

# **Law of the Judiciary**

## **Chapter One**

### **Independence of the Judiciary and its Guarantees**

#### **Article 1:**

Judges are independent and, in the administration of justice, they shall be subject to no authority other than the provisions of *Sharia* and laws in force. No one may interfere with the judiciary.

#### **Article 2:**

Judges are not subject to removal from office except in the cases set forth in this Law.

#### **Article 3:**

Without prejudice to the provision of Article 49 of this Law, judges may not be transferred to other positions except with their consent or by reason of promotion, in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

**Article 4:**

Without prejudice to the provision of Article 68 of this Law, judges may not be sued for acts carried out in the course of performance of their duties except in accordance with the conditions and rules pertaining to the disciplining of judges.

**Chapter Two**  
**Supreme Judicial Council**

**Article 5:**

The Supreme Judicial Council shall be composed of a chairman to be named by royal order and ten members as follows:

- (a) Chief Judge of the Supreme Court.
- (b) Four full-time judges of the rank of chief judge of a court of appeals to be named by royal order.
- (c) Deputy Minister of Justice.
- (d) Chairman of the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution.
- (e) Three members satisfying the conditions required for an appeals judge to be named by royal order. The terms of the Chairman of the Council and the members provided

for in paragraphs (b) and (e) shall be four years renewable.

**Article 6:**

In addition to the other powers provided for in this Law, the Supreme Judicial Council shall:

- (a) attend to judges' personnel affairs such as appointment, promotion, disciplining, assignment, secondment, training, transfer, granting of leaves, termination of service and the like, in accordance with established rules and procedures, in such a way as to guarantee the independence of the judiciary.
- (b) issue regulations relating to judges' personnel affairs upon the approval of the King.
- (c) issue judicial inspection regulations.
- (d) establish courts in accordance with the nomenclatures provided for in Article 9 of this Law, merge or cancel them, determine their venue and subject jurisdiction without prejudice to Article 25 of this Law and constitute panels therein.
- (e) supervise courts and judges and their work within the limits stated in this Law.

- (f) name chief judges of courts of appeals and their deputies from among the appeals judges and chief judges of courts of first instance and their assistants.
- (g) issue rules regulating jurisdiction and powers of chief judges of courts and their assistants.
- (h) issue rules specifying the method of selecting judges as well as procedures and restrictions pertaining to their study leaves.
- (i) regulate the work of Trainee Judges.
- (j) determine equivalent judicial work required to fill judicial ranks.
- (k) make recommendations relating to the Council's established jurisdiction.
- (l) prepare a comprehensive report at the end of each year including achievements, obstacles and relevant recommendations, and bring the same before the King.

**Article 7:**

Headed by its Chairman, the Supreme Judicial Council shall convene at least once every other month and whenever need arises. Its meeting shall be valid if attended by the majority of members and its decisions shall be taken by

majority vote of the Council. In the absence of the Chairman of the Council, the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court shall act on his behalf.

**Article 8:**

- (1) The Supreme Judicial Council shall have its own budget which shall be issued in accordance with the rules governing issuance of the State budget.
- (2) The Supreme Judicial Council shall have a General Secretariat and the Council shall select the Secretary General from among the judges.
- (3) A sufficient number of researchers, specialists and administrators shall be appointed at the Council. Pursuant to its decision, the Council may seek the assistance of whomever it deems necessary. They shall be supervised by the Chairman of the Council.
- (4) The Council shall issue internal regulations to regulate its work and duties.

**Chapter Three**  
**Courts and Jurisdiction**  
**Section One**  
**Hierarchy of Courts**

**Article 9:**

Courts shall consist of the following:

- (1) The Supreme Court.
- (2) Courts of appeals.
- (3) First instance courts, which are:
  - (a) General courts.
  - (b) Penal courts.
  - (c) Family courts.
  - (d) Commercial courts.
  - (e) Labor courts.

Each court shall have jurisdiction over matters brought before it in accordance with this Law, the Law of Procedure before *Sharia* Courts and the Law of Criminal Procedure. The Supreme Judicial Council may establish other specialized courts upon the approval of the King.

## **Section Two**

### **The Supreme Court**

#### **Article 10:**

- (1) The Supreme Court shall be seated in the City of Riyadh.
- (2) The Chief Judge of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by royal order at the rank of minister, and his services may not be terminated except by royal order. He shall satisfy the conditions required to fill the post of chief judge of a court of appeals. In his absence, the senior most of the chief judges of the Supreme Court panels shall act on his behalf.
- (3) The Supreme Court shall be composed of a chief judge and a sufficient number of judges of the rank of chief judge of a court of appeals. Appointment of members



shall be by royal order pursuant to a recommendation by the Supreme Judicial Council.

- (4) Without prejudice to the provision of Article 13 of this Law, the Supreme Court shall exercise its jurisdiction through specialized panels as needed. Each panel shall be composed of three judges except a penal panel that reviews sentences of death, amputation, stoning or *qisas* (*lex talionis* retribution) for criminal homicide or lesser injuries shall be composed of five judges. Each panel shall have a chief judge.
- (5) Appointment of the chief judge of each of the Supreme Court panels and its members shall be pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council upon the recommendation of the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court.
- (6) There shall be a sufficient number of employees in the Supreme Court such as researchers, specialists, administrators, clerks, registrars and others as needed.

**Article 11:**

In addition to the powers provided for in the Law of Procedure before *Sharia* Courts and the Law of Criminal Procedure, the Supreme Court shall oversee the proper

application of the provisions of *Sharia* and the laws issued by the King which are not inconsistent with *Sharia* in cases within the jurisdiction of the general courts in relation to the following:

- (1) Review of judgments and decisions issued or supported by courts of appeals relating to sentences of death, amputation, stoning, or *qisas* (*lex talionis* retribution) in cases of criminal homicide or lesser injuries.
- (2) Review of judgments and decisions issued or supported by courts of appeals relating to cases not mentioned in the previous paragraph or relating to *ex parte* cases or the like without dealing with the facts of the cases whenever the objection to the decision is based upon the following:
  - (a) Violating the provisions of *Sharia* or laws issued by the King which are not inconsistent with *Sharia*.
  - (b) Rendering of a judgment by a court improperly constituted as provided for in the provisions of this and other laws.
  - (c) Rendering of a judgment by an incompetent court or panel.
  - (d) An error in characterizing the incident or improperly describing it.

**Article 12:**

Each of the Supreme Court panels shall convene headed by its chief judge with all its members attending. If a member is absent or becomes impeded from attending, the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court shall replace him by a member of other Court panels.

**Article 13:**

- (1) The Supreme Court shall have a general panel headed by the Chief Judge of the Court, with all its judges as members.
- (2) The General Panel of the Supreme Court shall undertake the following:
  - (a) Determining general principles in issues relating to the judiciary.
  - (b) Reviewing matters assigned to it by this Law or other laws.
- (3) The meeting of the General Panel shall not be valid unless attended by at least two thirds of its members, including the Chief Judge or whoever acts on his behalf.
- (4) The decisions of the General Panel shall be taken by majority vote of members present. In case of a tie, the

Chief Judge shall have the casting vote, and its decisions shall be final.

**Article 14:**

If a supreme court panel decides – in connection with a case before it – not to follow a precedent adopted by it or by another panel in the same court, or if a court of appeals panel decides not to follow a precedent established by a supreme court panel, the matter shall be put before the Chief judge of the Supreme Court to refer it to the General Panel of the Supreme Court to decide it.

**Section Three  
Courts of Appeals**

**Article 15:**

- (1) There shall be one or more courts of appeals in each province which shall exercise their work through specialized panels. Each panel shall be composed of three judges. A penal panel that reviews cases of criminal homicide, amputation, stoning, or *qisas* (*lex talionis* retribution) in a case of criminal homicide or lesser injuries shall be composed of five judges. The rank of a judge in a court of appeals shall not be lower

than the rank of an appeals judge, and each panel shall have a chief judge.

- (2) One or more specialized appeals panels may be established in the counties attached to the province where there is a court of appeals.
- (3) The chief judge of each panel and its members shall be appointed pursuant to a decision by the chief judge of the court of appeals. The chief judge of the court - or a court member deputized by him - shall preside over the panel in the absence of its chief judge.

**Article 16:**

The courts of appeals panels are:

- (1) Jural panels.
- (2) Penal panels.
- (3) Family panels.
- (4) Commercial panels.
- (5) Labor panels.

**Article 17:**

Courts of appeals shall review appealable judgments rendered by first instance courts and shall decide, after hearing the statements of litigants, in accordance with the procedures provided for in the Law of Procedure before *Sharia* Courts and the Law of Criminal Procedure.

#### **Section Four**

#### **First Instance Courts**

**Article 18:**

First instance courts shall be established in provinces, counties and districts as needed.

**Article 19:**

General courts in provinces shall consist of specialized panels that include panels for execution and for *ex parte* and similar cases which are outside the jurisdiction of other courts and notaries public, and decide on traffic accident cases and violations provided for in the Traffic Law and its Implementing Regulations. Each panel therein shall consist of a single judge or three judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council.

**Article 20:**

A penal court shall be composed of specialized panels as follows:

- (a) Panels for *qisas* (*lex talionis* retribution) and *hadd* ('Qur'anic prescribed punishment') cases.
- (b) Panels for *ta'zir* ('discretionary punishment') cases.
- (c) Panels for juvenile cases.

Each panel shall be composed of three judges except for cases determined by the Supreme Judicial Council which shall be reviewed by one judge.

**Article 21:**

A family court shall be composed of one or more panels, and each panel shall consist of one or more judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council and may include specialized panels as needed.

**Article 22:**

A commercial court and a labor court shall be composed of specialized panels, and each panel shall consist of one or more judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council.

**Article 23:**

A general court in a county or district shall be composed of one or more panels. Each panel shall consist of one or more judges as determined by the Supreme Judicial Council. Specialized penal, commercial, labor and family panels may be established, whenever necessary, in the general courts of counties and districts where no specialized courts are established. Said panels shall have the powers of specialized courts.

The Supreme Judicial Council shall determine the cases to be reviewed by the general courts of one judge.

**Article 24:**

The chief judge, members or judge of each panel shall be appointed pursuant to a decision by the court's chief judge. The chief judge of the court or whomever he deputizes from among the court members shall preside over the panel in absence of its chief judge.

**Section Five**  
**Court Jurisdiction**

**Article 25:**



Without prejudice to the provisions of the Law of the Board of Grievances, the courts shall have jurisdiction to decide all cases in accordance with the rules governing the jurisdiction of courts set forth in the Law of Procedure before *Sharia* Courts and the Law of Criminal Procedure.

**Article 26:**

- (1) In cases other than those requiring inspection of the site of dispute, courts may not hold their hearings in other than their respective seats. Nevertheless, they may - when necessary- hold their hearings in places other than their usual seats, even if outside their area of jurisdiction pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council.
- (2) If necessary, the Supreme Judicial Council shall, pursuant to a decision issued by it, assign one or more panels to review cases relating to Hajj and Umrah pilgrims. Regulations shall be issued pursuant to a decision by the Council to regulate the work of these panels and determine their venue and subject jurisdictions.

**Article 27:**

If a case is brought before a court subject to this Law and the same case is also brought before a court of the Board of Grievances or of another authority having jurisdiction to decide on certain disputes, and if both courts insist on reviewing the case, or both decline to do so, a petition shall be submitted to the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee at the Supreme Judicial Council for designating the competent authority. This Committee shall be composed of three members: a member from the Supreme Court to be selected by the Chief Judge of the Court, a member from the Board of Grievances or from the other authority to be selected by the President of the Board of Grievances or the other authority, as the case may be, and a member from among the full-time members of the Supreme Judicial Council to be selected by the Chairman of the Council who shall head this Committee. This Committee shall also have jurisdiction to decide the dispute which arises in respect of execution of two conflicting final judgments, one of which is rendered by a court subject to this Law and the other by a court of the Board of Grievances or the other authority.

**Article 28:**

In the cases mentioned in Article 27 of this Law, a petition shall be submitted to the Secretariat General of the Supreme Judicial Council. The petition shall include a sufficient description of the case in which the dispute, abstention or the two conflicting judgments occurred, in addition to particulars related to names of litigants, their respective capacities, places of residence and subject matter of the petition. The petitioner shall file as many copies of this petition as there are litigants, along with the documents supporting his petition. The Chairman of the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee shall designate one of its members to prepare the case and present it for litigation. The Secretariat shall notify the litigants by serving them with copies of the petition and shall summon them to appear at the hearing set for the preparation of the case. Following such preparation, the case shall be presented to the Chairman of the Committee, who shall set a hearing before the Committee for the parties to litigate the subject matter of the case.

**Article 29:**

Filing of the petition to the Committee referred to in Article 27 of this Law shall stay the proceedings of the case in respect of which the petition was submitted. If the petition is

submitted after a judgment has been rendered in respect of the case, the Chairman of the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee may stay the execution of either conflicting judgments, or both.

**Article 30:**

The decision of the Conflict of Jurisdiction Committee on the petition shall be issued by majority vote and shall not be subject to objection.

**Chapter Four**

**Judges**

**Section One**

**Appointment and Promotion of Judges**

**Article 31:**

To be appointed as a judge, a candidate shall fulfill the following requirements:

- (a) He shall be of Saudi nationality by descent.
- (b) He shall be of good character and conduct.
- (c) He shall be fully competent to hold the position of a judge in accordance with *Sharia*.
- (d) He shall hold a degree from one of the *Sharia* colleges in the Kingdom or any equivalent degree, provided that, in the latter case, he shall pass a special examination to be

prepared by the Supreme Judicial Council.

- (e) He shall not be less than forty years of age if he is to be appointed to the rank of an appeals judge, and not less than twenty two if he is to be appointed to any other rank in the judiciary.
- (f) He shall have not been convicted of a crime impinging on religion or honor or been the subject of a disciplinary action dismissing him from a public office, even if rehabilitated.

**Article 32:**

Ranks of the judiciary are as follows:

Trainee Judge, Judge C, Judge B, Judge A, Deputy Chief Judge of Court B, Deputy Chief Judge of Court A, Chief Judge of Court B, Chief Judge of Court A, Appeals Judge, Chief Judge of a Court of Appeals, and Chief Judge of the Supreme Court. These positions shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

**Article 33:**

To hold the rank of Trainee Judge, a candidate must, in addition to the requirements listed in Article 31, hold a Bachelor's degree with a general grade not lower than (Good)

and with a grade of at least (Very Good) in Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and its principles (*Usul al-Fiqh*).

**Article 34:**

To hold the rank of Judge C, a candidate shall have spent at least three years at the rank of Trainee Judge.

**Article 35:**

To hold the rank of Judge B, a candidate shall have spent at least one year at the rank of Judge C or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least four years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least four years, or have obtained a Master's degree from the High Judicial Institute or from a *Sharia* college in the Kingdom in the field of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles, or have obtained the Legal Studies Diploma from the Institute of Public Administration from among holders of a degree from a *Sharia* college in the Kingdom with a general grade not lower than (Good) and with a grade of at least (Very Good) in Islamic jurisprudence and its principles.

**Article 36:**

To hold the rank of Judge A, a candidate shall have spent at least four years at the rank of Judge B, or worked in

comparable judicial positions for at least eight years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least eight years, or have obtained a Doctoral degree from the High Judicial Institute or from a *Sharia* college in the Kingdom in the field of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles.

**Article 37:**

To hold the rank of Deputy Chief Judge of Court B, a candidate shall have spent at least three years at the rank of Judge A, or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least eleven years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least eleven years.

**Article 38:**

To hold the rank of Deputy Chief Judge of Court A, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Deputy Chief of Court B, or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least thirteen years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least thirteen years.

**Article 39:**

To hold the rank of Chief Judge of Court B, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Deputy Chief Judge of Court A, or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least fifteen years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least fifteen years.

**Article 40:**

To hold the rank of Chief Judge of Court A, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Chief Judge of Court B, or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least seventeen years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least seventeen years.

**Article 41:**

To hold the rank of Appeals Judge, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Chief Judge of Court A, or worked in comparable judicial positions for at least nineteen years, or taught the subject of Islamic jurisprudence or its principles at a college in the Kingdom for at least nineteen years.



**Article 42:**

To hold the rank of Chief Judge of a Court of Appeals, a candidate shall have spent at least two years at the rank of Appeals Judge.

**Article 43:**

The Master's degree or diploma provided for in this Law shall be equivalent to a four-year service in comparable judicial positions, and the Doctoral degree provided for in this Law shall be equivalent to a six-year service in comparable judicial positions.

**Article 44:**

- (1) The probation period for a trainee judge shall be two years from the date of assuming his position pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council to appoint him to this position. If, during this period, he is deemed unfit for the judiciary, the Supreme Judicial Council shall issue a decision to dismiss him from the judiciary.

- (2) A newly appointed judge shall be under probation for one year, and if he is not proven fit during this period, his service shall be terminated by royal order.
- (3) A judge appointed for the first time shall be given an allowance equivalent to a three-month salary.

**Article 45:**

Without prejudice to the provisions of this Law, a member of the judiciary shall enjoy the rights and guarantees provided for in the Civil Service Law and Retirement Law and shall observe the duties provided for in the Civil Service Law which do not conflict with the nature of judicial positions.

**Article 46:**

With the exception of trainee judges and persons appointed under probation, a member of the judiciary may not be dismissed except for reasons provided for in paragraphs (f), (h), (g) of Article 69 of this Law and in accordance with procedures provided for therein.

**Article 47:**

Appointment and promotion in the judiciary shall be by royal order pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council stating that the legal requirements are satisfied on a case by case basis. In promotion, the Council shall take absolute seniority into consideration. If candidates are equal in seniority, priority shall be given to the most competent, as per the proficiency reports. In case of equal proficiency or in the absence of proficiency reports, priority shall be given to age seniority. A member of the judiciary under evaluation may not be promoted unless he has been at least twice evaluated at his current rank and received a proficiency rating not lower than average in the last two reports prior to promotion.

**Article 48:**

Salaries of members of the judiciary of all ranks shall be in accordance with the Salary Scale of Judges.

**Section Two**

**Transfer, Secondment and Leaves of Judges**

**Article 49:**

Members of the judiciary may not be transferred or re-assigned within the judiciary except pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council. Nor may they be transferred, assigned or seconded outside the judiciary except by royal order pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council specifying the remuneration due to the assigned or seconded judge. Assignments or secondments shall be for one year renewable for another year. However, the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council may, in exceptional cases, assign a member of the judiciary to another position within or outside the judiciary for a period not exceeding three months per year.

**Article 50:**

Pursuant to a decision issued by him, the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council shall permit judges to take their leaves in accordance with relevant provisions.

**Section Three**  
**Duties of Judges**

**Article 51:**

A judge may not engage in commerce or work or hold a position inconsistent with the independence and dignity of the

judiciary. The Supreme Judicial Council may decide to prevent a judge from engaging in any work the performance of which, in its opinion, conflicts with the duties of the position and the proper performance thereof.

**Article 52:**

Judges may not disclose deliberations.

**Article 53:**

A judge shall reside in the locality of his place of work. The Supreme Judicial Council may, in exceptional circumstances, give a judge permission to reside temporarily in another locality near his place of work.

**Article 54:**

A judge may not absent himself from work, nor discontinue working, except in unforeseen emergencies, before obtaining written permission to do so.

**Section Four**

## **Inspection of Judges' Work**

### **Article 55:**

- (1) A department for judicial inspection shall be set up at the Supreme Judicial Council, consisting of a head, an assistant and a sufficient number of full-time judges to be selected by the Council from among judges of courts of appeals and first instance courts.
- (2) The Judicial Inspection Department shall undertake the following:
  - (a) Inspecting of the work of judges of courts of appeals and first instance courts in order to gather information which would lead to determining their level of proficiency and the extent of their keenness in the performance of their duties.
  - (b) Investigating of complaints submitted by judges or against them in matters relating to their jobs after they are referred to the Department by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Inspection and investigation referred to in (a) and (b) of this paragraph shall be carried out by a member of the judiciary of a rank higher than that of the judge under

investigation or whose work is being inspected, or by a member senior to him, if both are of the same rank. The investigation and inspection shall be carried out at the Judicial Inspection Department or at the court as may be determined by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

- (3) Inspection of members of the judiciary shall be carried out at least once and not more than twice a year.

**Article 56:**

The following ratings shall be used in evaluating the proficiency of a judge:

Distinguished, Above Average, Average, Below Average

**Article 57:**

- (1) The Judicial Inspection Department shall notify the judge concerned of the report and his proficiency rating as well as all that is kept in his file, and he may file with the Inspection Department his objection to the same within thirty days from the notification date, unless there is an acceptable excuse.

(2) The Judicial Inspection Department shall refer the objection along with a memorandum stating its views to the Supreme Judicial Council within fifteen days from the filing date.

The Council shall decide on the objection after perusal of the documents and shall notify the objecting petitioner, in writing, of the Council's decision. Said decision shall be deemed final.

## **Section Five**

### **Disciplining of Judges**

#### **Article 58:**

Without prejudice to the impartiality and independence of the judiciary and the right of the Supreme Judicial Council to supervise courts, judges and their work, the chief judge of each court shall have the right to supervise the judges of his court and notify them of all acts violating their duties or requirements of their positions after hearing their statements. The notification may be made verbally or in writing, and in the latter case, a copy of the notification shall be sent to the Supreme Judicial



Council. The judge may object to the notification- in writing- before the Council within fifteen days from the notification date. If the violation is repeated or continued, he shall be subjected to a disciplinary trial.

**Article 59:**

Disciplining of judges shall be the responsibility of a panel to be formed at the Supreme Judicial Council of three judges from among full-time Council members. Decisions of the said panel shall be taken by majority vote but shall not be final except with the approval of the Council.

**Article 60:**

The head of the Judicial Inspection Department or his designee shall file the disciplinary action before the Disciplinary Panel upon request by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council either on his own initiative or upon the suggestion of the chief judge of the court to which the judge belongs. Such request shall not be filed except in accordance with a criminal or administrative investigation carried out by a judge whose rank shall not be lower than an Appeals Judge, to be assigned by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

The initial pleading of the case shall include the violation and supporting evidence. The Panel shall issue a decision to summon the judge to appear before it.

The Disciplinary Panel may, with the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council, carry out the investigations it deems necessary and may assign any of its members to carry out such investigations.

**Article 61:**

If the Disciplinary Panel finds grounds to initiate trial proceedings for all or some of the violations, it shall summon the judge to appear at a suitable time. The writ of summons shall include a sufficient statement of the subject matter of the case and the evidence of the violation.

**Article 62:**

If the Disciplinary Panel decides on the initiation of trial proceedings, it may, upon the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council, order the suspension of the judge from performing his duties until the end of the trial. The Panel may at any time reconsider the suspension order.

**Article 63:**

The disciplinary action shall end upon the resignation of the judge. The disciplinary action shall have no effect on the criminal or civil suit arising from the incident itself.

**Article 64:**

The hearings of the Disciplinary Panel shall be confidential. The Disciplinary Panel shall render its judgment after it has heard the defense of the defendant judge, who may submit his defense in writing or empower a member of the judiciary to defend him. The Panel shall always have the right to summon him to appear in person. If he does not appear in person or empower somebody on his behalf, a judgment by default may be rendered after ascertaining that he was properly notified.

**Article 65:**

Judgment rendered in the disciplinary action shall include the grounds upon which it is based, and such grounds shall be stated upon pronouncing the judgment in a confidential session. The judgment shall not be subject to appeal.

**Article 66:**

The disciplinary penalties which may be imposed on the judge shall be reprimand and termination of service.

**Article 67:**

Execution of the penalty of termination of service shall be pursuant to a royal order and the penalty of reprimand shall be in accordance with a decision issued by the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

**Article 68:**

In cases where a judge is caught in a criminal act, the matter shall, upon the arrest and detention of the judge, be reported to the Supreme Judicial Council within twenty four hours from his arrest. The Council may decide whether the judge shall continue to be detained or released on or without bail. The judge may request that his statements be heard before the Council, upon bringing the case before it. The Council shall specify the term of detention in the decision ordering either detention or the continuation thereof. The aforementioned procedures shall be observed whenever the continuation of detention is deemed necessary after the expiration of the term fixed by the Council. Except in the foregoing cases, the judge

may not be arrested nor may investigation proceedings be instituted against him except with the permission of the Council. Detention of judges and execution of punishments restraining their freedom shall be implemented in separate places.

## **Section Six**

### **Termination of Service of Judges**

#### **Article 69:**

The service of a judge shall terminate for one of the following reasons:

- (a) Reaching seventy years of age.
- (b) Death.
- (c) Acceptance of his resignation.
- (d) Acceptance of his request to retire in accordance with the Civil Retirement Law.
- (e) Being unfit for the judiciary in accordance with Article 44 of this Law.
- (f) Inability to perform his duty after expiration of his sick leave or if it appears at any time that he is unable to perform his duty properly due to his sickness.

- (g) Obtaining below average grade in proficiency reports for three consecutive times.
- (h) Termination of his service for disciplinary reasons.

**Article 70:**

In cases other than death and retirement for having reached the statutory age, or, with respect to a trainee judge, for being proven unfit during the probation period, the service of a judge shall be terminated by royal order pursuant to a decision issued by the Supreme Judicial Council.

**Chapter Five**  
**Ministry of Justice**

**Article 71:**

- (1) Without prejudice to the provisions of this Law, the Ministry of Justice shall be entrusted with administrative and financial supervision of courts and notaries public.
- (2) The Ministry of Justice shall submit proposals or projects to promote the administration of justice.

(3) A research center shall be established at the Ministry of Justice with a sufficient number of specialists with a university degree at least to publish select judgments with the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council.

**Article 72:**

The Deputy Minister of Justice shall be selected from among practicing or former judges of the rank of Chief Judge of Court B or higher, or who has previously held such rank. He shall be appointed to "Grade Excellent".

**Chapter Six**

**Notaries Public**

**Section One**

**Notaries Public and their Jurisdiction**

**Article 73:**

The establishment of notaries public and determination of their jurisdiction and formation shall be pursuant to a decision by the Minister of Justice. The head of each office shall supervise the notaries public under his authority.

**Article 74:**

Notaries public shall have jurisdiction to authenticate contracts and record declarations other than endowments and wills. Some of such jurisdictions may be entrusted to others in accordance with regulations to be issued by the Minister of Justice upon the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council.

**Article 75:**

In localities with no notaries public, the function of the notary public shall be entrusted to the court of that locality. Said court shall have the jurisdictions and powers of the notary public within the court's venue jurisdiction.

**Section Two**

**Appointment and Inspection of Notaries Public**

**Article 76:**

To be appointed as a notary public, a candidate shall satisfy the requirements provided for in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) of Article 31 of this Law.

**Article 77:**



Regulations issued by agreement between the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Civil Service with regard to determination of qualifications required for various ranks of notaries public shall remain in effect. Said Ministers may amend such Regulations in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

**Article 78:**

Without prejudice to the provisions of this Law, notaries public shall be subject to all provisions applicable to civil service employees.

**Article 79:**

Notaries public shall be subject to judicial inspection in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

**Section Three**

**Power of Documents Issued by Notaries Public**

**Article 80:**

Documents issued by the notaries public under the powers provided for in Article 74 of this Law shall have dispositive power and shall be admitted as evidence in courts without additional proof. Such documents may not be contested except on grounds of being in violation of the requirements of *Sharia* or law or being forged.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Employees of Courts and Notaries Public**

#### **Article 81:**

Registerers, recorders, researchers, process servers, interpreters, experts, secretaries and the like shall be deemed assistants to the judiciary. The Minister of Justice, after agreement with the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council, shall issue the regulations stating the rules and procedures regulating their work.

#### **Article 82:**

Without prejudice to the provisions of the Civil Service Law relating to appointment conditions, persons to be appointed as assistants to the judiciary and employees of courts shall pass an examination, the procedures and conditions of which shall be determined pursuant to a decision to be issued

by the Minister of Justice after agreement with the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

**Article 83:**

The provisions of the Civil Service Law- when not inconsistent with the provisions of this Law - shall apply to court employees and notaries public. Employees of each court and notaries public shall be under the supervision of their administrative head, and all shall be subject to the supervision of the chief judge of the court or the head of the notaries public as the case may be.

**Chapter Eight**  
**General and Transitional Provisions**

**Article 84:**

All appointments and promotions in the judiciary shall be effected within the appropriations made in the budget and the provisions thereof.

**Article 85:**

This Law shall supersede the Law of the Judiciary issued by Royal Decree No. M/64 dated 14/07/1395 H.