

Title: Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (B.E. 2560 / 2017)

Summary:

The 2017 Constitution of Thailand, promulgated by King Maha Vajiralongkorn, establishes the country as a democratic constitutional monarchy, reaffirming the monarchy as the symbolic head of state and embedding popular sovereignty within a parliamentary system. It was adopted in the wake of political instability and is designed to promote ethical governance, prevent corruption, and ensure national unity. The Constitution emphasizes checks and balances, creating a framework in which the King, the National Assembly (Parliament), the Council of Ministers, and the judiciary work together to exercise sovereign power.

It codifies a broad range of fundamental rights and freedoms under Chapter III, including liberty of person, religion, expression, privacy, education, and political participation. Rights are protected unless explicitly restricted by law for public order, national security, or public morals. Citizens also have duties—such as defending the country, voting, and paying taxes—alongside these rights. The Constitution includes progressive provisions on gender equality, anti-discrimination, public health, education, and consumer protection. It requires the state to provide universal healthcare, free quality education, and uphold rights of marginalized populations.

A notable feature is the introduction of strict mechanisms to combat corruption and unethical governance. The Constitution strengthens independent institutions—such as the Election Commission, National Anti-Corruption Commission, and Constitutional Court—to ensure transparency and enforce accountability. The judicial system is mandated to be independent, while the King retains ceremonial roles, including military leadership, appointments, and royal assent to laws. The document also outlines comprehensive frameworks for environmental protection, resource management, and media freedom, while affirming state obligations to support religious and cultural traditions.

On governance, the Constitution provides detailed structures for the bicameral legislature—comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate—and mandates fair electoral processes. Members of Parliament are subject to ethical conduct rules and can be removed through legal mechanisms. The document also formalizes national strategy directives and development goals, aligning state duties with long-term policy planning. Legal reforms are encouraged, requiring broad public consultation and periodic reviews for relevance and impact.

In sum, Thailand's 2017 Constitution blends traditional monarchy with democratic principles, aiming to build a stable, transparent, and accountable government, while safeguarding civil liberties and advancing public welfare through participatory and rule-based governance.