

## SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

**Dates of Elections:** 9 and 10 November 1981

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament on the normal expiry of its term of office. Previous elections were held in August 1977.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The unicameral Parliament of Syria, the People's Council, consists of 195 Deputies elected for 4 years. According to the 1973 Constitution, half the Assembly members must be workers and peasants; these currently number 99.

### **Electoral System**

All Syrian citizens who are at least 18 years of age and registered as electors are entitled to vote unless they are insane or have been convicted of a serious crime. Voting is not compulsory.

Qualified electors of at least 25 years of age may be candidates for the People's Council. Civil servants and members of the armed forces must resign from their posts if elected as Deputies. As mentioned above, at least half of the Deputies must be workers and peasants, terms specifically defined in the election law. All parliamentarians are elected by simple majority vote. Each member is deemed to represent the whole population, and his mandate may not be restricted by any restrictions or conditions.

Except in cases defined by law, the elected member may take leave in order to join the Council. His post or work is reserved for him, the period of leave being regarded as active. Candidates run in an individual capacity even if they are members of a political party.

If a parliamentary seat becomes vacant for any reason, it is filled through a by-election within 90 days, provided the remaining period of the Council's term is not less than six months.

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

According to the Interior Ministry, 45 Front candidates were returned unopposed and a total of 1,558 candidates vied for the remaining 150 seats.

The elections resulted in a victory for the National Progressive Front, which captured all 195 People's Council seats. The *Baath* Arab Socialist Party of President of the Republic Hafez al-Assad won 60% of all seats. As opposed to the previous legislature, no independent candidates were successful.

President al-Assad appointed a new Cabinet on 3 December. The Prime Minister is Dr. Abdul-Rauf Kassem.

Statistics

1. *Distribution of Seats in the People's Council*

Political Group	Number of Seats
National Progressive Front . . . . .	195 (+ 36)
Independents. . . . . I . . . . .	— (— 36)
	195

2. *Distribution of Members of the People's Council  
according to Sex*

Men. . . . .	182
Women	13