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## **Tunisia expert drafting new constitution says no reference to Islam**

### ***Експерт із Тунісу, який розробляє нову конституцію, не говорить про іслам***

*Туніському академіку С. Белаїду президент Каїс Саїд доручив переписати конституцію Тунісу. Нова конституція лежить в основі дорожньої карти К. Саїда щодо відновлення політичної системи Тунісу після того, як він відправив у відставку уряд, а потім розпустив парламент у результаті дій, які суперники назвали переворотом. Багато тунісців вітали дії К. Саїда проти політичних партій та змішаної президентсько-парламентської системи, які вважалися корумпованими та невмілими, але інші попереджали, що він ризикує звести нанівець демократичні завоювання країни за останнє десятиліття.*

<https://www.africanews.com/2022/06/07/tunisia-expert-drafting-new-constitution-says-no-reference-to-islam/>

Tunisian academic, former dean of the Faculty of Law of Tunis and the president of the National Consultative Commission for a New Republic, Sadeq Belaid

#### **TUNISIA**

The man charged by President Kais Saied with rewriting Tunisia's constitution said Monday he would present a draft stripped of any reference to Islam in order to fight Islamist parties.

The first article of a constitution adopted three years after the North African country's 2011 revolution says it is "a free, independent and sovereign state, Islam is its religion and Arabic is its language".

But Sadeq Belaid, the legal expert appointed last month to head a committee to draft a new constitution, told AFP "80 percent of Tunisians are against extremism and against the use of religion for political ends".

"That's exactly what we want to do, simply by erasing Article 1 in its current form," he said in an interview.

The draft will be presented to Saied ahead of a planned July 25 referendum.

Asked whether there would be any reference to Islam in the new constitution, Belaid said "there won't be".

The new constitution is at the heart of Saied's roadmap for rebuilding Tunisia's political system, after he sacked the government last July and later dissolved parliament in moves described by rivals as a coup.

Belaid, who once taught Saied and now heads the president's "National Consultative Commission for a New Republic", said he would present the new draft by June 15.

The president is then to sign off on the text ahead of a popular vote.

Belaid, 83, said he wanted to tackle Islamist-inspired parties such as Ennahdha.

"If you use religion to engage in political extremism, we will not allow that," he said.

"We have political parties with dirty hands. Whether you like it or not, French or European democrats, we won't accept these dirty people in our democracy."

Many Tunisians have welcomed Saied's moves against political parties and a mixed presidential-parliamentary system seen as corrupt and inept, but others have warned that he risks scrubbing out the country's democratic gains over the last decade.