

Vocabulary – Chapter 3

representative government	A political system in which power is exercised by elected leaders who work in the interests of the people.
rule of law	The principle that government is based on clear and fairly enforced laws and that no one is above the law.
limited government	A political system in which the powers exercised by the government are restricted, usually by a written constitution.
individual rights	The rights and liberties that can be claimed by individuals by virtue of being human. Such rights are also sometimes referred to as natural rights or human rights.
separation of powers	The idea that the powers of a government should be split between two or more strongly independent branches to prevent anyone person or group from gaining too much power.
popular sovereignty	The principle that the people are the ultimate source of the authority and legitimacy of a government.
constitutionalism	The belief that governments should operate according to an agreed set of principles, which are usually spelled out in a written constitution.
majority rule	The idea that decisions approved by more than half of the people in a group or society will be accepted and observed by all of the people.