment – be punished with one or both of the following penalties:
a. Imprisonment for no longer than one year.
b. A fine that does not exceed one thousand USD or its equivalent in the officially circulated currency.

Article (111): *Penalty for Violating the Disbursement on Elections Campaign Rules*

Any person who violates Articles (68 and 69) of this law shall be punished with imprisonment for a period no longer than six months, or a fine that is not less than one thousand USD, or equivalent thereof in the legally circulated currency, or with both penalties. The Court shall have the right to remove his/her name from the list of candidates and confiscate those funds.

Article (112): *Ballot Papers and Electoral Minutes Related Crimes*

1. Any person who commits any of the following actions shall be considered as committing a crime:
a. Any person who falsifies or introduces false information into the electoral minutes and in the voters lists which this law requires to be organized.
b. Any person who introduces or allows the introduction of ballot papers into a ballot box under the name of persons who have not voted or do not exist.
c. Any person who intentionally includes false data in the candidacy application, or declaration or date of registration or submission thereof.
d. Any person who hides, destroys, or damages any bill of challenge or appeal filed by an electoral list or a presidential candidate according the provisions of this law.
e. Any person who hides, destroys, or damages any candidacy application submitted by any list or candidate.

2. Any person who commits any action stipulated in paragraph (1), shall – upon indictment – be punished with one or both of the following penalties:
a. Imprisonment for no longer than one year.
b. A fine that is not less than one thousand USD or its equivalent in the legally circulated currency.

Article (113): *Incrimination of Actions which the Law did not Impose Special Penalties For*

Any act, omission, refrain, failure, or neglect of any duty stipulated by this law and for which there is no specified penalty, shall be considered a crime punishable with a penalty of imprisonment for a period no longer than 3 months, or a fine of not more than 500 USD or its equivalent in the legally circulated currency, or with both penalties.

Article (114): *Penalties for Crimes Committed by Elections Staff Members*

If the person who commits any of the crimes defined in this chapter of the law is the chairperson, or member of any election staff , or employee of the administrative body of the staff , or any other person on official duty in accordance with this law, shall be punished – upon indictment – with the penalty of imprisonment for a period no longer than three years, or a fine of not more than three thousand USD or its equivalent in the legally circulated currency, or with both penalties.

Chapter Thirteen: Closing and Interim Provisions

Article (115): *Elections in Jerusalem*

1. In accordance with the provisions of this law, the Commission shall create voters registries for the Palestinian voters in Jerusalem. The Commission is entitled to follow any of the appropriate procedures and instruments to guarantee Jerusalem voters to practice their voting rights.

2. Elections in Jerusalem shall take place in accordance with the provisions of this law and regulations, instructions and procedures set forth by the Commission.

3. Without prejudice to the above stated paragraphs (1, and 2), provisions of the present law shall apply to the elections that run in Jerusalem just as they apply to any other electoral area in Palestine.

Article (116): *The next Presidential Elections*

Without violating the provisions of Articles (105 and 106) of this law, the next presidential elections shall be conducted at the same time with the first legislative elections that shall be conducted by virtue of this law.

Article (117): *Notifications*

Every decision, order, document or notification which is required under the provisions of this law for any person concerned shall be considered valid and legal if:
a. It is received by the person concerned by hand,
b. It is received 48 hours after its posting by registered mail to the person's known address.

Article (118): *Issuance of Regulations*

The Commission shall issue the regulations necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this law.

Article (119): *Nullifications*

1. Law number (9) of 2005 concerning the elections shall be null and void.

2. Law number (19) of 2005 concerning the amendment of Article (73) of the Elections Law number (9) of 2005 shall be null and void.

3. Law number (4) of 2006 concerning the amendment of some of the provisions of the Elections Law number (9) of 2005 shall be null and void.

4. Law number (1) of 2006 concerning the police and security personnel voting shall by null and void.

5. Any provisions that contradict the provisions of this law shall be null and void.

Article (120): *Ratification of the Decree by a Law*

This decree which is issued by a law shall be referred to the Legislative Council on its first legal session for ratification.

Article (121): *Implementation and enforcement of this law*

All competent bodies, each within its jurisdiction, shall execute the provisions of this decree by a law, and it shall come into force as from publication in the Official Gazette.

Issued in Ramallah City on September 2nd, 2007
20th of Sha'ban 1428 H
Mahmoud Abbass
Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee
President of the Palestinian National Authority