

## Afghanistan: Government Overview

The 2004 constitution of Afghanistan established a strong presidential form of government, with important powers reserved for the national assembly. The constitution defines Afghanistan as a unitary Islamic republic, in which no law can be contrary to Islam and the values of the constitution. Following disputed results during the 2014 presidential elections the two leading candidates agreed to create the temporary position of a chief executive, with a role similar to that of a prime minister, until the constitution could be amended to establish a prime ministerial system of governance.

The predominant bodies provided for in the constitution are the president, assisted by two vice presidents; the cabinet; the national assembly; the Loya Jirga; and the judiciary. Afghanistan is made up of 34 administrative provinces, each led by an elected provincial council. The justice system is a combination of traditional and formal mechanisms, the formal justice system having been weakened by years of wars and civil unrest. During that time, traditional mechanisms served as the main judicial authority and in most parts of the country was the only one. The nine members of the supreme court, the Stera Mahkama, are appointed by the president for 10-year terms. The president is commander in chief of the armed forces of Afghanistan. However, armed factions continue to operate in many parts of the country.

### Citation Information

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