

Jam'iyyat al-Wifaq al-Watani al-Islami (National Islamic Reconciliation Society), Bahrain, 2010, "Translated for the Islamic Political Party Platform Project, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, <http://kurzman.unc.edu/islamic-parties>. [6/19/13]."

Definition of Al-Wefaq? Who are we?

An Introduction

- 1) The Political Track/Focus
- 2) The Economic Track/Focus
- 3) The Legal Track/Focus
- 4) The Societal and Social Service Track/Focus
- 5) The Municipal and Environmental Track/Focus
- 6) Relations with the Other
- 7) Urgent Files
- 8) Conclusion

The General Program

Who are we? An introduction to Al-Wefaq's Islamic Vision and its Intellectual Authority.

An introduction to its general program:

- 1) The political track/focus:
 - Assesses the political situation in the Kingdom, pinpoints (diagnoses) sources of imbalances, and provides a vision for work.
 - Trading Authority
 - Constitutional File
 - Judiciary Independence
- 2) The Economic Track/Focus
 - Assess the economic situation in the Kingdom, pinpoints (diagnoses) of imbalances, provides a general solution, and manages the private sector.
 - General budget
 - Equal Distribution of Wealth
 - Achieves sustainable development and the development of national wealth.
 - Achieves an economic welfare state
 - Social Security Program
 - Privatization
 - Payoff financial and administrative corruption
- 3) The Societal and Service Track/Focus

- Assess the general social situation (reality), pinpoint areas of imbalances/injustices, promote national unity and equal opportunities.
 - Deal with the problem of poverty and promote social equality.
 - Improve education and build a knowledgeable society.
 - Improve health care.
 - Improve media, culture, and the arts.
 - Women and Children
 - Youth and Students
- 4) The Municipal (Domestic) and Environmental Track/Focus
- Assess the domestic situation in the Kingdom and pinpoint areas of imbalances and provide a solution.

Relations with the Other

- Our vision and requirements for our relationship with the other.
- Interior Affairs
 - Our vision for Bahraini society
 - Our relationship with civilian institutions/
 - Our relationship with political power
 - Our relationship with authority
- External Affairs
 - Our Gulf relations
 - Our Arab and Islamic relations
 - Our relationship with the international community. “International organizations”.

5) Urgent Files

Our vision for urgent files.

- Naturalization outside the framework of the law.
- Provision of affordable housing for the (Bahraini) citizen.
- Discrimination among citizens based on their tribe, creed, or race.
- Preserving public wealth and fighting against financial and administrative corruption.
- Unemployment and low wages.
- Determining the public ownership of land and sea.

Conclusion

In the Name of God Most Merciful Most Gracious

The General Program of Al-Wefaq

It is usual for parties engaged in democratic experiences (experiments) to write about the vision and mission statements of its general program and about its various programs dealing with causes that find themselves within the realm of their work and to undertake the implementation of said program in the event that they achieve political power in the process of 'sharing power'. *(There is no direct English translation for the term they use, but they are advocating for power to be shared and for political leaders to be changed often. Anti-oligarchy)*

In a democracy, it is customary for political parties to detail in writing their general programs and agendas, their vision, political views, some programs dealing with different crucial issues that these parties feel are important and promise to execute such programs if they achieve power.

Similar to this situation, some Arab parties have moved forward with writing their general agenda with the fundamental difference in that all the Arab parties, except for the governing party in each country, are denied access to the executive branch. Due to this, its agenda usually expresses a theoretical vision that cannot be practiced in reality and achieved because of the lack of circulation of power.

Bahrain is among a group of countries where power is not dispersed and shared equally among various branches of government. Political parties in our country suffer from this much in the same manner that many other Arab countries suffer.

In this regard, despite all these obstacles, we at Al-Wefaq present our program to the Bahraini citizen in the hopes of achieving the following objectives:

- 1) Increase political knowledge and awareness. We encourage increasing dialogues on the pertinent topic of general political perceptions and visions and we allow for a broad range of participation in this program. This allows for us to focus on matters of political importance among all our members, which have positive educational and intellectual benefits.
- 2) To make Al-Wefaq known to its members, both here and abroad, for its various visions, goals and programs.
- 3) Ensure that any proposal that is written takes into consideration the practicality of its implementation. As long as the party in question does not have access to executive power-making tools, then any given proposal should be able to work with the decision-making tools at hand in Bahrain (limited to the parameters that were established by the 2002 Constitutional reforms).

We say this only to make the Bahraini citizen more aware of our political reality and the limits through which we must implement our programs and to avoid having goals that are unrealistic.

4. We formulate our program based on the notion that we are a political power that participates in the country's legislative authority, as it was established by the parameters of the 1973 constitution and the reforms of 2002, to the degree which there is effective legislation among the elected council and other select regulatory powers.

This notion is an influential factor in any program written in a country such as Bahrain or any other counter where there is a lack of circulation of power. In this regard, our program aims to participate in the legislative process.

Assessment of the Current Political Situation:

Political life is like a river. As long as the water continues to circulate, then it remains pure and people and land can benefit from it. If it stops circulating/flowing then harmful parasites will infest its stagnant waters. Our "political river" flowed/circulated between the years of 1971 to 1975 and it became stagnant with the dissolution of the national parliament and the suspension of constitutional reforms. Thus, political "filth" (they use the world mold) became apparent in our lives. It is evident that our government had a 'layer of corruption' that hid behind the crutch of 'national security' until God ordained us to move/circulate this stagnant water with the policy reform known as the 'National Action Charter' in an attempt to revert to constitutional rule (Constitutional Monarchy). There were more disagreements on how to change the constitution than actual changes. Thus, political stagnation (continuing with the river metaphor) returned with a vengeance despite municipal and parliamentary elections.

These circumstances led to other problems and political crises that reflect the Kingdom's affairs. There is no semblance of democracy in resolving these issues that Bahrainis suffer from. At the forefront of these issues are low incomes and unemployment, delayed housing services, a decline in the quality of medical treatment and education, and an increase in economic and administrative corruption.

To make matters worse, political 'naturalization' increased burdened the country's budget and deprived the people of adequate social security and a stable economy.

Democracy is successful in that it allows power to be circulated in the country through the 'ballot box' (elections). This is the cure for our political condition.

We believe that the problem can be solved if we find a strategy that we can all agree on so that we can achieve a true constitutional monarchy. Circulation of executive power is essential for this to happen. We must trade and share power.

Our General Political Mission:

This program follows a general political vision based on Islamic governance in the practice of “Ummah” (national) politics (concept of a nation) in that the nation chooses its leaders on the basis of shura. It is also based on the concept of a modern democracy.

We want to find a legal and peaceful way to follow in the example of other prominent constitutional monarchies such as Britain, Sweden, Norway, Spain Japan and others, so that the monarchy can ‘inherit’ the country generation after generation, while at the same time circulating executive power through parliamentary elections.

Based on this vision, we will work on starting a dialogue that will enable us to create a realistic timeline for the implementation of a constitutional monarchy and we will do so in stages while also taking into consideration Bahrain’s domestic and regional circumstances. We aim to meet the needs of the people while leading them towards democracy and the distribution of political power.

To achieve the following Objectives:

Our Political Vision:

Our Islamic Vision:

The Bahraini people are ninety-nine percent majority Muslim and actively practice the values and culture of Islam in their quotidian lives.

They are composed of two respectable sects.

Based on these facts: Al-Wefaq will carry out all its programs through:

- 1) Establishing a moderate and tolerant Islamic character in the country and fight against all forms of religious absence in people’s lives. Armed with God Almighty’s saying: Invite people to the path of God using wisdom and good sermons and argue with them in a way that is beneficial. And also: “If you see a group of people that do not agree on religion then warn them against this disagreement”. And Also: “There shall be no hate based on religion for truth is distinguishable from error.”

We maintain that it is the citizen and foreigner’s right to have freedom of religion and belief.

- 2) A semblance of religious tolerance and respect among all religions and sects and solidifying this through accepting that this is the right of every human being when it concerns spiritual belief and practice.
- 3) Al-Wefaq will attempt to establish laws that ensure:

- a. That there will be educational curriculums that appeals to both respectable sects.
 - b. That both religious communities will have equal visibility in the media.
 - c. Both religious communities will have equal access to services from the ministry of Islamic Affairs in the establishment of religious institutions, mosques, galleries (areas of communion), and funeral spaces and cemeteries.
- 4) Establishing that every citizen has equal rights and prohibiting any action that discriminates amounts people on the basis of religion or sectarian affiliations.
 - 5) Ensuring personal freedoms guaranteed by Islam and the Constitution.
 - 6) To encourage family tourism and combat the downfall of tourism and anything that prevents the Bahraini from becoming fully acquainted with Islamic customs and culture and that leads to the alienation of the Bahraini community.

The Political Focus/Track

The Constitutional File:

Al-Wefaq will work towards creating a new constitution that is agreed upon by all Bahrainis/ considering the following determining factors:

- 1) That the lack of a progressive constitution can be attributed to the 1973 constitution. One must follow the example of the world's most prominent and long lasting constitutional monarchies.
- 2) One must achieve a realistic separation between the executive branches.
- 3) Limit legislative power to an elected council.
- 4) Regulate a peaceful transfer of authority in light of political pluralism.
- 5) (In reference to the above statements) The transfer of power must be done in a democratic manner that is agreed upon by the general public or by the amendments established by parliament /approved by the king or any other acceptable method.

Al-Wefaq will also work towards creating a new constitution and establishing a new/ the next parliament in order to pressure decision-makers in bringing about constitutional amendments (based on the last four years).

2) Political Rights file:

Al-Wefaq will work on achieving the following goals:

- 1) Giving every citizen a political voice by changing the law pertaining to elections and electoral blocs.
- 2) Abolishing any project based on discriminating on or distinguishing among citizens based on religion and/or creed- especially in government jobs.
- 3) Work on giving the people more opportunities to participate in the political process / creating more than one party/ represent minorities and oppositional parties/ change the framework of ministries.

3) Independence of the Judiciary:

In order for security to prevail and for tranquility to settle in everyone's hearts; there must be a "side" that every human being can turn to in the event that they experience injustice, even if the source of this injustice is the state or an institution of great political and financial power.

This will be achieved through a Judiciary that does not discriminate against anyone in both the transition phase and once fully established.

The Economic Focus/Track

Assessing the Economic Situation in the Kingdom

2) Economy

1) Just distribution of national wealth:

Al-Wefaq's economic vision is based on the belief that it is necessary to distribute national wealth fairly among the people and it is also based on:

- 1) to increase spending from the general budget on the ministries dealing with infrastructure and roads, housing, education, health, water, electricity, in order to improve the quality of services and insure economic well-being for all citizens.
- 2) To render favoritism based on creed or religion a national crime when employing people in the government and to ensure that an employee will be assessed based on their qualifications for the job.
- 3) Build a network of protection from laws and regulations for the disadvantaged classes in society based on the following:
 - Draft a law that determines the global poverty line based on our national currency (or low income) while also taking into account inflation rates.
 - Provide social security to families that live below this poverty line.
 - Pass a law to protect against unemployment.
 - Authorize the Social Security Act for the following groups: the handicapped and the old in age.
 - Total or partial exemption for poor individuals or families of fees that the state imposes for the provision of certain services.

2) Protection of national wealth and fighting against corruption:

Al-Wefaq works to protect national wealth from being lost or wasted due to the corruption that is currently widespread among numerous ministries and government entities/structures, and works towards subjecting all of these governmental structures, including the Economic Development Board, to the regulations set forth by the Parliament and does this through:

- Including financial supervision as a parliamentary responsibility in the upcoming constitutional changes.
- Detailed and precise documentation of the Queen's financial resources and a precise account of how it was spent.
- Emphasis on articles pertaining to stealing public wealth in the penal code.
- Questioning all ministers suspected of financial corruption and removing trust in them.
- By insisting that all stolen finances be returned and that all accounts of corruption be punishable by law.
- Implementing a financial disclosure law for all ministers and high government officials. This will be led by members of parliament, the Shura and municipal leaders
- Drafting a law that determines public ownership of land, coasts, and seas and determining which authorities are qualified to deal with this.
- To reclaim coasts, lands, and seas that have been obtained illegally and incorporate them into the public domain.

3. Development of National Wealth:

The kingdom is in need of adopting clear strategic policies in assessing our economic options. Al-Wefaq believes that we must strive to:

- 1) Create a suitable base to encourage and stimulate domestic capital and investment in Bahrain and to avoid emigrating abroad. Thus, we need:
 - Achieve competition in the market and abolish political influence on economic life and create healthy and legal economic competition focusing on investment.
 - Forbid ministers and high government officials from financial dealings with the state.
 - Provide necessary land for commercial and industrial projects.
 - Provide the necessary energy (electricity, gas, oil) for factories and urban development.
 - Encourage small investors and merchants/traders by providing them with the necessary loans and the protection they need.

This is achieved by increasing the budget through the incorporation of small projects in the general budget.

- 2) Encourage foreign investment in various aspects of the economy while focusing on national interests.

4. Protecting the Citizen:

Bahrain's size does not exceed 720 square kilometers and over the past four years the price of land has increased to an unbelievable degree and for various reasons. Among these reasons was the decision to give land in different areas of the country to foreigners. In order to protect the citizen, Al-Wefaq will seek to:

- Restrict foreign ownership of land and property in certain areas.
- Place conditions on foreigners with respect to buying and selling land such as prohibiting the sale of any land after a certain number of years (for example four years) after the date of purchase.

5. Privatization:

Al-Wefaq views privatization as a strategic option of Bahrain as this is also the case with many other countries in our region. This was demonstrated in the report issued by the

office of financial regulation in 2004, which examined the spread of financial and administrative corruption in various institutions. This makes privatization an ideal option that will help protect the citizens who are losing their jobs because of corruption.

6. Achieving an economic welfare state:

Through its work with the parliament, Al-Wefaq aims to move towards the establishment of an economic welfare state through the following:

- Access to soft loans from the government.
- Paying low rent for those living in dwellings belonging to the public sector.
- Impose small fees for basic services such as phone lines, electricity and water, and higher education.

The Legal Track/Focus:

Assessing the legal situation in the kingdom:

Al-Wefaq believes in the rights and freedoms granted by Islam and in the international conventions that govern these rights so long as they are not in opposition with Islam, and we urge the state to sign the international declaration of human rights and the international declaration of economic rights as soon as possible. We shall adopt laws based on the content of these declarations and the declarations that Bahrain has signed such as the International Declaration of Human rights, and the international convention against torture, and the protection of children and others.

Al-Wefaq places particular importance on the freedom of speech and in particular:

- 1) The Freedom of the Press and supports reforms on the regulations of the press on the country.
- 2) Al-Wefaq seeks freedom for the local television and broadcast industry and opening it to the private sector, according standardized guidelines and conditions.
- 3) Al-Wefaq supports (peaceful) freedom of expression on all political and social topics in light of legal frameworks and drafting a law that will achieve:
 - a. Guaranteeing freedom of expression for various political and social powers.
 - b. Maintenance of the economy and commerce.
 - c. Maintaining public security for the Queen.
- 4) Refuses new repressive acts such as the Terrorism Law and the National Safety act or other laws of this nature that foster the image that they are necessary for security.

- 5) Al-Wefaq is working on 'purifying' existing repressive laws that do not allow freedoms. At the forefront of these laws is the need to revise Judicial procedure and the penal code. Al-Wefaq is working to find faire and acceptable solutions for the following issues/cases:
 - i. Issue/Case of martyrs
 - ii. Issue/Case of victims of torture
 - iii. Issue/Case of those returning from exile
 - iv. Issue/Case of those born in Bahrain but are deprived of citizenship.

- 6) Al-Wefaq adopts amendments to the Nationality Law so that it can provide for:
 - a. Explicitly and clearly prevent dual citizenship.
 - b. Cancel the exception of granting citizenship and restrict this limitation in legal documents.
 - c. The need to publish the name of those granted citizenship once they are naturalized.
 - d. Withdrawing citizenship from all those who acquire a citizenship outside the framework of the law.
 - e. Granting children the right to their mother's citizenship in the instance that they are unable to acquire their father's citizenship, and if they are able to enjoy the benefits of their father's citizenship, then the children of a Bahraini mother will possess permanent residence in Bahrain but without the right to citizenship.

The Legal Track of Our General Program:

Al-Wefaq believes in individual rights, freedom of speech, and all international laws that govern such rights as long as they are in agreement with Islamic Sharia. This track of the general program from the period of 2006 to 2008 emphasizes these notions of individual rights and considers them to be essential basic rights as given by the constitution and should not be altered or denied to individuals except in cases of extremity. This section represents the legal track of the general program. This is the outline and a detailed plan of action will be presented in three months detailing the following points:

1. Implementing the principals of human rights in the country according to the constitution and guaranteeing individual rights and legal representation at all times and in all places in the kingdom and emphasizes the fact that these rights are part of establishing a political system based on equality and justice guaranteeing that political ambitions are rights for every individual in the country despite their religious or ethnic or affiliation.

2. Emphasizing and ensuring basic human rights for individuals and political freedom for every individual and making depriving individuals from these rights illegal.
3. Linking political partnership and emphasizing individual rights in order to guarantee a prosperous life for all individuals.
4. Al-Wefaq will defend all individuals who are deprived from their legal and political rights or those who are subjected to injustice through peaceful and legal means.
5. Expediting the implementation of these laws with the hopes that they will be on par with international standards and ensuring that the groups or individuals that compose this system are independent from the government.
6. Respecting political opposition and guaranteeing their right of speech according to international standards.
7. The government has to accept independent transparent reports that are done in evaluation of the different branches of government.
8. Citizens should have the right to elect their leaders in all elected offices since this is a basic human right.
9. All local laws should be consistent with international human rights conventions and laws signed by Bahrain; including banning torture, protection of children and others, and we urge Bahrain to join other international bodies that enforce similar laws such as the international institute for political and civil rights and the international institute for economic, social, and cultural rights, and the Rome Convention on the International Criminal Court.
10. Revaluating laws that pertain to Freedom of Speech and the Freedom the Press and under this guaranteeing the rights of individual political parties to issue their own political newspapers, radio stations, television stations and websites.
11. Guaranteeing basic women's rights according to Sharia and encouraging their participation in daily life and practices and ensuring that all rights for women and families are not compromised.
12. Emphasizing that the right to meet and discuss and express political opposition is a basic right guaranteed by all international conventions and should not be banned for any reason or excuse and guaranteeing the right to political expression of thought for all political and social groups and working towards the development of laws:

- Guaranteeing freedom of speech for all political parties and social groups.
- Protecting all national resources and the national economy.
- Protecting general security in the Kingdom.
-

13. Reconsidering the different repressive laws that restrict freedom of speech that were introduced during the state security period and before enabling the legislative branch. Removing sections that are restrictive from laws dealing with freedom of speech such as laws of political parties and civil societies and their political rights.

14. Reject the issuance of new repressive laws such as the Terrorism Act and National Security Laws and others, and emphasize that existing laws are capable of achieving security if they were implemented by law enforcement authorities that are familiar with and sensitive to human rights issues.

15. Pressure to develop and improve the performance of law enforcement authorities in dealing with protestors and public gatherings according to acceptable international principles and ensuring that their employees or members are well aware of freedom of speech and basic human rights.

16. Find just and acceptable solutions to the issue of martyrs (in this case I believe what they meant are people who were killed during riots or demonstrations demanding social justice and equal political and social rights)

17. Cancellation of Legislative decree 56 for 2002, continue efforts to achieve national reconciliation and to make reparation for damage caused to victims of torture, empowering them and provide them with rehabilitation, treatment and fair compensation and bring those who were responsible for their suffering to justice.

18. Resolve the issue of National citizenship for those "Nationals" who were born previously in Bahrain or who came back to Bahrain from Exile.

19. Amend the Naturalization Law to include the following:

- Prevent Dual Citizenship in a clear and implicit law
- Cancel the exception law to grant citizenship and leave this to the legal system to be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- Publish the Names of People granted citizenship once they become naturalized citizens.
- Withdrawal of National Citizenship from individuals that were granted such right not according to national legal laws.
- Give citizenship to children from Bahraini mothers if they don't have the nationality of their fathers, and if they have the nationality of their fathers give them permanent residency status without citizenship.

20. Reform the Judicial System so it can have full independence and transparency

21. Launch the freedom to form political parties, trade unions, professional organizations and the formation of non-governmental human right organizations.

22. Empowering political, trade union and basic human right actives and protect them from torture and harassment, and ensure that their arrest is not politically motivated and restrain enforcement authorities from the harassment and torture of activities so they can perform their activist roles freely and without any pressure from the government. Defend those who lost their jobs for their political views and force the government to employ them again.

23. Elimination of all forms of discrimination that exist in official institutions, practices and policies that affect broad segments of the Bahraini Society such as ethnic or religious discrimination, discrimination in public employment, and pressure the government to implement all United Nation Recommendation for the elimination of all forms of discrimination, open employment in the arm and security forces for all ethnic and religious groups in Bahrain to insure the homogenous nature of such forces. Ensure that employment in high ranking governmental position is based on qualification and not otherwise, and stop all formal and non-formal governmental practices from preventing Shiites from living in certain parts of the country, and adopt a new law that defines and criminalize discrimination based on religious or ethnic background.

24. Renounce the systematic marginalization of the Shia in the political process, stop the manipulation of the demographic makeup through the organized and systematic naturalization of foreigners.

25. Call for increased political and administrative openness and transparency and strengthen oversight, accountability principles and the wise use of public money.

26. Removal of blacklists that contain individuals who are banned from travel and from entering Arab and Gulf States.

27. Dissemination and Consolidation of the principles of freedom, democracy and human rights, and the preparation of specialized studies and research in the field of human rights and the organization of regular meetings, seminars and workshops for consolidating and strengthening political, legal and moral rights and issues that insure the implementation of the objectives of this organization. Preparation of training plans that ensure refined and qualified human right cadres that are capable of working with all sectors of society with particular attention to youth

28. Cooperation with similar Bahraini, regional and international centers and organizations in order to strengthen and ensure basic human rights.

The Societal and Social Service Track

Assessing the social situation/condition:

The people of Bahrain are unique due to the geography of the peninsula, and for the country's cultural and mercantile history, and for their moderation and their ability to coexist. However, official policies began to historically distinguish among the different members of society based on their sectarian and tribal affiliations, and this has caused society a great deal of abuse and caused social divisions among the people, this in addition to economic and political corruption caused a great deal of greed in the political system and led to the disappearance of the middle class and led to an increase of poverty in every sect, race, and tribe. There are a small number of wealthy people and a 'crushed' poor majority (with %40 of inhabitants living under the poverty line).

This reality does not measure Bahrain and its people, for we had the intention of embarking on true and serious political and economic reforms, for our social condition will improve in many ways and will do so quickly. We are confident that consecrating citizenship is a fundamental criterion in dealings between people and the establishment of a powerful and strong-willed sense of national unity and that fair distribution of the national wealth among people can help a large portion of the problem of poverty, and that a judicious distribution of the general budget and increasing spending on the lower class can help improve the overall quality of social, housing, and medical services, and improve the quality of education in our country.

1. Address poverty
2. Achieve social justice
3. Development of education and a knowledge-based society
4. Improving media, culture and the arts.
5. Women and children
6. Youth and Students

The Municipal and Environmental Focus/Track

Assessing the municipal situation in the Kingdom and pinpointing weaknesses and providing a vision for a solution.

Assessment of the municipal situation:

After the 2002 elections, the people realized that there is a severe neglect of services in the kingdom.

Relations with the Other:

Here at Al-Wefaq, we utilize the saying of Imam Ali: "People are of two kinds: either he is your brother in religion, or equivalent to you in creation". We consider everyone in our country as friends or partners in our nation, and we look at people from the outside as friends first and foremost and we work on improving the relationship based on the following philosophy: "Work together in righteousness and piety and do not help one another in sin and aggression". We attach great importance to strengthening and

improving the relationship with different political parties and power and we also attach great importance to consolidating relationships in surrounding Arab, Islamic and Gulf countries.

We also look to the outside world, nations, and governments, in consideration of the following (Quranic) saying: “We made you into different nations and tribes so that you may come to know one another” and “God does not forbid you from dealing with those who fight with you on the basis of religion with justice and kindness”. For we strengthen our relations with those who we are not accustomed to and we resist those who approach us with aggression by working actively to deter that aggression, for if justice and equity prevail then we can work with him on improving good and otherwise we will keep debating with him until he changes his view/opinion.

The Relations Focus:

Al-Wefaq desires to build pure and positive relations with all political forces with the goal of bringing about fruitful cooperation in building the nation and solving national problems (problems of the civilians) without having to back down from any just cause from any of the causes concerning the people and the nation.

Relationship with political forces:

Al-Wefaq seeks to build a positive and strong relation with any political force that undertakes/adopts the causes of the people and the nation instead of the narrow interests of factions, and form a national consensus on the national program as a springboard for electoral blocs and alliances in the Chamber of Deputies (Council of Representatives) and the municipal council. We open our hearts and arms to (we welcome with open minds and arms to) all political forces that are dedicated to improving the common good for all people in the Kingdom, and we support coalitions of four-party alliances and work to support them in all possible ways.

Relationship with the institutions of civil society:

Al-Wefaq seeks to increase the role of civil society in the management of public affairs through various civil societies and organizations and seeks to advance the implementation of modern laws that meets the needs of these institutions and facilitate their work, and looks forward to further reconciliations and joint efforts between us and all of these institutions.

Arab, Islamic and Gulf Relations:

Al-Wefaq considers the Gulf Cooperation Council System to be a positive development in the creation of a common and united Gulf market. This economic union necessitates the creation of several projects at the forefront of common Gulf currency, and the

unification of custom tariffs, and more importantly to overcome the movement of capital and Gulf Labor and consider it to be national labor.

Al Wefaq considers the Arab League to be the home of Arabs and the prime Arab institution which is indispensable to us and that it is in need of a plethora of administrative and institutional reforms so that it may be considered an economic and political institution that will be capable of bringing about true and quick changes on the Arab and International stages, and we urge the implementation of reforms that were agreed upon in the Tunis Summit and advocate for the spread of democracy and freedoms in the Arab World.

Al-Wefaq adopts the notion of a Gulf Parliament and Arab Parliament, that will bring about political reforms in stages, and for these institutions to be modeled after the European Union.

Al-Wefaq also adopted the role of a global Islamic organization and the decisions that were agreed upon in the 2005 Mecca conference.

At this moment in time, Al-Wefaq's agenda pays special attention to ending the presence of multinational forces in Iraq and to limiting their existence to a specific amount of time, and to achieving reconciliation between these forces and the elected Iraqi government.

Al-Wefaq sympathizes with the struggle of the oppressed Palestinian people and advocates for justice in this humanitarian issue until all rights of this resistant nation are returned/retrieved.

External Affairs:

Al-Wefaq's views on external affairs are based on our affiliations with the Kingdom of Bahrain for our vision and our policies are centered around causes that focus on the struggles of our people and alleviating them only. We seek to foster good relations with foreign countries so long as they do not attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of our country.

We look positively to organizations working in the domain of human rights and democracy and organizations that provide humanitarian aid. We look forward to working with these institutions so long as it does not conflict with the Islamic faith and its commandments.

Al-Wefaq approaches our relations with other Arab countries with complete friendliness and cooperation so long as they do not interfere with the affairs of our country and we oppose any aggressive enemy to any of these countries and our Arab and Muslim community, and we reject the presence of foreign forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and we ask for a timeline for the withdrawal of forces from these countries. We also support the rights of the people of Chechnya and Kashmir in their struggles for independence, and we stand with the Palestinian people in their struggle for human rights and assert that they have a right to a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Urgent files

These are files that require immediate attention because they pose detrimental consequences to our people and the nation and prevent us from achieving any true national reconciliation and prevent us from building a modern homeland.

Leaving these urgent files without proper treatment or consideration will lead Bahrain into a state of chaos and violence for they threaten our economic, social, and political stabilities and keep us from achieving a sense of security.

1. Naturalization outside the Framework of the Law.
2. Discriminating against people based on religion, creed or tribal affiliation.

Housing File:

Housing is among the most important priorities after security and nourishment, for there is no security without shelter. Al Wefaq considers the question of housing to be the most important of issues and believe that we can solve the problem of the provision of housing and land for every citizen through:

1. Issuing legislation that defines the public ownership of land, seas, and coasts.
2. Working to recover all land that was illegally obtained outside the framework of the law.
3. Doubling the budget allocated to the Ministry of housing instead of placing the majority of funds in the Ministry of Defense and to transfer 51 million dinars from the Department of defense to the Department of housing as was the case in 2005.
4. Control population growth by forbidding naturalization outside the framework of the law and encourage people to reduce reproduction.
5. Make investment in desert areas payable in the provision of housing services provided to citizens.
6. Involving the private sector in collaboration with the ministry in solving the housing crisis.
7. Encouraging a culture of vertical housing (apartments) among the population.
8. Advancing a bill that pays rent for low-income workers based on strict and specific parameters and places a cap on rent rates.

Unemployment and Low Wages File:

Al-Wefaq considers this file to be of utmost importance and a top priority for the first session/second meeting of the Chamber of Deputies in:

1. Expediting the implementation of the social security act against unemployment.

2. Assigning a labor market law that secures the future of the Bahraini worker by preferring him/her to a foreign worker in a set number of vocations while also
3. Work to open the doors of various ministries, including the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior, to all and placing them all on equal footing.
4. Encourage the private sector to employ Bahraini individuals through economic incentives provided by state.
5. To address the imbalance between the educational system and the labor market needs.
6. Increase the budget to support training and rehabilitation programs for citizens and laying the basis for a culture of career commitment for job-seekers.
7. To achieve job security for workers in the private sector.
8. Unifying compensations and incentives of retirement and social security.
9. To prepare legislation to protect low wage workers through:
 - a. Social security benefits for low income workers.
 - b. Exemption/reduction of taxes imposed by the state on citizens of low income.

Maintenance of Public Funds.

Ownership of Land and Sea.

Conclusion:

Al Wefaq seeks to make and bring real and serious reforms in a gradual reform process provided that the gradual improvement does not turn out to be extremely slow, and keep adverse situations unchanged, which is not beneficial to anyone.

Al Wefaq considers itself to be political institution that is responsible for the development of the Kingdom in various fields and that defends citizens in all their issues regardless of their religion and their beliefs, race, Al Wefaq is for all citizens.

Al Wefaq considers itself to be protector of the Arab and Islamic Identity of Bahrain and its political system under a real constitutional monarchy that the rule is inherited by the respected Al-Khalifa family and its decedents, and strives to develop a political system that allows sharing of power.

Al Wefaq is also working to build and consolidate all its national unity programs and positions for and among all the people of the Kingdom of Bahrain and opens and extends its hands and opens its heart to its fellow political associations to cooperate in righteousness and piety and achieve common national interest.