

TUNISIA

Date of Elections: 2 November 1986

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Tunisia, the Chamber of Deputies, is composed of 125 members elected for 5 years*.

Electoral System

All citizens aged 20 years or more who have held Tunisian nationality for at least five years and who are in full possession of their civil and political rights are entitled to vote. Disqualified are persons convicted of crime; those convicted of offences which entail either an unsuspended sentence of imprisonment in excess of three months or a suspended sentence in excess of six months; those under guardianship; undischarged bankrupts; the insane; and active members of the armed forces.

The electoral registers are permanent. They are revised at the commune or sector level annually in early January. Citizens living abroad may also be registered. All disputes concerning the lists are resolved by a revision committee. Voting is not compulsory.

Candidates for Parliament must be qualified electors who are at least 28 years of age and born of a Tunisian father. Governors, magistrates and members of the police force cannot be elected. The exercise of public functions which are non-elective and remunerated out of funds from the State, public establishments or public collectivities are generally incompatible with the office of Deputy; this is also true for the office of president or director of a national enterprise and public establishment, as well as director or administrator of certain public enterprises. Also incompatible are offices which involve working for a foreign State or an international organization when remuneration is provided by these employers.

Candidatures must be submitted during the third or fourth week preceding the elections. Candidates may either run as independents or as members of a party list; within the same constituency, several lists may not bear the same title or belong to the same party or organization. Each list enumerates as many candidates as there are seats to be filled in the constituency. Candidates need make no monetary deposit.

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 19.

Tunisia is divided into 23 electoral constituencies. In each, four to seven candidates, who appear on lists, are elected by simple majority. The elector casts as many votes as there are seats to be filled and, in so doing, may cross out names or split his vote among candidates of different lists. Should only one list be presented, the candidates on it who have obtained the greatest number of votes are declared elected. In case of vote splitting, the seats to be filled are allotted to the candidates of the different lists in the order of votes obtained.

A parliamentary seat which falls vacant between general elections is filled through a by-election held within three months. No by-elections are, however, held within the last 12 months of the expiry of the legislature's term.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The election date was set on 14 August 1986, and the campaign officially began on 20 October.

The Patriotic Union fielded candidates in all 23 constituencies for the totality of the parliamentary seats. Its lists were made up of candidates designated by the ruling Socialist Destourian Party (*Parti socialiste destourien* - PSD) and representatives of four national organizations - the employers', farmers' and women's unions, as well as the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT). The PSD had been founded in 1934 by President of the Republic Habib Bourguiba. All opposition parties boycotted the poll due to alleged electoral irregularities. A total of 15 independent candidates on two different lists were also in the running.

On polling day, the PSD, allied with the national organizations under the Patriotic Union banner, won all 125 seats by strong margins. The independents' lists were officially maintained although they had declared their withdrawal on the eve of the polls.

President Bourguiba returned his Government on 5 November. The Prime Minister is Mr. Rachid Sfar.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies

Number of registered electors.	2,622,482	
Voters.	2,175,093	(82.94%)
Void or blank ballot papers.10,036	
Valid votes.	2,165,057	

<u>Political Group</u>	<u>g g g</u>
Socialist Destourian Party (PSD).125

*2. Distribution of Deputies according to
Professional Category*

Executives.	54
Teachers.	27
Civil servants.	15
Lawyers.	12
Businessmen.	7
Doctors and Pharmacists.	6
Farmers.	4
	125

3. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex

Men	118
Women.	7
	125

4. Distribution of Deputies according to Age Group

28-39 years.	21
40-59 »	82
60 and over.	22
	125