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His Excellency President Shukry El-Kuwatly and President Gamal Abdel Nasser will each deliver a statement to the people in the Syrian and the Egyptian Parliaments respectively on Wednesday, 5th February, 1958, in which they will announce the decision reached in this meeting and explain the principles of the unity on which this rising young republic shall stand. The peoples of Egypt and Syria shall be called upon to participate in a general plebiscite on the principles of this unity and the choice of the head of the state within thirty days.

In proclaiming these decisions, the participants feel great pride and overwhelming joy in having assisted in taking this positive step on the road to Arab unity and solidarity, a unity which has been for many an epoch and many a generation the Arabs' much cherished hope and greatly coveted objective.

In deciding on the unity of both nations, the participants declare that their unity aims at the unification of all the Arab peoples and affirm that the door is open for participation to any Arab state desirous of joining them in a union or federation for the purpose of protecting the Arab peoples from harm and evil, strengthening Arab sovereignty, and safeguarding its existence.

May God protect this step we have taken and those which are to follow with His ever vigilant care and benevolence so that the Arab people under the banner of unity may live in dignity and peace.

PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTION of the United Arab Republic.—Cairo, 5th March, 1958⁽¹⁾.

PART I—THE UNITED ARAB STATE

ARTICLE 1

The United Arab State is a democratic, independent, sovereign republic, and its people are part of the Arab Nation.

ARTICLE 2

Nationality in the United Arab Republic is defined by law. Nationality of the United Arab Republic is enjoyed by all bearers of the Syrian or Egyptian nationalities ; or those who are entitled to it by laws or statutes in force in Syria or Egypt at the time this Constitution takes effect.

(1) Published in English in the United Arab Republic *Year Book*, 1959.

PART II—BASIC CONSTITUENTS OF THE SOCIETY

ARTICLE 3

Social solidarity is the basis of society.

ARTICLE 4

National economy is organised according to plans which conform to the principles of social justice, and aim at the development of national productivity and the raising of the standard of living.

ARTICLE 5

Private property is inviolable; the law organises its social function. Property may not be expropriated except for purposes of public utility and in consideration of just compensation in accordance with the law.

ARTICLE 6

Social justice is the basis of taxation and public imposts.

PART III—PUBLIC RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

ARTICLE 7

All citizens are equal before the law. They are equal in their rights and obligations, without distinction of race, origin, language, religion or creed.

ARTICLE 8

No infraction and no punishment may be imposed except by virtue of the law. Penalties may not be inflicted except in respect of offences committed subsequently to the date of the law prescribing them.

ARTICLE 9

The extradition of political refugees is prohibited.

ARTICLE 10

Public liberties are guaranteed within the limits of the law.

ARTICLE 11

Defence of the Homeland is a sacred duty, and the fulfilment of military service is an honour for all citizens. Conscription is obligatory in accordance with the law.

PART IV—THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER I. THE HEAD OF STATE

ARTICLE 12

The President of the Republic is the Head of State. He exercises his powers in the manner prescribed by this Constitution.

CHAPTER II. THE LEGISLATURE

ARTICLE 13

Legislative power is vested in an Assembly named the National Assembly. The number of the members of the National Assembly and their choice are determined by Presidential decree. At least half of the number of members must be members of the Syrian Chamber of Deputies and the National Assembly of Egypt.

ARTICLE 14

The National Assembly exercises control over the acts of the Executive in the manner prescribed by this Constitution.

ARTICLE 15

To be member of the Assembly, a person must not be less than thirty years of age according to the Gregorian Calendar.

ARTICLE 16

The National Assembly has its seat in Cairo. It may be convened elsewhere upon the demand of the President of the Republic.

ARTICLE 17

The President of the Republic convokes the Assembly and declares the closure of its session.

ARTICLE 18

Meetings of the National Assembly, without summons, and outside its sessions are null and void, and decisions taken therein are null and void, according to the law.

ARTICLE 19

Before admission to the exercise of their functions members of the Assembly shall take the following oath before the Assembly in public session:

“I swear in the name of Almighty God to preserve faithfully the United Arab Republic and its Régime, to watch over the interests of the People and integrity of the Homeland, and to respect the Constitution and the Law.”

ARTICLE 20

The Assembly shall elect a President, and two Vice-Presidents at the first ordinary meeting.

ARTICLE 21

Meetings of the Assembly are public. Nevertheless, the Assembly can meet in camera following the demand of the President of the Republic or 20 of its members. The Assembly decides thereafter whether the discussion of the question under consideration should or should not be resumed in public.

ARTICLE 22

No law may be enacted unless approved by the Assembly. No draft law may be adopted unless a vote is taken on each of its articles separately.

ARTICLE 23

The Assembly draws up its own internal regulations determining the manner in which it exercises its powers.

ARTICLE 24

Every member of the National Assembly is entitled to address to the Ministers questions or interpellations. Interpellations may not be discussed until after at least seven days from the date of their presentation, except in the case of urgency and with the consent of the Minister concerned.

ARTICLE 25

Any twenty members of the National Assembly may ask for the discussion of a general question with a view to ascertaining the Government's policy and exchanging views on such a question.

ARTICLE 26

The National Assembly may express its wishes and proposals to the Government regarding several questions.

ARTICLE 27

No impost may be established except by a law. No one may be exempt therefrom except in the cases specified by the law.

No other tax or duty may be exacted except within the limits defined by the law.

ARTICLE 28

The law defines the basic rules of the collection of public revenues and the manner of their expenditure.

ARTICLE 29

The Government may not contract any loans, nor undertake any project which would be a burden on the State Treasury over one or more future years, except with the consent of the National Assembly.

ARTICLE 30

No monopoly may be granted except by law and for a limited duration.

ARTICLE 31

The law prescribes the manner of the preparation of the budget, and its presentation to the National Assembly.

ARTICLE 32

The project of the State's General Budget must be submitted to the National Assembly for its examination and approval at least three months before the end of the financial year. Each section of the Budget must be voted separately.

The National Assembly may not introduce any amendments to the draft budget except with the approval of the Government.

ARTICLE 33

Every transfer of funds from one section of the Budget to another must be approved by the National Assembly, as well as any expenditure for which no provision is made therein or exceeding the budgetary allocations.

ARTICLE 34

The provisions relating to the Budget of the State are applicable to independent or annexed budgets.

ARTICLE 35

The law determines the rules regarding the budgets of other public institutions.

ARTICLE 36

No member of the National Assembly may, during the session, be subject to a criminal prosecution without the permission of the Assembly, except in cases of *flagrante delicto*.

The Assembly must be given notification on any case where prosecution is undertaken while the Assembly is in recess.

ARTICLE 37

No member of the National Assembly may be deprived of his mandate except by a decision of a two-thirds majority of the Assembly, upon a proposal of twenty of its members, and this on the ground of loss of confidence and esteem.

ARTICLE 38

The President of the Republic has the right to dissolve the National Assembly. In this case, a new Assembly must be formed and convoked within a period of sixty days from the dissolution.

ARTICLE 39

When the National Assembly declares a vote of no confidence in a Minister, he must resign.

A motion of censure concerning a Minister may not be submitted to the Assembly until after an interpellation has been addressed to him. Such a motion must be proposed by twenty members of the Assembly. No decision may be taken before at least three days from the date of the presentation of the motion.

Withdrawal of confidence must be pronounced by the majority of the members of the Assembly.

ARTICLE 40

No one may at the same time be a member of the National Assembly and incumbent of a public function. The law determines the other cases of incompatibility of functions.

ARTICLE 41

No member of the National Assembly may be appointed to the board of a company during the period of his mandate except in the cases prescribed by the law.

ARTICLE 42

No member of the National Assembly may, during the period of his mandate, acquire or take or lease any State property, or lease, sell or exchange to or with the State any part of his property whatsoever.

ARTICLE 43

Members of the National Assembly receive a remuneration prescribed by the law.

CHAPTER III. THE EXECUTIVE

ARTICLE 44

The executive power is vested in the President of the Republic, and he exercises it in the manner prescribed by the Constitution.

ARTICLE 45

The President of the Republic may not, during his term of office, exercise a liberal profession or undertake any commercial, financial or industrial activity. Nor may he acquire or take or lease any property belonging to the State, or lease, sell or exchange to or with the State any part of his property whatsoever.

ARTICLE 46

The President of the Republic may appoint one or more Vice-Presidents, as he may relieve them of their posts.

ARTICLE 47

The President of the Republic appoints the Ministers and discharges them from their functions. Ministers of State, and Secretaries of State may be appointed. Each Minister supervises the affairs of his Department, and executes the general policy drawn by the President of the Republic.

ARTICLE 48

No Vice-President, or Minister may, during his tenure of office, exercise a liberal profession, engage in commercial, financial or industrial activities, nor may he acquire or take

or lease any property belonging to the State, or lease, sell or exchange any part whatsoever of his own property to, or with the State.

ARTICLE 49

The President of the Republic and the National Assembly have the right to bring a Minister to justice for infractions committed by him in the exercise of his functions. The indictment of a Minister by the National Assembly is affected by a proposal submitted by at least one-fifth of the members of the Assembly. Such indictment must be approved by a majority of two-thirds of the members of the Assembly.

ARTICLE 50

The President of the Republic has the right to initiate laws, to oppose, or to promulgate them.

ARTICLE 51

If the President of the Republic opposes a draft law, it is sent back to the National Assembly within the thirty days following the date of its communication to him.

If it is not referred back to the Assembly within this period, it is considered law and promulgated.

ARTICLE 52

If a draft law is referred back to the Assembly within the prescribed time, and is voted a second time by a majority of two-thirds of its members, it is considered law and promulgated.

ARTICLE 53

While the National Assembly is in recess, the President of the Republic may enact decrees, having the force of law, or take decisions originally lying within the competence of the Assembly, should the necessity arise. Such decrees and decisions must be submitted to the National Assembly at its first meeting. If, however, the Assembly opposes them by a two-thirds majority, they are no longer effective from the day of their opposition.

ARTICLE 54

The President of the Republic enacts the regulations necessary for the organisation of the public service departments and supervises the administration thereof.

ARTICLE 55

The President of the Republic is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

ARTICLE 56

The President of the Republic concludes treaties and communicates them to the National Assembly. Such treaties will have the force of law after their conclusion, their ratification and their publication in conformity with the rules in force.

However, peace treaties, treaties of alliance, commercial and navigational treaties as well as all treaties entailing territorial changes or affecting the rights of sovereignty, of those involving expenditure by the Public Treasury for which no provision is made in the Budget, will not become effective until after ratification by the National Assembly.

ARTICLE 57

The President of the Republic may declare a state of emergency.

ARTICLE 58

The United Arab Republic consists of two regions : Egypt and Syria. In each, there shall be an executive council appointed by Presidential decree. This executive council has the competence to examine and study matters pertaining to the execution of the general policy in the region.

CHAPTER IV. THE JUDICATURE

ARTICLE 59

Judges are independent. They are, in the administration of justice, subject to no other authority save that of the law. No power in the State may interfere in lawsuits or in the affairs of justice.

ARTICLE 60

Judges are irremovable, in the manner prescribed by law.

ARTICLE 61

The law organises the various jurisdictions and determines their attributions.

ARTICLE 62

Sessions of the Courts are conducted in public, unless a court decides, in the interests of public order or morality, to sit in camera.

ARTICLE 63

Judicial decisions are pronounced and executed in the name of the Nation.

PART V—GENERAL

ARTICLE 64

Cairo is the capital of the United Arab Republic.

ARTICLE 65

The law determines the national flag and the regulations relative thereto.

The law also determines the State emblem and the regulations relative thereto.

ARTICLE 66

The law only legislates post-operatively ; it has no retroactive effective. Nevertheless, provisions to the contrary may be stipulated in a law except in criminal matters with the approval of the majority of the members of the National Assembly.

ARTICLE 67

Laws are published in the Official Gazette within two weeks from the date of their promulgation, and come in force ten days thereafter. Nevertheless this time may be extended or curtailed by a special provision in the law.

PART VI—INTERIM AND FINAL DECREES

ARTICLE 68

All laws, decrees and regulations in force in each of the two regions of Egypt and Syria at the time this Constitution comes into effect shall remain valid within the regional spheres, for which they were intended. These laws, decrees and regulations may, however, be abrogated or amended according to the procedure established in the present Constitution.

ARTICLE 69

The coming into effect of the present Constitution shall not infringe upon the provisions and clauses of the international treaties and agreements concluded between each of Syria and Egypt and the foreign powers.

These treaties and agreements shall remain valid in the regional spheres for which they were intended at the time of their conclusion, according to the rules and regulations of the International Law.

ARTICLE 70

A special budget, alongside the State Budget, shall be drawn up and put in force in each of the present regional sphere of each of Syria and Egypt until the coming into effect of the final measures for the introduction of a single budget.

ARTICLE 71

The public services and administrative systems existing at the time the present Constitution comes into effect shall remain in force in each of Syria and Egypt until their reorganisation and unification by Presidential decree.

ARTICLE 72

Citizens shall constitute a National Union to work for the realisation of national aims and the intensification of the efforts for raising a sound national structure, from the political, social and economic viewpoints. The manner in which a union is to be formed shall be defined by Presidential decree.

ARTICLE 73

The present provisional Constitution shall be in force until the announcement of the People's approval of the final Constitution of the United Arab Republic.

Issued on Wednesday, March 5th, 1958.

GAMAL ABDEL-NASSER.