**An overview of four political systems**

Throughout history, people have created political systems, ranging from monarchies to republics. Each can have its own advantages, disadvantages and degrees of success.

Governments formed as people sought protection from outside invaders and their fellow citizens, giving rise to national defense, common laws and economic systems. Eventually, governments expanded to include regulating the economy, providing social services and protecting personal rights.

**Four Types of Political Systems**

Differences in political systems can be found in how they provide services, protect rights and enforce the rule of law.

**1-Democracy**

Democracies are based in principles and values, not necessarily common practices. There are two types:

**Direct Democracy** - Each citizen has an equal say in government operations, such as town hall meetings where residents vote on government business. Many states make changes to laws according to the vote of the people through ballot initiatives or referenda.

**Representative Democracy** - As in the United States, citizens elect representatives who make laws.

A basic tenant of a democracy is the system of free and fair elections, in which all citizens of legal age may participate. Democracies also share fundamental concepts:

**Citizen responsibility** - Citizens are expected to participate in the process of government.

Majority rule and individual rights - The majority decides on laws and determines who is charged with making them. The government is decentralized to the regional and local level, to be more accessible to the people and more responsive to their needs.

**Protecting individual rights** - A fundamental principle of democracy is protecting basic human rights such as free speech, freedom of religion, freedom to organize and freedom to fully participate in society.