In the name of Allah, most Merciful and Beneficent

Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates

Federal Law No. (7) for 2008
On
National Center for Documentation and Research

We, Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates;

- Having reviewed the Constitution;
- And Federal Law No. (1) for 1972 concerning jurisdiction of Ministries and powers of Ministers, and laws amending thereof;
- And the Penal Law promulgated through Federal Law No. (3) for 1987 and laws amending thereof;
- And Federal Law No. (7) for 2002 concerning copy rights and accompanying rights as well as laws amending thereof;
- And Decree issued through Federal Law No. (4) for 2004 concerning the establishment and organization of the Ministry of Presidential Affairs;
- And Federal Law No. (17) for 2006 concerning the establishment of the Supreme National Security Council;
- And upon the presentation made by the Minister of Presidential Affairs, and approval by the Council of Ministers and the National Federal Council, and by the Supreme Council of the Union;

We have issued the following law:

Chapter One

Article (1)

Definitions

In the enforcement of this law, each of the following words and phrases shall have the meaning juxtaposed to it unless otherwise indicated by the context:

The State: United Arab Emirates

Ministry: Ministry of Presidential Affairs

Minister: Minister of Presidential Affairs

Government bodies: Ministries, departments, authorities and public organizations as well as other entities within the Federal or local (emirate) governments, and companies fully owned by them.
Center: National Center for Documentation and Research

Board: Center's Board of Directors

Director General: Center's Director General

Document: Any record, whether hand-written or printed, or in the form of photograph, drawing, sketch or audio recording, whether on paper, magnetic tapes, electronic media or any other means, and is held at the Center. These include public and private historical documents.

Public Document: Any document related to governmental bodies functioning, whether in the legislative, judicial or administrative fields or others. Any record received by any governmental body shall be regarded as a public document, whether these are documents related to the functioning thereof or necessary for the discharge of their duties.

Historical Document: Groups of documents collected from governmental bodies or any other sources within the state or from outside it, and include information of importance to historical research in all spheres.

National document: Every document relating to national interests of the state and its higher policies, national security, as well as rare heritage of influence on the state.

Private Document: Every document privately owned by, or related to people and yet is of national interest.

Oral Archives: Information orally gathered by the Center, and is recorded in writing and audio form, thus supplementing already existing knowledge or filling gaps therein, or providing information that has not been recorded before, and are added to the Center's holdings after being officially documented.

Chapter Two

Center's Establishment and Jurisdiction

Article (2)

A center to be named The National Center for Documentation and Research is to be established, and shall be invested with the powers necessary for the discharge of tasks. The Center is an administrative unit attached to the Minister, and is headquartered in Abu Dhabi. It may establish branches or offices within the state.

Article (3)
The Center aims at collecting documents and supervising their preservation and archiving in accordance with scientific archiving norms, with a view to making use therefrom for the public interest, dissemination of cultural and historical awareness, in addition to helping researchers wishing to benefit from the body of information in the Center’s possession.

Article (4)

The Center shall supervise and index documents, and take whatever measures necessary for their preservation. In particular the Center undertakes the following:

- Collecting, receiving and documenting records in accordance with the provisions of this law;
- Collecting and documenting oral archival material, preservation and facilitating use thereof in the appropriate scientific manner;
- Collecting documents of special historical value to the State, Gulf Cooperation Council states and the Arabian Peninsula, from within the state and from abroad, or copies thereof;
- Indexing documents held by the Center and facilitating use thereof, and preparing the necessary catalogues, instructions and guides;
- Protection of documents from damage, and restoration of damaged documents, using the appropriate means of safety and maintenance;
- Advising governmental bodies with regard to the measures and precautions necessary for the protection of documents from damage throughout the period scheduled for preservation at their respective archives before they are removed to the Center;
- Advising private bodies at their own request on measures and precautions for the protection of their documents from damage;
- Advising government bodies on coordination of rules applied with regard to the organization of public documents therein;
- Conducting and publishing research and studies serving the Center’s purposes, and highlighting values and historic accomplishments of the state;
- Providing access to researchers wishing to benefit from the body of information held by the Center;
- Organizing and participating in seminars, conferences and training programs and workshops within the state and abroad to promote the Center's objective in conjunction with the bodies concerned;
- Any other jurisdiction related to the Center’s work to be assigned through Cabinet decrees.

Chapter Three

Documents

Article (5)

Public, national and historical documents are a state property by virtue of their being official pools of information necessary for scientific and historical research.
Historical and national documents should not be disposed. Other documents may be disposed of in the manner specified by this law, and in accordance with the rules and procedures set by the Center.

**Article (6)**

All governmental bodies are committed to dispatching their documents to the Center after five years from the date of closing a file. These bodies may retain certain documents for an additional period if these are necessary for running their works, provided that the additional period shall not exceed another five years, and in accordance with the controls to be set forth by the bylaws of this law.

**Article (7)**

As an exception from the provisions of Article (6) of this law, the Cabinet shall determine the governmental bodies that may retain some or all of their documents for periods other than those stipulated in this law should the national security or public interest so necessitate.

**Article (8)**

Everyone possessing a private document directly or indirectly related to the country's history or affecting national interests should deliver it or copy thereof to the Center in return for remuneration as per the controls determined by the bylaws of the his law.

**Article (9)**

In coordination with the Center, government bodies have to provide favorable conditions for the safety and preservation of documents throughout their holding thereof, and in accordance with the rules and procedures to be determined by the Center and as per the nature of work in each government body.

**Chapter Four**

**Classification of Documents**

**Article (10)**

Documents are to be classified in accordance with the methodology to be determined by the Center as follows:

- Confidential or non-confidential, in coordination with the governmental body concerned.
- Useful or otherwise for scientific and historical research.

The bylaws of this law shall define the controls necessary for the classification of documents.
Article (11)

Documents classified as confidential shall remain so throughout the period to be specified by the Center. The Center shall define the procedure necessary for disposal of useless documents.

Article (12)

As an exception from provision (1) of Article (11), confidential documents may be accessed when necessary by the following bodies:

- The body that had dispatched the document concerned to the Center
- Judicial bodies concerned
- The Minister
- National Security Adviser

Article (13)

Without prejudice to provisions of Article (10) of this law, the Center has no right to photocopy or circulate any documents that have been classified as confidential, or whose period of confidentiality has not yet expired, except as per the procedure set forth in the bylaws of this law.

Article (14)

Every employee designated to collect, preserve or supervise documents in any way as per the provisions of this law shall be responsible for maintaining whatever secrets they may involve, and has no right to disclose any of these secrets except as per the provisions of this law.

Chapter Five

Center Administration

Article (15)

The Center shall be managed by a board of directors chaired by the Minister. The board shall comprise six members who will select a deputy to act for the chair in his absence. The board of directors shall be formed through a Ministerial decree for a renewable four-year term. The said decree shall specify the remuneration to be cashed to the Chairman and members of the Board.

Article (16)

The Board is the body responsible for defining the Center's general policy, and shall exercise the powers necessary for the realization of the Center's objectives as per the provisions of this law. The Board in particular may undertake the following tasks:
• Develop and follow-up implementation of the general policy to be pursued by the Center in light of its set objectives.
• Probe annual financial allocations of the Center, and its balance sheet, and forward recommendations concerning these.
• Endorse the draft organizational structure of the Center, to be issued through a decree by the Minister.
• Endorse the draft regulations of the Center’s personnel, and its financial and internal regulations. These regulations are to be issued through a decree by the Minister.
• Endorse draft contracts to be concluded with individuals, authorities and organizations within the state and abroad, within the limits defined in the Center’s internal regulations.
• Submit to the Minister a semi-annual report on all aspects of the Center's activity.
• Examine issues referred to it by the Board Chairman or the Director General.
• Accept gifts, grants and subsidies compatible with the Center’s objectives.

Article (17)

The Board shall meet upon invitation from its chairman, at least once a month. Where necessary, the Board may meet upon request by the Director General or by at least half of the Board’s members.

Board meetings shall be valid only with the attendance of the absolute majority of its members, provided the Chairman or his Deputy shall be present. Decisions are taken by the absolute majority of votes of those present. In case of equal voting, the side of the Chairman shall overrule.

The Board may invite to its meetings experts or specialized figures, but these shall have no vote.

The Board shall have a Secretary to be selected by the Chairman. Minutes are to be recorded and endorsed by the meeting’s chairman.

Article (18)

The Board Chairman shall undertake the following:
• Financial transactions within the limits specified in the Center’s financial regulations.
• Appointment of the Executive Director and senior staff of the Center upon recommendation by the Director General, and in the manner specified in the Center’s staff regulations.
• Any other jurisdiction stipulated in this law, or in the Center’s regulations

Chapter Six

Center’s Staff

Article (19)
The Center shall have a Director General to be appointed through a Federal Decree. The Director General shall run the Center within the context of the provisions of this law. He will particularly undertake the following:

- Implement Board’s decisions
- Undertake financial transactions within the limits stipulated in the financial regulations and regulations applicable in the Center
- Develop draft policies and plans necessary for the realization of the Center’s objectives, and submission thereof to the Board.
- Develop the necessary programs for the implementation of the Center’s endorsed policies and plans, and submit periodic reports to the Board in this concern.
- Develop the draft organizational structure of the Center
- Develop the Center’s staff regulations as well as its financial and internal regulations.
- Prepare a semi-annual report on all aspects of the Center’s activities
- Appoint staff as per the Center’s bylaws and regulations
- Recruit experts and technical advisers to take part in the Center’s works and projects, and determine their financial remuneration within the limits of allocations earmarked for this purpose, and as per the rules set by the Board in this connection.
- Any other tasks as may be assigned by the Board.

Article (20)

The Center shall have an Executive Director to assist the Director General in running the Center and to act for him in his absence. Powers and jurisdiction of the Executive Director shall be set forth in the Center’s bylaws and regulations.

Article (21)

Staffing and disciplinary regulations issued by the Minister shall apply to Center’s staff. Where there is no specific text in such regulations, the applicable Civil Service laws of the State shall be applicable.

Chapter Seven

Financial Affairs

Article (22)

The Center’s annual revenue shall consist of:

- Annual allocations within the Ministry’s budget
- Gifts, subsidies and grants that may be accepted by the Board and are in line with the Center’s objectives
- Proceeds resulting from the Center’s activities

The executive bylaws of this law shall determine fees for the Center’s activities and means of collection thereof.
Article (23)

Center’s funds and its financial and accounting affairs shall be managed as per the provisions of its financial regulations. In the management of its funds, the Center shall be subject to the financial auditing.

Chapter Eight

Penalties

Article (24)

Whoever may be responsible for damaging a document through negligence shall receive a prison term of not less than two months and not more than one year, and shall be fined no less than AED 3,000 and no more than 10,000, or any of these two penalties.

Should the damaged document be confidential, the prison term shall be no less than six months and no more than a year, while the fine shall be no less than AED 20,000 and no more than 50,000, or any of these two penalties.

Article (25)

Whoever deliberately damages a document shall receive a prison term of no less than eight months and shall be fined no less than AED 40,000 and no more than 100,000, or any of these two penalties.

Whoever deliberately damages a confidential document, carries it outside the state, photocopy it or disclose a secret it includes without securing the necessary approval for so doing shall receive a prison term of no less than one year and shall be fined no less than AED 50,000 and no more than 1,000,000, or any of these two penalties.

The same penalties occurring in the previous two items (1) and (2) of this article shall apply as per the document’s classification to anyone who steals a document or who denies access to documents to those responsible for the enactment of this law.

Article (26)

The court may double the penalties stipulated in the previous two articles of this law for crimes involving national documents.

Article (27)

A prison term and a fine shall be imposed on whoever violates any other provision of this law.

Article (28)
The imposition of any of the penalties stipulated in this law shall not prejudice any tougher penalty stipulated by any other law.

Chapter Nine

Concluding Provisions

Article (29)

The Center may retain a copy or more of any of its documents at other locations within the state or abroad.

Article (30)

The Board Chairman shall issue the bylaws pertaining to this law upon endorsement by the Board.

Article (31)

Any provision conflicting with the provisions of this law shall be cancelled.

Article (32)

This law is to be published in the Official Gazette, and shall be enacted as of the date of its publication.

Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
In the name of Allah, most Merciful, Most Beneficent

Ratification by the Supreme Council of the Union

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Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
Ruler of Abu Dhabi

Mohamed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum
Vice-President, Prime Minister
Ruler of Dubai

Sultan Bin Mohamed Al-Qassimi
Member of the Supreme Council
Ruler of Sharjah

Saqr Bin Mohamed Al-Qassimi
Member of the Supreme Council
Ruler of Ras Al-Khaima

Hmeid Bin Rashid Al-Neimi
Member of the Supreme Council
Ruler of Ajman

Rashid Bin Ahmad Al-Mualla
Member of the Supreme Council
Ruler of Um Al-Quwain

Hamad Bin Mohamed Al-Sharqi
Member of the Supreme Council
Ruler of Al-FuJeirah