

Algeria

The constitution provides for freedom of conscience and worship. The constitution declares Islam to be the state religion and prohibits state institutions from behaving in a manner incompatible with Islam. The law grants all individuals the right to practice their religion as long as they respect public order and regulations. Offending or insulting any religion is a criminal offense. Proselytizing of Muslims by non-Muslims is a crime.

Bahrain

The constitution declares Islam to be the official religion and sharia to be a principal source for legislation. It provides for freedom of conscience, the inviolability of places of worship, and freedom to perform religious rites. The constitution guarantees the right to express and publish opinions provided these do not infringe on the “fundamental beliefs of Islamic doctrine.” The law prohibits anti-Islamic publications and mandates imprisonment for “exposing the state’s official religion to offense and criticism.”

Egypt

The constitution describes freedom of belief as “absolute” and specifies Islam as the state religion. It also enshrines the principles of sharia as the primary source of legislation, which local lawyers stated creates potential legal ambiguities with regard to the freedom of belief guaranteed in the constitution. The constitution only provides adherents of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism the right to practice their religion freely and to build houses of worship.

Iran

The constitution defines the country as an Islamic republic, and specifies Twelver Ja’afari Shia Islam as the official state religion. It states all laws and regulations must be based on “Islamic criteria” and official interpretation of sharia. The constitution states citizens shall enjoy human, political, economic, and other rights, “in conformity with Islamic criteria.” The penal code specifies the death sentence for proselytizing and attempts by non-Muslims to convert Muslims, as well as for *moharebeh* (“enmity against

God”) and *sabb al-nabi* (“insulting the prophet”). According to the penal code, the application of the death penalty varies depending on the religion of both the perpetrator and the victim. The law prohibits Muslim citizens from changing or renouncing their religious beliefs.

Iraq

The constitution establishes Islam as the official religion and states no law may be enacted contradicting the “established provisions of Islam.” The constitution guarantees freedom of religious belief and practice for Muslims, Christians, Yezidis, and Sabeian-Mandeans, but not for followers of other religions or atheists. The law prohibits the practice of the Bahai Faith and the Wahhabi branch of Sunni Islam.

Jordan

The constitution declares Islam the religion of the state but safeguards “the free exercise of all forms of worship and religious rites” as long as these are consistent with public order and morality. The constitution stipulates there shall be no discrimination based on religion. The constitution and the law accord primacy to sharia, which includes a prohibition against Muslims from converting to another religion, although conversions of Muslims continued to occur.

Kuwait

The constitution declares Islam to be the religion of the state but states freedom of belief is “absolute.” It declares the state will protect the freedom to practice one’s religion, provided such practice does not conflict with established customs, public policy, or morals. Defamation of the Abrahamic faiths (Islam, Judaism, and Christianity), publication or broadcast of material the government deems offensive to religious groups, and practices the government deems inconsistent with Islamic law are prohibited by law.

Libya

The interim constitution states Islam is the state religion and sharia the principal source of legislation. It accords non-Muslims the freedom to practice their religion and bans discrimination based on religion. The

internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) remained in office, but it did not control the entire country.

Morocco

The constitution declares the country to be a Muslim state with full sovereignty and that Islam is the religion of the state. The constitution guarantees freedom of thought, expression, and assembly, and says that the state guarantees to everyone the freedom to “practice his religious affairs.” The constitution states the king is the protector of Islam. It prohibits political parties, parliamentarians, and constitutional amendments from infringing upon Islam. The criminal code prohibits undermining the faith or enticing a Muslim to convert to another religion.

Oman

The Basic Law declares Islam to be the state religion but prohibits discrimination based on religion and protects the right of individuals to practice religious rites as long as doing so does not “disrupt public order or contradict morals.” According to the law, it is a criminal offense to “defame” any faith. Proselytizing in public is illegal.

Saudi Arabia

According to the 1992 Basic Law of Governance, the country’s official religion is Islam and the constitution is the Quran and Sunna (traditions and practices based on the life of the Prophet Muhammad). The legal system is based on sharia as interpreted within the Hanbali School of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence. Freedom of religion is not provided under the law. The government does not allow the public practice of any non-Muslim religion.

Tunisia

The constitution declares the country’s religion to be Islam but also declares the country to be a “civil state.” The constitution designates the government as the “guardian of religion” and obligates the state to disseminate the values of “moderation and tolerance.” It prohibits the use of mosques and other houses of worship to advance political agendas or objectives, and guarantees freedom of belief, conscience, and exercise of religious practice.

United Arab Emirates

The constitution designates Islam as the official religion. It guarantees freedom of worship as long as it does not conflict with public policy or morals. It states all persons are equal before the law. The law prohibits blasphemy, proselytizing by non-Muslims, and conversion from Islam.

Western Sahara

The Kingdom of Morocco claims the territory of Western Sahara and administers the estimated 75 percent that it controls by the same constitution, laws, and structures as in internationally recognized Morocco, including laws that deal with religious freedom. According to the Moroccan constitution, Islam is the religion of the state, and the state guarantees freedom of thought, expression, and assembly. The constitution also says the state guarantees to everyone the freedom to “practice his religious affairs.” Moroccan law penalizes the use of enticements to convert a Muslim to another religion, prohibits criticism of Islam, and prohibits political parties from infringing upon Islam.

Yemen

The constitution declares Islam the state religion and sharia the source of all legislation. It provides for freedom of thought and expression “within the limits of the law,” but does not mention freedom of religion. The law prohibits denunciation of Islam, conversion from Islam to another religion, and proselytizing directed at Muslims.

Afghanistan

The constitution establishes Islam as the state religion but stipulates followers of religions other than Islam are free to exercise their faith within the limits of the law. Conversion from Islam to another religion is considered apostasy, which is punishable by death, imprisonment, or confiscation of property....

Bangladesh

The constitution designates Islam as the state religion but upholds the principle of secularism. It prohibits religious discrimination and provides for equality for all religions. The government provided guidance to imams throughout the country on the content of their sermons in its stated effort to prevent militancy and to monitor mosques for “provocative” messaging.

Maldives

The constitution designates Islam as the state religion, requires citizens to be Muslim, and requires public office holders, including the president, to be followers of Sunni Islam. The constitution provides for limitations on rights and freedoms “to protect and maintain the tenets of Islam.” The law states both the government and the people must protect religious unity. Propagation of any religion other than Islam is a criminal offense.

Pakistan

The constitution establishes Islam as the state religion and requires all provisions of the law to be consistent with Islam. The constitution also states, “subject to law, public order, and morality, every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice, and propagate his religion.” The courts continued to enforce blasphemy laws, whose punishment ranges from life in prison to the death sentence for a range of charges, including “defiling the Prophet Muhammad.”