

Law No 18 of 2004 Public Meetings and Demonstrations

(Section: Chapter One (1-10

Article 1

In implementing this Law, every meeting attended, or is expected to be attended, by more than 20 persons, or where no special invitation is required for attendance thereof, to be held at a private or public place other than public roads and parks for the discussion of one or more public issues, shall be deemed to be a public meeting

Article 2

:In implementing this Law, the following shall not be considered public meetings

Religious meetings held at places of worship in accordance with the rules in force at the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs .1

.Meetings organised or invited to by ministries and other governmental agencies and public corporations and institutions .2

Meetings convened by private juridical persons such as societies, private institutions, clubs and companies, for the discussion of matters within their competence according to their relevant organising legislations and attended exclusively by their members and affiliates .3

.Meetings and conferences held in accordance with custom, or entailed by social occasions and festivities .4

Notwithstanding, where discussions in such meetings go beyond their normal purposes, they shall be deemed public meetings under the provisions of this Law.

Article 3

No convening, organisation, invitation, announcement or coverage of news on any public meeting shall take place without obtaining a licence therefor under this Law.

Article 4

The licence for a public meeting shall be issued by the Director General for Security at the Ministry of Interior, based on a written application to be submitted thereto, signed by at least three persons involved in the meeting and specifying the time and place fixed for the convening of the meeting.

Where such an application is to be submitted by a juridical person, it shall be submitted by its legal representative.

In all cases the application shall be accompanied with a proof that the person in possession of the venue consents to the convening of the meeting in such a place.

Article 5

The application for licence shall be submitted at least seven days before the time fixed for the meeting, and the application shall be deemed rejected where the applicants do not receive an approval of the meeting three days before the fixed date for the meeting.

Persons whose application has been rejected may appeal to the Minister of Interior against the rejection decision within 24 hours. The Minister shall respond to the appeal within the following 24 hours, after which the appeal shall be deemed quashed, and the decision of the Minister on such appeal shall be final

Article 6

Where a public meeting relates to elections it shall not be convened, except during the period between inviting the electors to vote and the day preceding the elections

The General Security Directorate at the Ministry of Interior shall be notified of the meeting at least four days before the time fixed for the meeting and where the Directorate fails to object to the convening of the meeting within two days of its fixed date, it shall be deemed an approval to convene the meeting

Concerned persons may, in accordance to the provisions of the foregoing Article, appeal against the decision objecting to the convening of the meeting

Article 7

No person shall attend any public meeting while carrying an arm, regardless of such arm being licensed. The arms included in the Schedules attached to the aforesaid Law No 14 of 1999 shall be deemed arms in the implementation of this Law

Article 8

Public meetings shall not continue beyond midnight except by a special permission from the Minister of Interior or his designated representative

Article 9

The organisers of the meeting shall be responsible of its orderly conduct, not exceeding its purpose, not violating the tenets of religion, public order and public morals, and to prevent anything that defames the reputation of the State or other states. Whereupon any of the aforesaid take place, they shall conclude the meeting and they may seek the assistance of the police in so doing

Without prejudice to the responsibility of the organisers of the meeting for the aforesaid, they may establish a committee to implement the said functions under their responsibility

Article 10

The police may attend the public meeting for the purposes of keeping the security and public order. They may decide a suitable place which shall be away from that of the speaker, and may disperse the meeting upon demand by the organisers, or upon the occurrence of any of the items provided for in the foregoing Article, or where such items may occur should the meeting continue

The police shall not resort to the use of power for dispersing the public meeting except upon the approval of the Minister of Interior or his designated representative, and within such limits necessary for that purpose