



# التقرير السنوي 2017

مدير وتقديم  
السفير/د. عزت سعد



الراعي البلاتيني



التقرير السنوي

2017

Annual Report



# Annual Report 2017

Editor  
Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad



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**Egyptian Council  
For Foreign Affairs**

**Annual Report  
2017**

**Editor**

**Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad**

**(2019)**

# Egyptian Council for Foreign affairs

Tower 2 Fakhir- Osman Towers, Nile Corniche, Maadi, 12<sup>th</sup> floor.

Telephone: (202)25281091- 6      Fax:(202) 25281093

Website: [www.ecfa-egypt.org](http://www.ecfa-egypt.org)

Email: [info@ecfa-egypt.org](mailto:info@ecfa-egypt.org)      [ecfa.egypt@yahoo.com](mailto:ecfa.egypt@yahoo.com)

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- 1)      Amb. Abdel Raouf El-Reedy
  - 2)      Amb. Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Shaker
  - 3)      Dr. Osama Ghazali Harb
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## **ECFA Honorary Chairman Speech**

On June 2019 our Council attains its twentieth year; the establishment of this Council was a dream, then, praise be to God, became an active reality on the Egyptian intellectual arena interested in foreign affairs.

During these 20 years, Egypt had witnessed various changes and faced major challenges, and that is what had also taken place in the international arena. The interaction with what is occurring on both regional and international stages and the major influence each of them has over the other is well known to every student of ancient and modern Egyptian history. From this point, while we were in the process of establishing this Council, we thought of inviting one hundred persons from various scientific and intellectual disciplines for the sake of founding the Council, which was the first civil non-governmental working field experience in the research field on foreign affairs and aspects of Egyptian national security related to and affected by it, in thought and practice.

With great appreciation to what has been achieved by the Council over these years; but, from time to time or from a known time to another known time, the law of life requires studying what has been achieved and determining the renovation and development needed as required by the rules of development.

I see that the twentieth anniversary of the Council should be taken as an opportunity towards the first step for the Board members, under auspices of the General Assembly, to put study plan forwards the performance assessment and identify the fields that need to be approached in order to improve the Council's work, so that by the Council's Silver Jubilee we would have already improved the performance and achieved the modernization of the Council's mechanisms and activities as required by such performance.

From what I know about the advantages and experiences

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possessed by my both dear friends; Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council, and ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council; I am fully confident that they both will lead this important work, together with the Board members, with such distinction, sincerity, experience, and competence; wishing the Council to continuously remain as an active and influential thought and study arena in Egyptian and International foreign affairs.

ECFA Honorary Chairman  
Ambassador/ **Abdel Raouf Al-Reedy**

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## **ECFA CHAIRMAN SPEECH**

It is my pleasure to congratulate Members of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on occasion of the Council's publication of the annual book 2017. This book is considered to be a brief compilation of the most important conferences, seminars, and workshops on International Policy priority matters or matters of interest at both the regional and national levels that had been organized in the Council or in collaboration with similar organizations, universities, and councils during the year 2017.

The book includes a summary on meetings, and visits paid by the council to other countries for consultation with similar councils on global and regional interests topics of common, for promoting relations between both countries, and in addition to that; representing the council in international and regional meetings on issues of priority concern to Egypt. The book includes, as well, a study on problems of concern to public opinions in Egypt, Arab World and Africa, which include countering terrorism and corruption, and issuance of recommendations on issues of significance to Egypt.

The Council's activity during the year 2017 was characterized by continuation of the Council to participate in the Arab Nuclear Forum activity after the transfer of the presidency of this Forum to the Arab Institute for Security Studies located in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for 2 years, starting from the end of 2016.

This book is considered to be inclusive and comprehensive to all Council's activities during the year as well as being complementary to the quarterly periodic publications, covering the Council's activities, which including:

- **Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops.**
- **Visits and Meetings by the Council.**
- **The Council's external visits.**
- **The Council's members participations in international and regional meetings.**

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**- Statements issued by the Council on the following topics.**

As I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts made by Director of the Council, Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad, for supervising preparation of the annual book for the year 2017. Which is considered to be a scientific and academic reference to researchers and those who are interested to follow the activities of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and foreign policy.

*May ALLAH grant us success,,*

Chairman of the Council  
Ambassador/ **Dr.Mounir Zahran**

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## INTRODUCTION

This is the second edition of the Council's annual report which is consistent with the first edition (The 2016 annual report) as regards the contents of the report beginning with the conferences, symposia, and workshops (in the first chapter), then visits and internal meetings (in the second chapter), the Council's external visits (in the third chapter), participations of council's members (in the fourth chapter), and statements issued by the Council on various occasions (in the fifth chapter).

In consistency with the working methods and activities of the Council in previous years, main internal issues and problems of the region received the Council's utmost care, for example, a symposium on "Economic developments in the axis of Suez Canal" in March and another one in May on "Promoting of Egyptian soft power", as well as a third one in cooperation with the National Council for Women on the topic of "Women and the Egyptian soft power" in the same month of May, and a fourth one on "National security issues in Egyptian foreign policy" in October, coupled with the latest developments in the regional and international arena particularly those directly influencing on Egypt's national security and regional security in general. In this context, the Council has organized a symposium on "developments of the Libyan crisis and the opportunities for resolution" and another one on each of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Bahrain regarding the cutting off of their diplomatic relations with the state of Qatar due to its support and financing of terrorism as well as its attempts to undermine the national security of these countries and Arab national security in general. The Council received the Chinese special envoy to Syria twice during 2017, the first time was in April and the second time was in September during which this file had been discussed at length from its various aspects.

In addition, the council's activities included, among many other activities, a symposium on "the policy of the new US administration (Trump's administration) in the Middle East, and prospects of Egyptian-US relations", as well as another symposium on "Egyptian-



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US relations in light of President Abdel Fatah El-Sisi's visit to Washington" in April, and a third symposium on "the spillovers of Trump's visit to the region" in June.

Like always, Palestinian affairs received special attention by the Council. Symposia and round tables have been held in this regard, for example, a symposium on "The new US administration and the peace process in the Middle East" and "Egypt and the rearrangement of the Palestinian situation and its reflections on the peace process". The Council also discussed, with a visiting American Jewish delegation, developments of the deteriorating situations in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Council hosted Dr. Marwan Kanafani, a well-known thinker, who presented the contents of his book bearing the title of "About Palestinians only: a dialectic of success and failure". This meeting was an opportunity to pose many of the members' questions on "the opportunities for completion of the Palestinian reconciliation as well as the challenges facing the Palestinian people". Within the frame work of the Council's care about national security issues including disarmament and Nuclear Non-Proliferation, particularly in the Middle East, and in addition to the participation of the Chairman of the Council in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in May 2017, Their Excellencies, Ambassadors: Dr. Mounir Zahran, Dr. Mohammed Shaker and Dr. Mahmoud Karem, participated in the membership of the Committee of Wise Men on the issues of arms control and non-proliferation, constituted by the resolution of the Secretary-General of the Arab League to prepare a unified Arab stance on issues expected to be addressed by the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council also headed the Egyptian delegation that visited the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) headquarters in Brussels, in March, where the aspects of cooperation with NATO were addressed. And Chairman of the Council participated as well in the work of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the

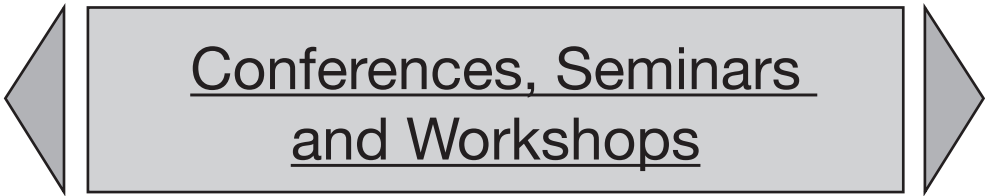
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Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May. The Council also organized a workshop, with the Arab Nuclear Forum (Amman / Jordan), on the topic bearing the title of “Towards a Youth Caucus specialized in issues of Security and Nuclear Weapons”, in which many students, young professionals diplomats, and others, have participated, In addition to the participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad in the Moscow Conference on International Security in April; the participation of Ambassador Mahmoud Karem in the Moscow Nuclear Non-Proliferation Conference in October. In addition to hosting a number of foreign ambassadors during the year (South Korea, China, Belgium); delegations and other personalities, as outlined in the second chapter, and the Council also reached out to a number of its partner states, namely, (India, Sudan and Ethiopia).

I hope that this edition will fulfill the desired benefit to Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow council’s members, and friends from think tanks, research institutes and other institutions.

Director of the Council  
Ambassador/ **Dr.Ezzat Saad**

## Chapter I



### Conferences, Seminars and Workshops



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## Round Table Discussion about «The New US Administration Policy in the Middle East and the Prospects of Egyptian-American Relations»

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held a roundtable discussion on the «New US Administration Policy in the Middle East and the Prospects of Egyptian-American Relations» following the winning the Republican candidate Donald Trump in the 2016 US presidential election.

The ECFA seminar highlighted features of the American foreign policy, in light of several indicators including Trump's statements and promises during his election campaign, his selection of his administration and advisers, and his inauguration speech on 20<sup>th</sup> of January, with special emphasis on Middle East issues, terrorism and the peace process in the region, his promises to transfer the US embassy to Jerusalem, and cancel the Iranian nuclear agreement.

Experts in American affairs, including diplomats and a number of specialized academics, participated in the discussion. Ambassador/Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chair opening the discussion, and Ambassador / Dr. Hussein Hassouna, Coordinator of ECFA American Affairs permanent Committee moderated it.

In general, the views of ECFA members were varied. Each presented his or her own vision, which was complementary to what others had presented in an integrated analysis of the subject of the discussion, as evident in the following interventions:

Ambassador / Dr. Mounir Zahran noted that, Trump did not focus on the fundamental issues related to the Iranian nuclear deal, the relationship with China and the future relation with Russia, adding that the first 100 days are very specific to the parameters of the new American policy after the completion of the new



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administration and its institutions and after it starts its functions.

For his part, Ambassador Hussein Hassouna the Coordinator of Permanent Committee of American Affairs at the Council, said that the Egyptian position revolves round aspiring to re-establish relations with the United States, especially on issues of common concern, more specifically, combating terrorism and reaching a peaceful settlement to the regional crisis.

ECFA member, Atef al-Ghamri stressed that the pro-Trump movement, which brought him to power, is not the result of a present moment in time. It is the result of a state of unrest that began 30 years ago and developed into a rebellion in 2016, or an influence on decision-making, and that interest groups and lobbyists have the final say.

With regard to thinking about relocating the American Embassy to Jerusalem, it would mean that the United States would be losing its constant claim that it is an honest mediator – on which it has long insisted and which requires that it commits itself to leaving the status of Jerusalem to be determined only in the final status negotiations.

While Dr. Mohamed Kamal, said Trump believes that the reason for his victory is the difference of his vision from traditional American policy, he said, he will maintain this difference, but there are real questions about the American institutions' ability to change their vision.

Dr. Mona Makram Ebeid Member of ECFA, stressed Egypt's need to cooperate with the Trump administration with a new formulating a new vision and policy to combat terrorism, which reflects the Egyptian position that refuses to deal with armed groups.

In this regard, Ambassador Ezzat Saad Director of ECFA, said that evidences indicate to the possibility of significant improvement in US-Russian relations , in a way that may positively impact the settlement of some of the problems of the region, but we must not ignore the role of other institutions within the United

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States, which are not keen on a normalization of relations and cooperation with Russia, such as the Congress and the Defense Department.

Ambassador Ihab Wahba pointed out that Trump adopts a confrontational approach in all his declared positions, in collision with large segments of American society, as well as a foreign collision approach, like what happened with Mexico and China.

Ambassador Mohamed Tawfiq said that, the good relationship between the presidents of the two countries, “Sisi and Trump”, would give a strong impetus in the direction of rebuilding the bilateral relations on a more solid basis to serve the interests of the two parties. He also stressed the importance of balanced relations.

While Ambassador/ Dr. ELSayed Amin Shalaby stressed that Trump’s positions and views towards the world will play an important role in shaping the world order, which will reflect on Egypt and the region.

In conclusion, Ambassador Hajar Al-Islambouli said that in light of the chaos sweeping the region, Egypt needs to formulate a more functional role in order to be able to present it according to its vision and perception of these crisis.

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## **ECFA's Meeting With Ambassador Frank Wisner and Dr. «ShibliTelhami»**

As part of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, interest in discussing regional and international changes affecting Egypt internally, it organized a panel discussion on 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2017 at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club over a working lunch in honor of Ambassador Frank Wisner, former US Ambassador to Cairo, and Dr. Shibli Telhami, distinguished Middle East expert in the United States. The importance of the meeting is largely due to the explanations made by figures in direct touch with American political life, at a time questions about the orientations and foreign policy of President Trump's administration have not stopped.

The meeting was attended by ECFA Chair Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Honorary Chair Ambassador Abdel Raouf Al-Reedy, and ECFA Director Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad. ECFA members Ambassadors Nabil Fahmy, Mohamed Shaker, Mohamed Al-Orabi, Mohamed Tewfik, Ihab Wahba, Marwan Badr, El Sayed Amin Shalaby, Mohammed Anis Salem, Mahmoud Al-Saeed, Mr. Mohamed Abdellah, Mr. Makram Mohammed Ahmed and Dr. Mohamed Kamal.

Speaking on the depth of the current political situation of **Trump era, Ambassador Wisner raised several points for consideration:**

- The United States is now experiencing a challenging phase after President Donald Trump won the last presidential elections, which were greatly controversial both inside and outside the United States, especially after his decisions to prevent citizens of seven Arab Muslim countries from traveling to the United States. This decision has significant implications at the local, regional and

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international levels, as well as for American public opinion and media in particular, and diplomats too.

- The United States always allows opposition. More than 100 diplomats have signed a memorandum against the President's intransigent decisions to prevent the citizens of seven Muslim countries from traveling to the United States. Wisner stressed that, the US law protects any opposition entity, insures all rights to free expression of opinion and guarantees that it is applied fairly.

- The Washington is undergoing a period of deep and radical change he had never seen the like of in his diplomatic career, or perhaps before that. The United States has not seen a state of anxiety and tension, as it did over the past few days.

- He noted that everything that happened in the United States recently, is pushing for a revolutionary change that will lead to a deep and radical change in the US political reality to form a new political order.

Wisner emphasized that these movements are driving a profound change in political forces within the United States, not only from Democrats but also from Republicans, and that things are changing in the United States, are no longer as they were in previous years, and that these conflicts will produce a new political base within the United States. He called it a «revolutionary» situation in the American political reality.

Adding that there are certain principles must be taken into consideration when we are evaluating the current period, Wisner said President Trump is very strict, especially in sending direct signals internally, by reviewing some trade and economic agreements, as well as externally. He pointed out that Trump was extremely vocal in his speeches when he said that he would put the war against extremism - especially Islamic extremism - among his pri-

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orities during his tenure, and that he was interested in strengthening relations with Israel, Egypt and some Gulf countries, but with the exception of some countries.

- On the Middle East, Wisner said he is confident that the new US administration does not have a strategic vision for the region, but only has some impressions thereon. In his view, this represents a real opportunity for Egypt and other countries in the region to come up with a new scenario to renew the course of relations with the United States, especially since there are many points that can be agreed upon.

- Frank Wisner said that the next period for US - Egyptian relations, represents a real opportunity and a new challenge for each of the two countries, noting that, the new US administration has no real knowledge of Egypt, except the Minister of Defense, James Mattis.

Therefore, Egypt has a real opportunity to reshape its relations with the United States as it sees fit. He said that this must be arranged in a very good and precise manner, and Egypt has a real opportunity to write its own scenario, including what is the most appropriate form of relations between the two countries within the framework of its strategic vision on the importance of these relations and their impact on the region, and what contexts Egypt wants for the course of bilateral relations in the next period.

He stressed the need for Egypt to be very cautious in that, noting that there are a number of issues which the two countries have different views in it, adding that, it must keep that into consideration and try to find common grounds and deepen points of convergence with the US on several issues such as the war on terrorism, Palestine-Israel reconciliation, and conditions in Jerusalem and in Syria and Iraq, as well as in Iran and some Gulf countries



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and other issues which require constant consultation.

**Mr. Wisner then gave the floor to Dr. ShibliTelhami, praising his extensive contributions to Arab-American affairs.**

- Dr. ShibliTelhami began his speech by thanking the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs for its hospitality, praising its unique team of ambassadors, academics and experts in international affairs.

- On the current American situation, he explained that the American people are in a state of division, stressing that the conflict is not only a partisan struggle between Democrats and Republicans, but there are many factors within the United States that support divisions and differences in American views held by people with their different categories.

Telhami added that, politics change and will continue to change, especially since it is known for those interested in foreign policy that the President is only one player among foreign policy players. He also pointed out that any country has several tools and factors of foreign policy. In this regard, he raised an important question about the reasons that made Americans vote for Trump.

Telhami stressed that matters are not as they seem to be in America. There are discontent and dissatisfaction among the people. But beyond that, Telhami stressed, the American people no longer feel safe, and have come to realize that the American dream is no longer achievable for several reasons. The most important things are growing poverty and increasing number of the poor, a widening gap between the poor and the rich, and an erosion of the middle class.

He explained that opportunities were greatly diminishing. In this respect, he said he and his children are a case in point. He considered himself more fortunate than his children who did not find the same opportunities he found when he immigrated to the United States several years ago.

He added that, more than 80% of the American people want

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radical change in the American system, not just a gradual change, which is interpreted as one of the main reasons for Trump's victory. Most of the American people - even those who did not vote for him - think he is able to make a radical regime change, while only one third of the people agree with him on different issues.

Dr. Shibli concluded by emphasizing that, we must be very careful in dealing with the new US administration, especially as the White House policies are expected to be mostly sudden and unexpected.

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## ECFA Shield to honor Engineer Ismail Osman

On February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017, ECFA held a ceremony to honor Engineer Ismail Osman for his outstanding and continuous contributions to the Council. ECFA Chair Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran presented ECFA Shield to Engineer Osman in appreciation of his efforts, in the presence of ECFA Honorary Chair Ambassador Abdul Raouf Al-Reedy, ECFA Director Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, and a number of ECFA members.

Eng. Ismail Osman, one of the founders of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, is pleased to provide a permanent headquarters for the Council (current headquarters).

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## Symposium about «Economic Development in the Suez Canal Region»

On March 7, 2017, the Egyptian Council of Foreign Affairs organized a symposium in which Dr. Ahmed Darwish , Former Chairman of the Suez Canal Economic Zone Authority, spoke about «Economic Development in the Suez Canal Region», by attending Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chair, and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, and a number of ECFA members which including ambassadors, academics and experts.

Dr. «Darwish» briefed the audience on all the developments in the Canal region. He said that «What is currently underway, project and the development taking place at present have been a big dream for Egyptians for a long time. They were always looking forward to how to use the channel as a maritime corridor with an important strategic location, like other countries which developed their ports, improve the level of services to transiting vessels and develop logistic aspects, rather than focus only on collecting fees».

The seminar discussed various aspects of these projects. ECFA's members discussed their positive impact on the economic situation in Egypt, the expansion of land allocation for investment projects especially African projects, offer training opportunities for Egyptian labor and the continuation of implementing ambitious economic programs.

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## Joint Seminar on «The Belt and Road Initiative ... and the Cooperation with the Suez Canal Economic Zone»

On March 18, 2017, a joint seminar between the Egyptian Foreign Affairs Council and the Chinese Center for Contemporary International Studies (CCCWS), was held at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club. It discussed the initiative of the Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013 and ways of future cooperation with Egypt within the framework of its national project, in achieving this with the economic region of the Suez Canal Economic Zone. The joint seminar headed by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad Director of the Council, Ambassador. Song Aiguo Chinese Ambassador in Cairo, Dr. Jin Xin Director of CCCWS and Dr. Essam Sharaf, former Prime Minister, of Egypt.

**The proceedings of the symposium took place over five sessions as follows:**

1. Opening session
2. First session «Building Connectivity for West Asia and North Africa».
3. Second session: «Development Industrial capacity Cooperation».
4. Third Session «Cooperation with the Suez Canal Economic Zone».
5. Closing Session

The participants stressed that stability in the world and in the Middle East in particular will play an important role in the implementation of the initiative, which places on Egypt and China the need to develop common visions and strategic visions to confront intellectual and religious terrorism.

As for the cooperation in the Suez Canal Economic Zone under the initiative, it was stressed that Chinese companies and in-

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vestors are aware of the importance of this cooperation, which is through the flow of Chinese investment, especially in the field of logistics, infrastructure and high technology industries in many fields, Goods for Europe.

The proceedings of the symposium took place over four sessions concluded to emphasize that, the Belt and Road Initiative is a global initiative that will benefit not only the 60 countries - or more - in which the new Silk Road will pass, but also the global economy and contribute to the interaction of human civilizations and cultures.

It is worth mentioning that, The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs arranged a visit to the Chinese delegation to the economic zone in AinSukhna on March 19<sup>th</sup>, where the developments in the Chinese region were identified, some factories were inspected and the new rules and procedures followed in granting licenses.

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## Nile River and prospects for cooperation in the lecture of Ambassador Dr. Mohammad Hegazy

In the Frame of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, concern with the issue of Nile water and its various dimensions, as one of the most important issues that figure at the top of the priorities of the Egyptian agenda in the recent period, the Council organized a lecture on 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2017, in which Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Hegazy gave it under the title of «River Nile and Prospects for Cooperation».

The speaker began with a detailed presentation of the Nile River historically, geographically and culturally, for Egypt. He then presented maps of works on the river, the partner countries with Egypt, and its basic features.

After that, he reviewed the current status and understandings between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia regarding the Renaissance-Dam .

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## The American-Egyptian relations in the light of President El-Sisi's visit to Washington (2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>) of April 2017

Regarding the council's interest of the Egyptian American relations development under President Trump, the council organized a symposium about this topic on Wednesday the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2017, after President El-Sisi's visit to Washington, with participate Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the council, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad Director of the council and a number of Ambassadors and experts , the meeting that was moderated by Ambassador Hussein Hassouna the Coordinator of Permanent Committee of American Affairs at the Council.

Ambassador Abdel-Raouf El-Reedy, the Honorary Chairman of the council, stressed on the importance of visit represents a paradigm shift in the relations between the two countries, especially after a period of cold relations between them, noting that the relations between the two countries are merely a reflection of the convergence of the two president's views on several issues. He also confirmed the importance of the President's visit to the congress to view the process of American policy-making.

Each one of the participants presented his perspective from an analytical point of view. These participants were including Ambassadors Rakha Hassan, Mohamed Anis Salem, Reda Shehata, Hajar El-Islamboly, Dr. El-Sayed Amin Shalaby and Dr. Mohamed Kamal.

Their remarks enriched the dialogue in this important seminar and broadened its horizons. The Symposium was concluded with the affirmation by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran and Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna of the role played by the council in the continued follow-up on these important events.



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## Seminar about (the new US administration and the peace process in the the Middle East ).

In an extended seminar held in the council's headquarter on April the 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017, different points of views were expressed regarding the new US administration and the peace process in the Middle East. Members of the council, academicians and Arab ambassadors, including Palestinian politicians, were presenting.

The symposium was lengthy and was divided into two sessions: the first was entitled "The United Sates and the peace process", the second was entitled "The Arab initiative to advance the peace process in the light of regional and international developments".

The Ambassador Dr. Barakat el-Fara, the former Ambassador of Palestine to Egypt and its permanent representative in the Arab League, and the Ambassador Hazem Abou Shanab, member of the Revolutionary Council of Fatah, represented the Palestinian side.

The participants then presented their views on this issue, including General Ibrahim Al-Duwairi, Head of the Israeli Studies Unit in the Council. After that, the first session of the meeting began with Ambassador Sayed Abu Zeid, who discussed the developments in the US role in the Middle East peace process.

The session included the interventions from Ambassador Dr. Barakat El-Fara and Ambassador Hazem Abou Shanab followed by discussions in which Ambassador Rakha Hassan, Ambassador Jilan Allam, Ambassador Mohamed El-Shazly, Ambassador Badr-el-din Zayed, Dr. Ahmed Abu Doma and Ambassador Ihab Wahba took part.

At the closing session, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad pointed out that, Trump is trying to outline a specific vision through the meetings he holds and that the National Security Adviser and

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the secretary of defense emphasize on the fact that the continuing state of chaos in the region is due to the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict, even some Israeli rightists find that Trump has violated their expectations.

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## Seminar about «Promoting Egyptian Soft Power»

On 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2017, a seminar was held at the headquarter of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on the «Promotion of Egyptian Soft Power», chaired by Ambassador Dr.Mounir Zahran, in the presence of a number of members of the Council of experts and academics, where the symposium included two axes, that were emphasized:

- The concept of soft power is a multidimensional concept but at the same time does not mix with the elements of the state and its institutions such as health and education.

- Soft power is gaining strength from the power of future influence on its value environment, with the importance of sending Egypt to its soft power and then moving forward for the future.

- The importance of analysis of the disappearance of Egyptian soft power in light of the escalation of regional and international players contribute to this extinction, and take advantage of global indices and standards, led by the index (Soft Power30).

- The need to prioritize and invest in the elements of soft power, which will generate revenues on Egypt at the lowest possible cost in a short period of time, and cooperate with state institutions to provide vision and advice and invite experts and specialists to conduct extensive discussions that enrich the vision to be formulated.

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## A conference on ‘The Role of Women in Supporting Soft Power’

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the National Council for Women held a conference concerning ‘The Role of Women in Supporting Soft Power’ at the Egyptian Opera House.

The conference was administered by Dr/ Mervat Abo Ouf, the professor of Mass communication and Journalism in the American University, where she started by welcoming those participating and emphasized that the conference coincides with President Sisi’s vision for 2017 as the ‘Year of Women’. She added that this vision reinforces the importance of the concept of soft power as a powerful weapon and a valuable wealth for Egypt, both internally and externally.

### **The conference was divided into 3 sessions that achieved the following recommendations:**

- Forming a committee concerned with the soft power, consisting of prestigious figures in the fields of culture, arts, mass media, and the economy in both the Egyptian Council for foreign affairs and the National Council for Women. The committee shall aim at clarifying and spreading Egypt’s message abroad in addition to encouraging and following up with the activities of the soft power whether inside or outside of Egypt under the supervision of both councils.
- Providing wider promotion for «*Taa’ Marbou-tah*» campaign. The Egyptian embassies, specially the cultural offices in addition to the Egyptian information general association shall be responsible for explaining the

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campaign's goals, its role in supporting the soft power, and providing relevant, occasional reports to both councils.

- Maintaining constant coordination between the National Council for Women, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, concerned committees in the parliament and other civil society organizations with the aim of empowering women's role in supporting the Egyptian soft power and achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.

- Supporting youth activity and initiatives, especially female youth activity that is concerned with the various fields of soft power through involving them in the activities of the National Council for Women and the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs.

- Supporting women's role in micro, small and medium enterprises that are concerned with soft power activity in both rural and urban areas across Egyptian coordination with the Ministry of Planning and Local Development; these enterprises has a positive, tangible impact on economic and social growth.

- Establishing a strategy with the goal of empowering women's role in the context of soft power as a part of achieving of the seventeen sustainable development goals by 2030 and accomplish security, stability and development.

- Coordinating between the National Media Authority and the African, Asian and European Radio Unions.

- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the National Council for Women with the purpose of executing the former recommendation.

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## Seminar on «Developments of the Libyan crisis and opportunities for a solution»(Part I)

On June 4<sup>th</sup> , 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs organized a seminar on «Developments in the Libyan Crisis and Opportunities for a Solution (Part I)», in which Mr. Mohamed Abu Bakr, Egypt's Ambassador to Libya. talked about it with participated from number of Council members of the Council of experts and academics.

The Ambassador highlighted the Libyan interior, stressing that the Libyan state enjoys a distinct geographic location and extended areas, which made it rich in resources, as well as the nature of the demographic structure of the population and the geographical and population characteristics of each region, which places the burden on any political negotiator.

In this context, he pointed out that this is evidenced by the follow-up to the developments of the Libyan crisis in 2011, and the subsequent occurrence of chaos and instability, and to enter into a series of continuous negotiations resulted in the «Sokhirat agreement», but did not succeed effectively to put it into operation, because of the existence of controversial material related to the formation of the Presidential Council and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. In addition to the above variables, and related to the demographic nature, which make the Libyans do not accept the imposition of any solution or settlement of the crisis or force them to accept certain parties. For a while The West is to represent the Islamists in the interim government, the presidential council, and the resulting divisions even within those institutions. He pointed out that, the West is explicitly intent on ignoring the fact that the Libyan state is not a state of institutions and that it moved from independence in 1951 To the revolution in 1969 and then to the 2011 revolution directly, and

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therefore the Libyan state lacks the concept of institutional.

In terms of the military field situation, he stressed that the Libyan army currently controls the areas of the Libyan east and the area of «Jafra» of strategic importance, especially as it represents a starting point and move to the regions of the east, west and south of Libya, stressing in this context and in relation to the recent Egyptian strikes, the Libyan army, in accordance with article 51, which affirms the right of the state to defend its national security and to confront any aggression on its sovereignty. He said that a subsequent statement by the President of the Presidential Council Fayed Al-Sarraj, in which the Egyptian government demanded the importance of coordination with the legitimate Libyan government, as a result of pressure within the Presidential Council and the Libyan Interim Government.

He concluded by stressing that, the two countries share common historical, ethnic and cultural ties, which require the importance of deepening cooperation and intensifying action, especially in the light of the European countries' awareness of the necessity of preserving the institutions of the Libyan state and supporting the Libyan army to confront extremist organizations and groups and maintain stability. And Regarding to the security of the Libyan state, to combat the scourge of illegal immigration and the export of terrorism to those countries, which will be done only by the joint movement to restructure the Libyan state, and to stop the existing liquidity situation and work to reach common points.

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## Round Table about «Fifty Years of the 1967 War ... Lessons Learned»

On June 5<sup>th</sup> , 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held a round table discussion about «Fifty Years of the 1967 War ... Lessons and Experiences Learned», with the aim of highlighting the internal and external causes and lessons learned, the challenges ahead, in the presence of Ambassador Dr. Mounir-Zahran, Chair of the Council, and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad Director of the Council, Dr. Ahmed Yousef Ahmed, Professor of Political Science at Cairo University, and Major General / Talaat Mousa, the strategic and military expert, along with a number of council members from ambassadors, experts and academics.

### **The participants reached a number of substantive points as follows:**

- The 1967 war is actually rooted to the 56<sup>th</sup> war, which is rooted to the nationalization of the Suez Canal.

- The failure of the governance model, relying on the criterion of loyalty rather than the criterion of competence in the selection of commanders of the armed forces, as well as a conflict of decision-making which was leading to failure to develop a clear strategic vision, not to mention the lack of readiness of leaders at the time to lead the field of operations.

On the regional level, despite Egypt's success in restoring the land and maintaining peace, all the territories occupied in 1967 have not been restored, as has the state of weakness, Arab division, the decline of Arab nationalism and the collapse of the nation state, and the emergence of new patterns of leadership of the regional system.

- The absence of accurate reading of changes in the global system, and rejection of any new ideas, including a new system



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for the Middle East without studying the elements and strengths, and loss of maneuverability.

**Lessons learned:**

- Adopting new principles during war operations based mainly on adopting offensive, surprise and deception approaches, as well as organizing elements and members of the armed forces, defining their tasks, developing strategic plans and coordinating the decision-making process.

- The importance of the steadfastness of the Egyptian people, which was a major starting point in the reconstruction, and the need to rely on them in the face of current challenges.

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## Round Table discussion about «After Trump's visit to the region»

On 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held round table discussion to analyze the results of Trump's visit to the region. In the frame of his first presidential tour of the region, which included the visit of Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Palestinian National Authority, as well as holding bilateral meetings with a number of leaders on the sidelines of the Riyadh Summit and the subsequent Islamic-American Summit followed by the announcement of the establishment of the Center for combating extremist thought in Riyadh. In addition the summit included sign a number of military and investment deals worth about 300 billion dollars.

The meeting was attended by a number of members from the Council of experts, academics and specialists in the American and Arab affairs.

**It was emphasized by the audience on that by drawing on an objective view of Trump's visit to the region, the following conclusions can be drawn:**

- Trump's desire to improve his relations with Islamic countries and to correct what he launched during his election campaign against Islam and Muslims. The main aim of the campaign is to invite the Gulf Countries to pay the United States for protecting Gulf security, regarding to thinking of Businessman. It appeared in the military and investment deals signed between the two sides.

- On the other hand, Trump wanted to offer diplomatic satisfaction to the Gulf States by recognizing Iran as the biggest supporter and sponsor of terrorism in the region. The visit also resulted in the emergence of Saudi Arabia as a weighty country and the implicit recognition of its role in the region.

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- Regarding the Palestinian issue, it was emphasized that Trump's position was more ambiguous. During the visit, he did not discuss the settlement of the issue or the two-state solution, unlike most previous administrations.

- The importance of formulating a flexible and balanced Egyptian strategic vision that shows how to deal with the current crisis and with the concerns of the Gulf countries on the one hand and the relationship with Iran on the other hand.

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## Round Table Discussion about «Cutting Diplomatic Relations with Qatar: Implications and Future Prospects»

With the participation of a number of members from the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on Round Table Discussion about «Cutting Diplomatic Relations with Qatar: Implications and Future Prospects», the Council hosted Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Morsi, Last Egyptian Ambassador in Qatar on 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, to clarify from his experience, the dimensions of Issue, which was headed by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the council.

**At the beginning, Ambassador Morsi talked about several points :**

- Qatar has a special strategy, which its elements had appeared after Sheikh Hamdad's coup in 1990s on his father. This Strategy based on build relations with majority powers, hosting extremism Islamic groups and their consultants from different places depending on its huge Financial resources, as well as, its closed relation with Iran. Qatari foreign policy is characterized by contradiction due to its desire to hold communication channels with several parties which have different interests.

- In addition, Qatar has created crisis in Arab states by intervention in internal affairs through its agents, e.g. Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, trough played on sectarian tensions, chaos, and changing of regimes.

**In this context, which clarified the problem with Qatar is at a standstill, The participations as follows:**

- Ambassador Salah Heleima pointed to the utilization of Qatar's huge capabilities and investments in European states and the United States to affect on decision-making processes in these states.

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- Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Badr Al-Dein spoke about Qatar's adoption of an aggressive policy towards Egypt and Saudi, especially after the two countries status during Sheikh Hamdad's coup over his father in the 90s. He also mentioned to the Turkish-Qatari alliance is supporting Qatari policy and its relations with Muslims Brotherhood and other extremist groups in Libya threatening Egyptian national security.

- Mr. Atef Al-Ghamry told of an incident that took place in the early 90s during his working as a reporter in Al-Ahram, that confirmed the relations between Doha regime and Israel role in this coup. In addition, he confirmed the Qatari role is the agent of US policy in the region and the U. S. would not abandon its agent.

- Ambassador Marwan Badr assured the Qatar's relationship with Iran is very strong and that there is a conflict among the Gulf States.

- Ambassador Osama Tawfik said that, during Sheikh Hamd's accession to power in the 90s, with conditional American approval to open the door to Israel to enter the Gulf Region from Qatar gate by opening an Israeli office for commercial representation in Doha, Sheikh Hamd accepted that.

- Ambassador Ihab Wahba confirmed the multi dimensions for the current situation, rejecting Egypt involvement in this crisis in particular Qatar will continued in its policies and practices. He also clarified there are great contradictions inside the American political institutions and its relation with President Trump.

- Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad assured the previous participations led us to believe that Egypt's policies towards the Gulf States and Qatar in particular, represents a challenge especially that Qatar has been able to establish a huge economic basis and its investment in many major states, so the last measure didn't have a major effect on it.

- Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran asked about the Qatari position in the Palestinian crisis, and its true role in reconciliation, especially after Qatar's announcement that Hamas is the legitimate representative for the Palestinian people.

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## Seminar on the developments of the Libyan crisis(PartII)

On 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2017, the Egyptian Ambassador to Libya, Mohamed Abubakar, met with the members of the Council to discuss the developments of the Libyan crisis, specifically the regional roles and the economic aspect of the crisis. Ambassador/ Dr.MounirZahran, Chair of the Council, and Ambassador / Dr. EzzatSaad, Director of the Council, and members of the Council attended by Ambassador / Marwan Badr, ManalMetwally, Dr. Ahmed Hafez Ibrahim.

In his speech on the first axis on the regional roles in the crisis, Ambassador Mohammed Abu Bakr stressed that despite the decline of the roles of some neighboring countries (Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria) and represented a fundamental pillar in the resolution of the crisis after 2014 due to the widening gap between these countries. However, on the other hand, the years after 2014 witnessed a broad Arab activity to settle the crisis. These efforts led to the signing of the «Sokhirat Agreement» in the Moroccan city of Sokhirat in October 2015. The most important of these was Egypt, which tried to overcome many controversial points and settle some of them. Continuous coordination with major powers, and on Led by the United States and Russia, but differences over the composition of the presidential council and the position of commander-in-chief remained stalled.

On the African level, he pointed out that the Union has begun to play a role, on the pretext that African countries are affected by the western role that has been played. A special envoy has been appointed for the Libyan crisis, and a working mechanism has been established in the Congo including the neighboring countries, the Congo and Ethiopia (12 countries), that this role still did not have a clear and effective outcome.

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On the Qatari role supporting the extremist groups and leaders, headed by Abdul Hakim Belhaj, he explained that companies were established to transport fighters, weapons and suspicious operations in the Libyan center, and attempts to control the Libyan oil market through the purchase of quotas, according to reports issued, will contribute to reducing this role.

On the second axis, related to the impact of the crisis on the economic situation, he explained that since 2013 the size of the reserve \$ 160 billion, was depleted and depleted oil reserves, especially following the control of «Ibrahim Badran,» commander of the armed militias controlling the crescent oil, and control of the supply lines until intervention The army in 2016 after cutting oil production to 50 thousand barrels. However, Libya still represents the world basket of raw materials, which is the reason for the absence of a clear international decision on how to deal with these resources and depletion, especially as Western countries are very concerned about any Russian role, and do not want to transfer the conflict and competition to the Libyan arena, With China, which is why many Western military bases are deployed in neighboring countries such as Niger.

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## A symposium entitled: «Problematique of the future identity of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region»

On 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs organized a symposium entitled: «Problematique of the future identity of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region», the participants and interventions addressed a number of issues that resulted from the referendum.

- At the opening session, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, emphasize the importance of keeping pace with the current developments in the political arena both internationally and the regionally, especially those taking place in the Middle East Region, concerning the Future Identity of the Region's States, preservation of the unity of their territories and maintaining their territorial integrity.

Hence the idea of organizing a symposium to discuss the ramifications of the separating of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq on the future of the whole region emerged.

He added that the Council draws on the Egyptian foreign policy, which emphasizes the need to maintain territorial sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Arab and African States.

Therefore, it is necessary to warn against the disintegration of Arab States and to settle differences or disputes among them by peaceful means.

He also noted that Israel's attempts to interfere in the Iraqi affairs should not be overlooked and that the impact of the separation of Kurdistan Region on the State of Iraq should not be ignored.

Within the framework of the three sessions of the Symposium, the audience participated in putting forward several points that constitute the reality resulting from the referendum in the lead-up to independence, in terms of its timing, and whether the



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Kurdish State, once independent, would have the capabilities to maintain such Independence or not.

Issues discussed during the Symposium included: the real motives behind the step taken by Massoud Barzani, at this very time; the internal divide that followed the referendum and surfaced afterwards in the Kurdish areas; the Kurdish opposition to Barzani's decision; as well as the grave impact, dealt with by audience, of that step on the concept of the 'National State' Model, not only in Iraq, but in the whole region at large; and how this is linked to the scheme of fragmentation of the region.

Participants also mentioned to the general positions of different States on this decision, especially US, EU, Russia, Israel, Iran and Turkey, alongside with an explanation of the Arab stances from Barzani's Announcement and their visions thereof.

- All of the above points were the focus of deliberations at the Symposium: Dr. Muhammad Mujahid El-Zayyat, ECFA's member, explained that the current situation could change in the very last moments. Should the Referendum be deferred, the Dream of a Kurdish State will continue to exist side by side with the dream of fragmenting the Iraqi State.

- In relation to the probabilities, ECFA's member, Ambassador Sayed Abu Zeid, referred to the launch of the first Kurdish Civil Movement in the city of Sulaymaniyah by some Kurdish intellectuals under a slogan "Not at the Presenting!", and their labeling of the Kurdish Parties' Decision as illegitimate and lacking both legal authority and national consensus.

- Regarding the emergence of internal Kurdish opposition to the timeliness of the Referendum, ECFA's member, Dr. Jamal Yousuf, made an intervention, during which he delivered a speech on behalf of Dr. Rajai Fayed, the specialist in Kurdish affairs, who could not attend the Symposium due to special circumstances, saying that regional and international positions rejecting the referendum formed a motive for the emergence of internal Kurdish opposition, prompting some to wonder whether

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it is at all possible to challenge the whole world and press on with the plan to hold the referendum! In the same vein, Iraqi MP and leader of the 'Movement for Change', Aram Sheikh Muhammad, pointed out that the referendum decision was hasty.

Here came the question: why did Barzani took this step at the time he chose?

In this context, Dr. Jamal asserted that the Referendum dream is but a political maneuver by Barzani to postpone the date of electing a new president for the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, especially since the parliament is being stalled for two years, a fact that is well-known to some Kurdish parties, which deem it necessary to agree on a more appropriate date, that would be in tandem with solving internal problems and working to strengthen the State so that it would be then ready to secede and become independent.

The very same motives were emphasized by Dr. Muhammad Mujahid El-Zayyat, who said that the objective of the referendum at the moment was a cover-up of Barzani, as his term of office has expired, hence he will not be able to run again in light of the stalling of the Parliament for two years, and delay of elections that was supposedly schedule the disruption of was supposed to hold new elections in 2017.

On the other hand, the Iraqi government announced that Iraq relies on the Constitution as a reference to regulate the relationship between the federal government and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Neither of the parties can determine its fate in isolation from the others, and any decision on Iraq's future must take into account the constitutional provisions.

- All of that was not in isolation from the concept of 'National State', which is being the target of fierce and systematic attacks, and this is exactly what was pointed out by Dr. Reda Shehata, when he explained that such idea had crystallized in Egypt, and what the region is witnessing is a fragmentation of the existing entities, thus the Kurdistan Region of Iraq is opening

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the door wide for dividing on a sectarian basis, let alone being in contradiction with all international charters, which call for the preservation of States' independence and territorial integrity.

- ECFA's member, Ambassador Muhammad Ashmawi, referred to this very idea, and cautioned that attention should be paid to the so-called «strategy of Tightening the Minority Parties», a global strategy being implemented in the Middle East Region, as a premise to destroying the great wall surrounding the Arabs and then finishing off their heart, i.e. Egypt and the Gulf States.

- In his intervention, ECFA's Member, Ambassador Sayed Abu Zaid, touched on the same connotation, pointing out that the conflict on the concept of 'National State', had been existing since the 1950s, and that the danger to the entire region comes from being pushed into scattering, dispersion and fragmentation to the extent of having bloody clashes and confrontations amongst astray conflicting shrapnel.

- Discussions have led to the identification of regional and international positions, and for his part, ECFA's Chair, Dr. Mounir Zahran, referred to the decision taken by the Arab Ministerial Council to reject the organization of the referendum in Kurdistan, and to demand that the unity and sovereignty of Iraqi territory should be preserved.

- ECFA's Member, Ambassador Muhammad El-Shazly, said that the Egyptian Policy in the Arab World is based on maintaining the territorial unity within the Arab world.

-The audience noted that the most important Arab move was the exchange of letters with Barzani, by the Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmad Abou El-Gheit, on his own initiative, explaining to him the Arab position that calls for deferral of referendum and conducting a dialogue between Baghdad and Erbil.

-In this context, the Egyptian Ambassador to Iraq stated that Egypt's official position is based on the principles of maintaining territorial unity and integrity of sister Arab countries; the strength of Iraq lies in the uniform and harmonious survival of its vari-

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ous multiple spectra, which together form the Iraqi State; and Egypt's refusal of making any unilateral moves, without the coordination between Baghdad and Erbil.

-When speakers touched on the Israeli position, each of them noted the real nature of Israel's role, which is supportive of Kurdistan's independence, since in addition to Netanyahu's announcement that in case the Kurds declared their own State, we, the government and people [of Israel], would be in support of that, there are also Israeli statements that have supported the secession of the Kurds for years.

-As Dr. Jamal Yusuf noted, the relationship between Kurdistan and the Israelis dates back to 1943, that is to say, before the establishment of the State of 'Israel', and such relationship is linked to Israel's interests with regards to its longstanding conflict with Iraq.

He cited what the Israeli journalist, Shlomo Nakdimona, published in his book 'The Mossad in Iraq and Neighbours', that Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani has seen a need to contact Israel since 1963, seeking their help to realize the Kurds dream of self-rule.

- For her part, Professor of the Political Science, Dr. Niveen Mussa'ad, pointed out that the Israeli side has been pursuing a strategy known as «Tightening the Minority Parties», considering that the creation of a 'Kurdish State' will serve as a salvation for Israel, because it would be on Israel's own interest to establish States based on ethnic, religious and sectarian grounds.

On the US stance, she noted that the US Policy is not always going in the same direction, that's to say the US cannot be a permanent supporter of the Kurds.

As for the European States, she noted that these States oppose the referendum, because they are suffering from separatist threats within their own countries, thus there is a divergence in European positions.

- Also, ECFA's Member, Ambassador Osamah Tawfiq, not-

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ed that all European States oppose the referendum, and object to the establishment of the Kurdish State, and their objection is due to the timeliness.

When the Russian stance was put forward, he referred to the Russian statements that Erbil should take into account the possible consequences of the referendum, which expresses the national desire of the Kurdish people.

- ECFA's Member, Dr. Muhammad Al Saeed Idrees, spoke about the ambiguity of the Russian stance, which is essentially due to Russian desire to divide areas into spheres of influence between the US and Russia, especially with the US having new bases in Iraq, and the Russians taking Syria as their own sphere of influence.

Coming to the Turkish and Iranian standpoints, he said that the two stances are identical in their categorically rejecting the referendum, leading to further (Iranian-Turkish) rapprochement.

-All aspects, direct and indirect, related to the referendum in Kurdistan, including whether it is a step paving the way for independence were put forward for discussion at the symposium.

As it also appeared, the decision lacked the element of timeliness, and its reflections would not be in the best interest of the entire region, nor indeed of Kurdistan Region of Iraq itself.

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## Joint workshop between ECFA and Arab Nuclear Forum on Disarmament

On Tue, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Wed, 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, a joint workshop on Disarmament, titled “Towards a NextGen Group of Experts on Security and WMD Issues”, was jointly held by Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), Egyptian Pugwash Association for Science & International Affairs (Egypt’s National Branch of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs), Arab Institute for Security Studies in Jordan, and US Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI). A number of experts, academics and former ambassadors participated in the course, and several students and scholars attended.

In the first day, three sessions were held, which the following topics were addressed: (i) Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its Review Conferences; (ii) Nuclear Export Control Regimes; (iii) Nuclear Non-Proliferation; and (iv) Regional and International Instruments. In the second day, three sessions were held, during which these topics were discussed: (i) Nuclear Security and Nuclear Fuel Cycle (NFC); (ii) Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, commonly known as Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and (iii) promotion of Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy.

The Work Shop was organized in the wake of the first meeting of Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Conference, held in Vienna last June, and the preparations currently underway to hold the second Prepcom meeting, scheduled to be held in May 2018, in preparation for the convening of 2020 NPT Review Conference.

The most notable development in current nuclear disarmament

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ment process, was the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017, as the first legally-binding treaty instrument since the UN was established. The treaty aims at totally eliminating nuclear weapons and of the world from the most dangerous weapons of mass destruction that threaten the human race.

It is noteworthy to note that organizing this joint work shop is part of the attention given by ECFA to the issue of Disarmament and making the Middle Eastern Region safe and free of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Over the years 2014/2015, and within this context, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2014, ECFA has organized a joint meeting with the Arab League, titled “Challenges facing Arab States, in particular, issues of terrorism, and the threat posed to the Middle East region by Israel’s possession of nuclear weapons”. ECFA organized another meeting, in 2015 to discuss the Outcomes of the Conference held in New York in April 2015, titled “Review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty”. In April 2016, ECFA has organized a Joint Conference, on “The Culture of Nuclear Security and Nuclear Non-Proliferation in the Middle East”, together with the Institute for Nuclear Security, within Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

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## A Symposium on “ Egypt and reorder of the Palestinian House...and its reflections of that on the Peace Process”

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) organized a Symposium on the theme of “ Egypt and reorder of the Palestinian House...and its reflections of that on the Peace Process” at ECFA’s Headquarter. The Symposium was chaired by ECFA Member, H.E. Ambassador Sayed Abou Zaid, with Participated Ambassador Dr. Barakat Al-Farra, former Ambassador of Palestine to Cairo and its Permanent Representative to the League of Arab States; ECFA’s Members, Major General Muhammad Mujahid El-Zayyat and H.E. Ambassador Muhammad Tawfeeq; as well as Dr. Subhi Esaileh, Editor-in-Chief of the “Israeli Selections” Quarterly Magazine; Major General Muhammad Ibrahim Al-Duwairy, Head of Israeli Studies Unit; and with attended Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman; and a number of ambassadors and academics who are also ECFA is Members.

### **The Symposium was organized in three sessions as follows:**

- First Session: Palestinian National Reconciliation - Opportunities and Challenges.

(New developments that have led to throwing a stone in the stagnant water, opportunities of achieving reconciliation, process of reconciliation as well as regional and Arab environment).

- Second Session: Implications of Reconciliation Process on Opportunities for Moving Peace Process Forward.



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(Egyptian Vision, Israeli Stance, American Stance).

- Third Session: Conclusion and Recommendations.

**Participants of the Symposium emphasized the following points in particular:**

- Reconciliation is not an aim per se; it is rather a first step towards completing the peace process, however it's completing requires joint action by all parties to seek solutions to issues facing both sides, including: (i) issues related to the problem of Gaza Strip employees, their salaries, and the deteriorating economic conditions in the Strip; (ii) the more complex problems, included in 2011 Agreement, concerning the realization of Community Reconciliation for those who died during the confrontations between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the wake of the 2007 coup d'état ( after Hamas's Coup in 2007); (iii) mechanism for elements of Hamas and Islamic Jihad Movements to join Fatah Movement, and how far Israel is willing to recognize them as part of the Palestinian Authority (PA); (iv) Security Dilemma in Gaza Strip, and the possibility for Hamas Fighting Militia Elements to be part of the Palestinian Security Apparatus; and lastly (v) Elections and Formation of a National Consensus Government that is acceptable to Israel, and to what extent Israel and the West would be ready to accept the idea of Hamas Elements being part of the would-be Consensus Government.

- As for the acceptance by Hamas to enter into negotiations with Fatah Movement in order to bring the reconciliation process to an end, that came after it has issued a new document in May 2017, in which the Movement has adopted approaches that are different from its basic principles. The main impetus for Hamas to do that is in fact the result of: (i) Internal Changes, i.e. deterioration of economic conditions in Gaza Strip; (ii) Regional Chang-

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es that have emerged on the political landscape, i.e. diminishing roles of the two main regional supporters of the Movement, namely Turkey and Iran, as well as the decline of the Qatari Role, the main supporter of Hamas, after the recent Gulf Crisis, in addition to the classification, by Four Alliance States (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Bahrain), of Hamas as a Terrorist Group.

- Such situation has been arrived at as a result of Hamas Movement's desire to uphold its existence in the Palestinian Political Arena and to avoid being any attempt to push out of the political scene.

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## Seminar on The outcomes of 61<sup>st</sup> IAEA General Conference 18 – 22 September 2017, Vienna

On 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, in the presence of the Chairman and the Director of the Council and a number of Experts and academics, Dr. Yousry Abu Shady- a Member of the Council, and who attended most of the IAEA General Conference activities, reviewed the summary report which he prepared on The outcomes of 61<sup>st</sup> IAEA General Conference referring to the following points in particular:

### 1. Delegations:

There were 168 countries invited to attend the conference, but only 152 countries had the right to vote on the resolutions, and there were also 16 States that did not meet its material obligations to the Agency.

-Maria Collinsen - Ambassador of the Philippines was selected to chair the conference.

- Egypt was represented by a delegation headed by Dr. Mohamed Shaker –the Minister of Electricity, Ambassador of Egypt to Austria Omar Amer, and a number of nuclear authorities' heads in Egypt, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### 2-Conference Highlights:

•At the opening session, the General Director of the Agency- Yukiya Amano, was renewed for a third term and it will end in November 2021, and the State of Grenada was accepted. Thus, the total number of members the Agency states has become (169).

• The IAEA agenda was approved without any discussion or voting, including the item on Israeli nuclear capabilities, which was subsequently submitted by the Arab states despite the Is-

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raeli objection.

- The Agency budget for 2018 was approved and amounted to \$ 365 million, In addition to \$ 85 million a voluntary participation (most of them from the United States),it appears to be the highest number in the agency's history.

- As a representative of Egypt - Dr. Shaker delivered his speech in the first morning session, about the imminent construction of El Dabaa nuclear power plant, and Egypt's need for energy from various sources. He also called all countries of the Middle East for joining to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to subject all nuclear facilities in the region to the IAEA.

- The Israeli representative strongly attacked all Arab countries for not cooperating in the field of regional security and also for presenting the item on Israel's nuclear capabilities, in particular Iran and Syria. He mentioned before that there were four countries in the region do not abide by the safeguards system as a justification for rejecting the Arab item, but he did not specify them. (Mr. Abu Shady estimates that Iran and Syria are among the four countries, but the question is about the other two countries. Is Egypt among them because of the file that was submitted in 2005-2009, or is the two countries concerned Iraq and Libya?).

- Egypt submitted a draft resolution on the implementation of the Agency's safeguards system and the evacuation of the Middle East region from nuclear weapons and mass destruction weapons, this decision which Egypt used to submit annually and get approval without any mechanism to implement it, Perhaps the most important reason for approval was not explicitly mentioning Israel's name in the resolution.

As usual, Israel objected to the second item of the resolution, concerning "The need for all countries of the region to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and also requested for a special voting on this item, Which led Egypt to demand a double votes specially on this item and the resolution as a whole, this

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scenario has been repeated annually for many years.

**Accordingly the voting result was as follows:**

-The second item was approved by (123) countries and was rejected by one State (Israel), and there are six States abstained from voting (United States / Canada / India / Rwanda / Togo / Malawi), and India's justification for abstention was; it does not believe that the IAEA is politically responsible for the treaty.

-The resolution as a whole was approved by 123 countries and was not rejected by any country, but there were five countries abstained from voting (the United States, Israel, Canada, Togo and Malawi) with 96.1%, and this is the highest percentage in the history of this resolution.

It is clear, from the mentioned high rate that, some African countries changed their attitude in a positive way, which may reflect the improvement of Egyptian-African relations.

- On behalf of the Arab States Iraq submitted, the reasons for the inclusion of the item on Israeli nuclear capabilities, and as a reaction, it did not submit any resolution to this voting, and that for two consecutive years.

Because there were strong objections against this item, particularly from Israel, the United States, Canada and the European Union, which means that if this resolution, had been submitted to the vote, will face failure. That's why The United States has repeatedly mentioned the need to focus on direct regional talks as the best way.

- "Eleventh" new countries were elected as members of the Board of Governors, and Egypt was not among them despite being outside the Council for two years. And this is the first time in the Agency's history that Egypt has been outside the Council for three consecutive years; the reason seems to be administrative rather than political.

- There are about "175" countries that have acceded to the Additional Protocol to the Treaty and 10 countries have not joined, including Egypt, where they signed but did not accede.

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The conference witnessed many side events, such as art exhibitions and scientific seminars.

**At the end of the presentation, he concluded a set of points, as follows:**

- As in previous years, the United States supported Israel's regional talks and direct negotiations between the countries of the region, opposing the Arab call for the Director of the Agency to activate the inspection in Israel and all its nuclear facilities.

- He pointed out that the decision adopted by the Arab League was submitted for discussion within the meeting and was not presented by the Arab League to vote generally, due to the strong opposition to the resolution by European countries and a number of African countries, As it somehow refers to Israel in its call to all States to accede to the Treaty.

- He strongly stressed the necessity for Egypt signature on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) with both countries Iran and Israel before 2020.

- On the Iranian nuclear program, he confirmed that Iran's commitment to the agreement with the Group of 5 + 1, pointing out that the American delegate of the organization visit the headquarters of the Agency, and to see the activities of the inspection by the agency in Iran, and Iran allowed the Agency to inspect on the military facilities (in spite of the nuclear agreement with it did not explicitly stated that, but the agreement gave Iran the right to ask the inspectors about the reasons for the visit).

- He referred to the global nuclear progress of a number of countries, including China, which is currently adopting a trend to build new reactors, the intention to enter the market to build reactors and produce nuclear energy for long-term competition. Japan also announced the return of five reactors which ceased in the after math of

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the second World War; approximately 50 Japanese reactors are expected to return to work within 10 years, while Russia has announced the establishment and expansion of new reactors, as well as contracts to build new nuclear power plants for peaceful purposes in Egypt and Jordan. As well as contracts for the construction of new nuclear power plants for peaceful purposes in Egypt and Jordan.

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## Symposium on the National Security Issues in Egypt's Foreign Policy, the Military, Political and Economic Dimensions

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) organized a Symposium titled “National Security Dimensions in Egypt’s Foreign Policy”, in which the ECFA’s Members delivered speeches, including: Staff Major General Hisham El-Halaby, Ambassador Marawan Badr, and Ambassador Muhammad El-Shazly, with the participation of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Director, and a number of Council Members.

**During the Symposium, three main themes were discussed, namely:**

- Military Dimension in Egypt’s Foreign Policy;
- Political Dimension in Egypt’s Foreign Policy;
- Economic and Developmental Dimension of Egypt’s Foreign Policy.

- On the Military Dimension, ECFA Member Major General Hisham Halabi, addressed two main themes in his speech:

- Some historical examples of the Armed Forces Role in Foreign Policy.
- Features of the current Armed Forces’ Role in Foreign Policy and the factors that are common to both Military and Diplomatic aspects in shaping Foreign Policy.

He concluded by stressing the fact that Military and Diplo-



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macy are two sides of a single coin, and that both sides should have a cumulative understanding of each others, recommending that 1973 War Case Study be taught to present generations.

- On the Political Dimension, Ambassador Muhammad Abdul-Moneim El-Shazly spoke and stressed that National Security is a broad concept that encompasses protecting the State against dangers that threaten its safety and preserving its basic tenets, the most important of which are:

- Unity and integrity of its territories and national soil; cohesion of its social fabric, unity of its people and cohesion of its internal front; preservation of its economic interests in a way that enables it to sustain its economic growth, and thus allow for achieving prosperity and stability; preserving the ethics, beliefs, civilizational norms and life-style of its people; maintaining regional security, especially in neighbouring States; creating a regional atmosphere that ensures security and stability in the country; and contributing to the formation of an international system that is supportive of and harmonious with the State's objectives.

He also stressed the need for all State's circles, official and popular, to be involved in achieving national security, adding that there are six circles that are pioneers in this regard, namely: (Economy, Armed Forces, Media, Culture, Arts, Scientific Research and Diplomacy).

- As for Economic/Developmental Dimension, Ambassador Marawan Badr explained, in his speech, that basically the funding for any State's economic development projects is to rely on their own resources, and in case these resources were inadequate, the alternative

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would be resorting to the international community, where funding such projects allows for aiding the Development process. He noted that there is a number of recognized mechanisms through which funding could be provided, including:

- Bilateral relations with States;
- Financing Institutions (Arab: Arab Monetary Fund, Regional: African Development Bank and Islamic Development Bank; or International: International Monetary Fund and World Bank).

Adding that there is another mechanism manifested in some International Groups that provide funding for some Developing States, or to certain geographical regions, such as the European Union within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership framework.

**The presentations were followed by a number of interventions by the audience, as follows:**

- In his intervention, ECFA Director, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, explained that the three presentations were complementing each other, noting that he could summarize his remarks as follows:

1. Using or threatening to use Military Force is part of any State's Supreme Policy, and a tool of its Foreign Policy or Strategy, that has components such as Economy, Culture, and Education... etc. He noted that historically, the term "Strategy" has had a military inference, being equated to Armed Forces Plans, and has evolved to become a "National Security Strategy". The traditional concept of "National Security" leads us to think along the lines of "Military Force", hence the existence of an intersection between connotations of National Security and Military Force at the theoretical level.

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- For his part, ECFA Member, Ambassador Reda Shehata, pointed out that setting transparency limits in relation to National Security events and threats, necessarily affects the extent of support or endorsement received, especially in times of crisis and balancing sources of threat to National Security with requirements for offering support and endorsements to the political leadership.

- Commenting on what Ambassador Reda said regarding the institutions forming Foreign Policy, ECFA Member, Ambassador Adel El-Saloussy, noted that in Democratic and European States, Parliament Institutions, always have a large and decisive role, and the parliament is one of the three main pillars of Foreign Policy Making.

- For her part, ECFA Member, Ambassador Hajer El-Is-lambouly, noted that she was not aware of many aspects included in the three presentations, especially what Ambassador Marawan's remarks on development aspects, in which he highlighted that a particular decision was taken in a certain way, against Organizations, which led to halting the possibility of benefiting from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), while other Arab States have benefited from it.

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## Round table Discussion on the development on the Situations in the Region and in Lebanon in light of Saad El-Hariri's Resignation

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, a round table discussion was held at the Headquarters of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA). The Round table discussion was held within the context of ECFA's keenness to closely follow the developments currently taking place in the region. The aim was to discuss repercussions of the resignation by Lebanese Prime Minister, Saad El-Hariri and the escalation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Iran. The Discussion attracted the participation of Ambassador Abdur-Raouf El-Reedy, ECFA's Honorary Chairman, Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, Ambassador Ihab Wahba, Coordinator of ECFA Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs, Dr. Mohammed Badr El-Deen Zayed, ECFA's Member, Dr. Ussama El-Ghazaly Harb, ECFA's Board Member, Prof. Dr. Ahmad Yousuf Ahmad, Professor of Political Science, and Dr. Muhammad Kamal, ECFA's Member.

- The Round Table discussion began with Ambassador Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, stressing that organizing the discussion was part of Ambassador Al-Reedy's proposal that called for the need to keep abreast and discuss current developments in the regional arena. Holding this Round table coincided with the convening of an Emergency Meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers at the Arab League, called for by KSA to discuss Iran's policies in the region.

- Ambassador Ihab Wahba, Coordinator of

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ECFA Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs, affirmed that the meeting was a part of ECFA's interest in discussing regional issues and the developments that the Arab world is witnessing. On the planned meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers, he stressed that divisions exist within the Arab ranks, in face of what is being echoed regarding the absence of Foreign Ministers of Qatar, Lebanon, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria and Iraq, with those States delegating only their representatives. He warned against following any disputed or unresolved steps, stressing that the Arab World has never gone through so many problems as it is doing right now. Even more, when a glimmer of hope to resolve those crisis emerges, it is followed by the emergence of other obstructing crisis as if they were parts of accurately calculated plans. For example, as the elimination of ISIL was almost at hand, the Qatari Crisis has emerged, with Four Arab States announcing their boycotting of the State of Qatar. It was followed by the Crisis of Kurdistan Region, then the recent crisis in Lebanon, and developments between KSA and Iran, in the wake of launching a Ballistic Missile from Yemen on Riyadh, and the announcement by KSA that the missile is Iranian made, followed by one of the US military officials, uttering support to the Saudi narrative. All of that, as it seems, is done with the aim of avoiding the Arab World from focusing on the development of its own conditions, but rather getting it preoccupied with solving its own problems and pushing it towards the normalizing of Arab-Israeli relations to confront Tehran. There are even talks that KSA is pushing Israel to launch a military operation against Hezbollah, a situation that reflects deterioration and disintegration of the Arab world from within.

- During interventions by participants in the

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Round Table Discussion, ECFA Board Member, Dr. Ossa-  
ma El-Ghazaly, said that when looking at the Middle East  
and the Arab World, we will note that the greatest danger  
we are facing is Iran's ambitions. Iran, since its revolution  
in 1979, has always shown its desire to extend its influ-  
ence and hegemony in the Arab region, using its claims  
against Israel as a mere pretext for achieving that.

- Ambassador Dr. Muhammad Badr El-Deen Zayed, Member of ECFA, stressed that Shiites are not all the same. They rather have many doctrines. Hence, not every Shiite is Pro-Iranian nor is he a supporter of Iran per se. He emphasized the need to maintain the Arab Shiites' opposition to Iran's policies, casting doubt on the two scenarios that are anticipated after the return of Saad El-Hariry to Lebanon, which would be either to keep his resignation or annul it in exchange for concessions from Hezbollah.

- Prof. Dr. Ahmad Yousuf Ahmad, a Political Science Professor, noted that what was happening in Lebanon then came within the context of the obvious Saudi-Iranian polarization and Iran's quest to dominate the States of the region. He stressed the need to support Egypt's current policy that is based on a rational idea of not interfering in Lebanon's Internal Affairs.

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## Roundtable Discussion on Countering Terrorism

On December 11<sup>th</sup> 2017, the Council organized a panel of discussion on «Countering Terrorist Organizations following the killing of the worshipers at Al Rawda mosque in Sinai on 24<sup>th</sup> of November», with the participation of Ambassador Dr. Mounir-Zahran, Chairman of the Council, Ambassador Abdul Raouf Al-Reedy, Honorary Chairman of the Council, General/ FuadAllam, member of the National Council for Combating Terrorism and Extremism, former State Security Agency Undersecretary Dr. Najih Ibrahim, specialist in the affairs of Islamic groups, and Colonel / KhaledOkasha, Member of the National Council to Combat Terrorism and Extremism.

-The Egyptian Council called for an urgent re-examination of the issue in the light of the massacre of worshipers during Friday prayers on November 24<sup>th</sup> at the Al-Rawda mosque in Bir al-Abed area in northern Sinai. This process represents a dangerous development in the practices of terrorist movements. Although the army and the police made strenuous efforts to confront the terrorists and their follow-up in the Sinai and Western Sahara, after the assassination of the police in the oases and killed nearly 16 after being confronted and capturing one of them, then the police and army managed to unravel.

-Then came the announcement of US President Donald Trump on 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, «which covered the media on the massacre of Al Rawda in Sinai, recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and the transfer of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to it.» It is necessary to distinguish between this subject and the first issue, which is a dangerous development in the operations of terrorists, perhaps due to the reduction of ISIS operations in Syria and Iraq, and then the ISIS terrorists moved to Egypt,

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and this is what Turkish President Erdogan recently said. There are those who criticized the Azhar scholars because they did not atone for the terrorists, while the killing of the worshipers in general during the Friday prayers is considered the summit of «infidels».

-The need for the Egyptian authorities to benefit from the experiences of other Islamic countries in the face of radical Islamic trends, with particular reference to the experiences of Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and Egypt's experience in the past against the extremism of the Muslim Brotherhood, after mentioning the experiences of these countries; with the aim of developing a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism and to counter attempts to spread this phenomenon.

The discussions resulted in a set of recommendations:

- It is necessary to organize lectures for detainees in all prisons for their guiding them and tolerating with some of them, instead of turning the prisons into haters of terrorism.
- Mainstreaming the accused in prisons in various professions - such as cooking, handicrafts and organizing libraries.
- There must be an alternative pot to turn extremists, when they engage in public life after they are released from prison in the framework of amnesty decisions.
- The need to take care of prisons, develop them and organize educational courses for officers and non-commissioned officers.
- Political decisions must be made to confront the economic hardships faced by Egyptians and the spread of terrorism in Egypt, which exploits those difficulties.
- Look for ways to attract the attention of young peo-



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ple and the public to fill the gap experienced by Egyptians to spread culture, art and other soft power.

- The need to develop an integrated strategy of the National Council to combat terrorism, Cooperate with experts in the fight against terrorism, and benefit from the experiences of other countries.

- The preference for moderate Sufi thought, such as the thought of the sheikhs Abdel Halim Mahmoud and Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayeb, in their thought of giving, forgiveness, tolerance and mercy to replace Takfiri thought and contain extremist Salafi ideas.

- The possibility of investing the presence of Sufism in many villages and regions, a strategy that proved successful when used in the past.

- Accelerate the amendment and development of the Law of Criminal Procedure and intensify the training sessions of judges in an open manner to deal with the situation of terrorism.

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## ECFA's Annual Conference 2017

### “Egyptian-African relations... towards new horizons”

As part of Egypt's keenness to rearrange the priorities of its foreign policy in the way that the Egyptian interest is growing, especially in light of the turbulent environment in the region, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs has chosen the theme of «Egyptian-African relations ... towards new horizons» in the annual Conference of 2017, which was held over a two day period from 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, and addressed a number of topics with an African dimension and its intersection with the interests of the Egyptian agenda. During the first day, and during four sessions, which included the review of 14 research papers for a group of experts and researchers specialized in African affairs, emphasize has been placed on all aspects of the Egyptian-African relations and their various dimensions (political, economic, security and cultural). This is in addition to reviewing the Egyptian relations with the Nile Basin countries as well as the African powers, and trying to identify the opportunities that can be exploited to maximize the Egyptian benefit of these partnerships through different cooperation frameworks.

In light of the security challenges that have become the main challenge to the development plans pursued by the African continent and its poor peoples, the security axis in the Egyptian-African relations has been strongly present on the agenda of the Conference through several research papers, (terrorism, migration, human trafficking and refugees), especially in areas that have a direct impact on Egypt's national security, particularly the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea. This is in addition to trying to highlight the common ground for cooperation, African conflict. This is in addition to trying to highlight the common ground of cooperation that can be the starting point of the Egyptian role,

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especially in the field of African peace and security.

In addition to the above, the developmental dimension and the economic axis were among the main focus of the sessions in the framework of enhancing the movement for the Egyptian role. The economic and trade opportunities that cooperation partnerships between Egypt and the continent will be explored by examining the current status of Egyptian-African relations, especially in East Africa, and the opportunities for industrial cooperation with the continent, in addition to evaluating the Egyptian development tools in Africa and ways to modernize them through the Egyptian Agency for Partnership for Development, or launching new regional initiatives. As well as the roles of the relevant ministries in this regard, and then crystallize a vision through which it can enhance the Egyptian economic interests in the continent.

On the framework of cultural cooperation between Egypt and African countries, considered as one of the areas through which the Egyptian relations can be strengthened and developed in the light of some common denominators through the religious component and other cultural components, the sessions focused on reviewing the current state of cultural and media communication between Egypt and African countries, as well as the tools that rely on this communication, and then discuss ways to develop them.

On the second day of the conference, and during three sessions, several papers were reviewed, focusing on the remaining issues of Egyptian foreign policy in the continent and discussing the opportunities to strengthen the Egyptian-African partnerships through the collective frameworks of African institutions. Through discussing the Egyptian role within the framework of the African Union (The Peace and Security Council, the peer mechanism, the mechanism of the wise men of Africa, African governance, the African Parliament) and its response to the Egyptian interests, as well as the opportunities and challenges that may

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face the Egyptian role in its partnerships with the sub regional Organizations (ECOWAS, SADC, Moroccan Union, Central Union, Sahel and Sahara) and the financial potential that are provided by the African development institutions (African Development Bank, African Export and Import Bank) can provide for Egypt's development projects.

On the international cooperation frameworks that the African environment may provide, given its geopolitical importance, with the international partners in different countries of the world, which have implications for the relations (Egyptian - African), especially if these partnerships are in a competitive framework with the Egyptian role on the spheres of influence on the continent, and hence the focus was placed on most of these partnerships, including partnerships (European, Asian and Middle Eastern), as well as addressing some of the roles of regional and international powers that affect the Egyptian interests in the continent (specifically water security), and these roles, Turkish, Iranian, Israeli and American, and then try to determine the dimensions of these roles And to work on developing a vision for the Arab movement towards these movements that affect on its interests.

## Chapter II



Visits to the Council



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## Delegations:

### American Jews delegation discusses ECFA's views on Egypt-US relations and peace process

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017, ECFA received a delegation of 23 American Jews from different social and professional backgrounds, headed by Mr. John Lipotlier, former US Congressman for the Republican Party of New York, and Mr. Eric Mandel, Founder and Director MEPIN, as part of the delegation meetings with a number of civil society organizations, including ECFA, to know ECFA's view of prospects of Egyptian-American relations under the new administration, and its vision of the Future of peace process in the Middle East.

Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran welcomed the delegation and reviewed ECFA history, role and interaction with counterpart centers and councils around the world.

The discussions covered several topics, including Egypt's assessment of its democratic transition experience, Egyptian-American relations in the light of the election of Donald Trump as the new US president, Egypt and its regional role.

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## The visit of the US Air War College to the Council.

It may be said that, the meeting which held on 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2017 between the students of the US Air War College and several ECFA's members was the series of questions posed by the American delegation on the Council views on them, after listening to the welcome speeches at the opening of the meeting by Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA's Director and Ambassador/ Dr. Hussein Hassouna, Coordinator of Permanent Committee for American Affairs of the Council.

Also participants in the meeting included Ambassador/ Ihab Wahba, Major General/ Mohammad Ibrahim Al-Duwairi, Major General/ Hisham Al-Halabi and Dr. Gamal Youssef.

The questions dealt with issues which relating to Egypt: Cairo's relations with the Trump administration, regional problems, the American role in solving the Palestinian issue and the fight against terrorism.

- A member of the US delegation asked about ECFA expectations of the meeting between President Sisi and President Trump and its result.

- Ambassador/ Dr. Hussein Hassouna answered on that, the meeting may witness more cooperation between the two countries especially in fighting terrorism.

- In reply to a question by a delegation member about the US role, Ambassador/ Ihab Wahba said, "The good relations between President Sadat and President Carter led to the signing of the peace agreement with Israel , this step confirmed and elaborated the American role in advancing the peace process.»

- In response to another question about the anti-American feelings towards the US role in the region, Ambassador Ezzat Saad said that, this feeling is linked to the American attitude towards the Arab-Israeli conflict.



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- Responding to a question about the fields and opportunities which Egypt wants the U.S to invest in it , in the light of the upcoming summit between the Egyptian and American presidents, the answer was that there are many huge projects that Egypt needs to invest in, including the development of the Suez Canal. Egypt also launched giant projects in record time, such as projects for the reclamation of desert lands. However, Egypt does not only need investment, but also needs to obtain technical and technological support and cooperation in various fields such as education.

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## The visit of members of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to the Council

Given the importance attached by the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to inform the Council of the status of the court and the objectives of the Court's delegation's visit to Egypt, the delegation visited the Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2017. The delegation was represented by the President of the Court Judge/ Silva Oré and a number of judges from different nationalities, including Judge/ Rafea Bin Ashour, representative of Tunisia, Judge/ Chafika bin Saoula representative of Algeria, in the presence of many members of the Council including Ambassador/ Dr. MounirZahran, Chair of the Council, Ambassador /Dr. EzzatSaad, Director of the Council, and Ambassadors Mohamed Anis Salem and Marwan Badr and Judge/ Dr. Fouad AbdelMoneimRiad.

Judge Silva Oré mentioned that during his visit to Egypt he met with several officials including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the interior, the Speaker of the house of the representative and the President of the Supreme Constitutional Court.

The delegation was informed of the efforts conducted by Egypt to guarantee human rights, while noting that the current round aims to make Egypt ratify the court's protocol already ratified by 30 African States. Oré also conveyed, on behalf of his colleagues and on his own behalf, his deepest sympathy and most sincere condolences to Egypt and its people to the terrorist attacks targeting Coptic churches in Tanta and Alexandria, thereby confirming the solidarity with Egypt in its war against terrorism.

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## Visit of Students From London School of Economics.

On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2017, a delegation of 12 students from London School of Economics visited the Council in order to become familiar with the nature of the Council's work and ask some questions about it.

The delegation asked a number of questions about the Egyptian foreign policy and the nature and extent of the regional powers in the Middle East. Many questions were also raised concerning and the crisis faced Egypt over the past period, including the crisis over the Tiran and Sanafir islands.

Ambassador Mounir Zahran made sure to give them detailed and clear answers .

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## A meeting with the delegation of the Shanghai Institute of International Studies

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a meeting was held at the Council's head-quarter with the delegation of Shanghai Institute of International Studies(SIIS). The Egyptian delegation included Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad Director of ECFA, Ambassador Hisham El-Zamaity, the Secretary General of the Council, Ambassador Ali El-Hefny, coordinator of the Permanent committee of the Asian affairs, Ambassador Ahmed Abd-el-Aziz, assistant of Foreign Minister for East Asian affairs and Mr.Mostafa Ibrahim, representative of the Egyptian Businessmen association. From the Chinese side, the delegation included Mr. Ye Qing, Director of the Institute, and some of the experts and academics of the Institute such as Prof. Chen Youjun, Prof. Li Weijian, Prof. Jin Liangxiang and Ms.XuXiaolan.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on issues related to the Belt and Road Initiative, developments in the region and Chinese diplomacy in the Middle East.

The Egyptian delegation confirmed on the fact that the meeting is an extension of the Council's efforts to coordinate with their Chinese counterparts on the Belt and Road Initiative, the most prominent of which was when a delegation of the China Center For Contemporary World Studies (CCCWS) on 18<sup>th</sup> of March. The importance of the strengthening of the economic aspect between the two countries was emphasized in order to reflect the evolution of the political and historical ties between the two countries. But also, since Egypt was one of the first countries to sign the memorandum of cooperation under the initiative.

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## Working Dinner with a number of Chinese Think Tanks

### **Working dinner with the Delegation of the African Studies Unit of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)**

On May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs organized a working dinner in honor of the delegation of the African Studies Unit of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR). The topics discussed were the Egyptian-Chinese and Sino-African economic cooperation, in Egypt, as well as Chinese-African cooperation in the areas of peace and security.

The discussions were held with the participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, Ambassador Hisham Al-Zamaity, Secretary-General, Ambassador Ali Al-Hefni, Coordinator of the Permanent Committee for Asian Affairs in the Council, Ambassador Ahmed Hajjaj, ECFA's Member and a number of representatives from the General Authority for Investment. The Chinese delegation, Mr. Li Wentao, former director of Shanghai Institute for International Studies, Wang Lei and Sun Hong, included researchers at the Institute.

The meeting emphasized that Egypt faces many internal and regional challenges and is moving forward in its efforts to combat extremism and terrorism, especially since Egypt enjoys stability unlike other African countries such as Zimbabwe, which may face instability due to the lack of more stable institutions unlike the Egyptian state, which managed to maintain its existence amid the tensions experienced in the region since 2011.

The idea of holding a conference to discuss ways of stabi-

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lizing the region in light of the remarkable US withdrawal from the region's crisis, as well as limiting Western attention to illegal immigration and refugees, and combating terrorism from the region, was welcomed. In this context, in light of the fact that Egypt has a clear and independent vision that is not part of the policies of other countries, as was the case before 2011, but depends on the diversification of the allies, which is based on armaments signed by Egypt with many countries. The most important of which is the interest of both countries.

The Chinese delegation also stressed the Chinese government's keenness to boost investments in Egypt, taking advantage of the steps being taken on the road to reform and the Chinese government's keenness to provide facilities to Egyptian companies. He expressed the hope that all problems will be overcome. High profit rates, and work to form a common vision to meet all the challenges faced by the Egyptian market.

China's recognition of the importance of working with the continent's partners, which according to economic outlook is a safe and open market for the world, which China has realized and has expanded its investment base in many countries of the continent and approved legislation and policies in this context to provide funding for these projects, especially the projects working in the field of infrastructure amid rising competition for the resources of the continent, and this is in spite of the problems faced by some of these countries, citing in this context the high deficit and foreign debt on the Ethiopian government, and its inability to repay Chinese companies invested in many infrastructure projects, as well as the existence of many security challenges, and the inability of many of these countries to achieve full stability. China has a huge loan and employment project for the people of the continent, especially as this is an important reason to combat terrorism, as well as the provision of military grants

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(5000-6000) to strengthen military capabilities and the provision of military equipment and tools.

In conclusion, Ambassador Dr. EzzatSaad, Director of the Council, deliberated a number of topics to be discussed by the upcoming meeting between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the African Studies Unit of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, namely:

- Combatting terrorism.
- Current situation in the region.
- The two sides view the future of the political situation and cooperation with the Arab League in this regard.
- How to prevent further interference in Arab affairs from the world powers, and the impact on Arab policy-making, the escalation of conflict in the region, and the Chinese role in calming the situation.

### Working dinner and signing a memorandum of understanding with the delegation of the Chinese Association of Friendship (CAF)

On May 14<sup>th</sup>2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the Chinese Association for Friendship (CAF) signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation between the two sides in all fields. The council then organized a working dinner in honor of the delegation during which they discussed various aspects related to ways of combating terrorism in the region and China in the fields of political, economic and cultural, in this regard it has been stressed on number of points including:

- Looking forward to enhancing the cooperation between the two sides in the field of cultural and

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knowledge exchange, and the importance of preparing a memorandum of understanding for cooperation between the Chinese Institute and many Egyptian cultural centers, such as Egypt Public Library.

- The importance of China playing its role in the (South-South) Cooperation, as well as cooperation between the South and the North in the context of what is known as the «Oriented Cooperation», especially in the framework of China's pursuit of the One Belt, One Road Initiative from the deepening of cooperation with all partners, although some countries have no desire to fear Chinese hegemony, which has faced the deepening of Sino-Japanese relations for decades, although the Chinese state has recognized since the revolution of 1978 the importance of cooperation between Asian countries to establish a new renaissance based on the concerted efforts of the Chinese people, and Aided with all partners in it, which China wanted to establish through the initiative of the One Belt, One Road and the way to establish a better world based on cooperation for development not conflict.

- Emphasize China's vision of a free world from nuclear-weapons, awareness of its dangers, and the nuclear arms race, which will only lead to further turmoil and tension and escalation of crisis.

- The importance of building on the two countries, the Egyptian and Chinese leaderships from strong political relations and starting from them to deepen cooperation in all security, economic and cultural fields and activate memorandums of understanding, especially those signed within the framework of the One Belt, One Road initiative. In light of the major national projects being carried out by the Egyptian state and the ongoing legislative reforms, foremost of which is the issuance of the new investment law, the solution of investor's problems and the



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end of bureaucratic procedures.

- The importance of working with Chinese partners to correct what is being promoted about Egypt in the Western media, especially since Egypt is working to combat a global phenomenon that suffers from many countries and is working to achieve economic development and social justice despite the increasing challenges, which requires the concerted efforts of its partners to support the Egyptian state in its steps.

- To intensify visits between the two sides with a view to exchanging views and coordinating visions regarding bilateral relations or global developments, as well as promoting cooperation between the two sides in all fields of education and culture, especially in the context of what was declared, that the year 2016 is the year of the Egyptian- Chinese culture.

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## Exchange of views with the delegation of the Chinese Foreign Policy Advisory Group

On 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received a delegation from the Foreign Policy Advisory Group of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which included Ambassador “Wuseke”, member of the Foreign Policy Advisory Group, the former Chinese Special Envoy for Middle East Affairs, the former Chinese Ambassador to Egypt, Ambassador “Zhou Xiaobi.

On the other hand, the members of the Council were: Ambassador/ Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council, Ambassador/ IhabWahba, Coordinator of the Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs in the Council, Ambassador/ Ali Al-Hefni, Coordinator of the Permanent Committee for Asian Affairs at the Council, Ambassador/ Mohammed Anis Salem, Ambassador/ Ahmed Rizk, Ambassador/ Mohamed Tawfiq, Members of the Council.

The meeting focused on the following issues in particular: US policy in the Middle East and its impact on developments in the region, in the light of Trump’s visit to a number of countries in the region in early May, combating terrorism, the Initiative of the Belt and Road and areas of cooperation between Egypt and China.

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## A Meeting with a Delegation from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> of August 2017, a delegation from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) visited the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs. General Gawn, Kai-Erik Jukka, Chief Liaison Office to Cairo, represented the UNTSO, from the Egyptian side, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of ECFA, and General Mohamed Ibrahim, member of the council, attended the conference.

### **The two sides discussed these topics:**

- Sinai's situation: The armed Forces and police efforts to combat the Terrorist and extremist groups.
- Egyptian-US Relations: changes with the new US president; US expectations from Egypt in regard to Egypt-Iran relations; Egypt expectations in return; implications for Israel and for Egypt-Israel relations.
- Egyptian - Sudanese Bilateral Relations.

Major General Mohamed Ibrahim discussed the situation in Sinai and the discussions between Hamas and Egypt. He explained the role of the Egyptian army to combat terrorism and the success of the comprehensive plans set by Egypt three years ago to eliminate the threat posed by Terrorist and extremist groups there.

Ambassador Ezzat Saad talked about the two other topics which are the Egypt-US relations and the Bilateral Relations between Egypt and Sudan. As to Egypt's relations with its neighbor Sudan, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat emphasized the importance of history and values which common between two countries and should to build on it.

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He also stressed on the importance of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and in achieving political stability in Egypt through investments and aids in order to stabilize the situation and help it counter violent extremism. He said that even though the strict economic reforms and the inflation may have a negative social impact, the Egyptian people understands the necessity of these reforms and support the leadership.

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## A Meeting with a Delegation from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) received a delegation from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), which included: Ms. (Judy Hyland), Senior Advisor to the National Committee for Human Rights, Colonel (Petri Kajanma), Deputy Chief of Staff, and Mr. (Dave foly), Head of Legal Affairs Department.

On the other hand, the following ECFA Members attended the meeting: Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad ECFA Director, and Maj. Gen. Muhammad Ibraheem El-Daury, ECFA's Israeli Studies Unit Head.

### **The meeting has focused on the following issues in particular:**

- recent events in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA); positive progress in Lebanon in terms of Governance and adoption of the electoral law; Israeli threats against Lebanon and Syria; security and stability of Sinai; especially after ISIL's defeat in Iraq and Syria; and reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah Movements.

- The Egyptian side stressed that Egypt will NOT tolerate any terrorist activities on its territory, and that Egypt is working and coordinating with all States to eliminate the terrorist presence of those groups.

- For his part, the UN Delegation stressed that Egypt's re-

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cent maneuvers to move stagnant water in the reconciliation process had been successful thanks to several characteristic elements of Egypt's Role, e.g. relations with Palestinian elites and factions, nevertheless the process is still facing many problems.

- Then, talks touched on several developments in the region, both in the wake of the resignation of Lebanese Prime Minister Saad EL-Hariry, Iran's threats in the region, and the fear of escalating the pace of Israeli confrontations with Hezbollah on Syrian borders.

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## The ECFA Received a Delegation from the UN Department of Field Support (DFS), the Provider of Recruitment Services to the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Missions

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) has received a Delegation from UN-DFS, the provider of Human Resources & Recruitment Services to UN Peacekeeping, Special Political and other Field Missions. The Delegation included Ms. Huda Hannina, Chief, Outreach and Workforce Planning Section at the UN, New York, and Ms. Seham Al-Kafy, Chief of Auditing Section. The following dignitaries were also present: Ambassador Amre El-Jowaily, Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for United Nations Affairs at Egypt's Foreign Ministry, ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Director, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, and ECFA Board Member, Dr. Osama El-Ghazaly Harb.

The aims of the meeting were for the Delegation to introduce career and field job opportunities available at the United Nations Offices in various regions and in different disciplines, and to explore ways of enhancing cooperation and coordination with ECFA to serve as a link with other research centres, Egypt Civil Society Organizations and ECFA's partners in the Arab World. This, in turn, will publicize those career opportunities, shed light on how to apply for available job vacancies and help move beyond different stages of job application.

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## **Figures:**

### Lecture of Korean Ambassador on (the Situation in North-East Asia Region and the current Situation in Korean Peninsula)

On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received Mr. Go Yoon – Son, Ambassador of the Republic of South Korea to Egypt. The Korean Defense Attaché, Mr. Kim Jin Moo and other Korean Embassy members accompanied him to the meeting with Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chair, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director and several ECFA members.

Ambassador Mounir Zahran welcomed the Korean Ambassador and the delegation, stressing the depth of the two countries' long and common history since the 1950s, which was recently strengthened by President Sisi's visit to South Korea in January 2016, and rising the level of trade exchange between the two countries and the aspiration to develop relations between the two sides in all fields of socio-economic development and in the exchange of views on all issues of common concern.

In conclusion, Ambassador Zahran emphasized the need to shed light on developments in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) in the context of the new US administration's declaration of withdrawal from the Convention.

The Korean Ambassador began his speech by thanking ECFA for the invitation, adding that he would speak about the North East Asian security environment, North Korea's nuclear tests and threats, as well as Korean-Egyptian bilateral relations.

On the Egyptian-Korean relations, Korean Ambassador said that, Egypt and Korea have firm and strong relations which were further strengthened by President Sisi's rule and his visit to South



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Korea earlier this year. This was followed by visits by many Korean personalities and the holding of meetings between the two ministers of industry in March 2016 in order to discuss what the Korean companies can offer in the field of economic development in the context of Egypt's experience and economic reform program, as well as its competitive advantage of being a large consumer market and open to the development of technology and chemical industries, in addition to Egypt's recent development of its infrastructure in the past period. There are also great opportunities for cooperation in the field of governance and the establishment of smart villages, as well as cultural exchange and the provision of training grants to transfer Korean expertise to the Egyptian market in all fields. The Korean ambassador expressed hope that this cooperation will continue and move to more fields related to enhance cooperation at the cultural and popular levels.

There were extensive discussions by the ECFA members on all the issues raised by the Korean Ambassador.

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## Meeting with the Chinese Ambassador in Cairo

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received Mr. Song Aiguo, Chinese Ambassador to Cairo, to speak about (Egypt-China Relations and Prospects for the Future).

The meeting was opened by Ambassador Mounir Zahran Chair of ECFA who welcomed the Chinese Ambassador, noting that, it was the first time that the Council received Mr. Song Aiguo, and stressed the historical ties between the two countries. Egypt was one of the first countries to recognize the Government of the People's Republic of China in 1956. Ambassador Zahran referred to the visits that took place at the presidential level between the Egyptian and Chinese presidents in recent time.

On his part, the Chinese Ambassador began by thanking ECFA for inviting him.

Ambassador Aiguo underlined the important and distinguished relations between the two countries, adding that "Egypt is the pillar of stability and security in the Middle East».

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## Meeting with Minister of local Development Mr. Hisham Al Sharif

On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received Minister of Local Development Hisham El Sherif to outline his vision to promote local development in Egypt, and his plan to upgrade and improve the services provided to citizens. He stressed that the plan is not limited to financial aspects but is primarily concerned with human and social aspects of development, in line with the government's 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy.

In this respect, Minister Al Sherif said that information technology and the experience of Egyptian cadres are key to promoting local development and that the ministry is moving at a fast pace to achieve it in line with President Sisi's vision.

The minister called on the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs to promote the Ministry's plans, by awareness and cultural activities through field visits to governorates.

Concerning the basic needs for education and health services, Minister Al Sherif stressed that the Ministry was in the process of adopting special programs designed to produce qualified human cadres, and is considering other decisions on the allocation of land in each governorate for establishing a university with specific disciplines based on its own resources and needs.

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## Round Table about Yazidis Tragedy

On Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a round table was held for ECFA members with Professor Khaleda Khalid Rashed, Adviser to the Cultural Committee of the Kurdistan Parliament, to talk about the Suffering of the Yazidis by Daesh Gangs and the Condition of the Displaced in Camps.

The meeting was chaired by Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chair, and Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director with the participation of Mr. Ragai Fayed, ECFA member; Mr Yasin Raouf, officer of the Cairo Office for Foreign Relations of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, and several ECFA members.

The meeting began with Ambassador Mounir Zahran welcoming the participants, in particular Ms. Khalida Khaled Rashed, writer, academic, parliamentarian and the author of many award winning novels and poems.

On her part, Ms. Khaleda stressed that she did not come to ECFA to gain sympathy from the media, but to convey a message on the need for respecting diversity, freedom and religion, which are the basic principles of humanity. Their absence has been the cause of chaos in the Middle East. Everyone is talking about diversity and respect but without applying them. "The Iraqi government is one of the Arab governments that do not recognize the need to respect Iraqi minorities and treats them as second-class citizens." Khaleda said.

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## The vision of the Chinese special envoy to Syria for the crisis solution

In the context of the attention given by the world and especially Egypt to the situation in Syria, to find a solution that would preserve the unity of the Syrian state and guarantee the security and integrity of its people, exchanges of view took place between the Chinese special envoy to Syria Mr. Xie Xiaoyan, the meeting took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2017 .

The Chinese envoy Mr. Xie Xiaoyan explained that the purpose of his mission as the Chinese special envoy for Syria is to discuss and consult on the Syrian crisis with the concerned regional and international parties in order to reach a solution that could be acceptable to all the conflicting Syrian parties.

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## The nanotechnology: a vital necessity for Egypt

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs hosted a meeting on Sunday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2017 with Dr. Taher Salah-el-Din, the nanotechnology professor and the director of Dr. Mostafa El-Sayed's center for nanotechnology researches.

Dr. Salah-el Din began by introducing his research paper which aimed to promote nanotechnology literacy, since it is a science to study and control an issue on an atomic and micro scale.

He also talked about implementing the roadmap to nanotechnology and its application in Egypt and the necessary foundations to build a nanotechnology-friendly base. These pillars include education based on science, the link between science and economy and commodities markets.

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## Meeting with Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Eng. Tarek El-Molla Explains to the Council the Developments in the Energy Sector in Egypt

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received Eng. Tarek El-Molla, Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, in order to discuss the recent developments in the energy sector in Egypt. El-Molla made sure to inform the members of the council of the strategy of the ministry which includes areas relating to the increase of productivity, secure the country's needs from petroleum products, the implementation of the oil sector development and modernization project, the expansion in projects aiming to deliver natural gas to houses and factories, the expansion of the petrochemical industries to maximize the value added. He also clarified that his vision is implemented by short-term and long-term plans to achieve a comprehensive vision in the energy sector by 2035. This vision was elaborated with the coordination of the ministry of Petroleum and the rest of the ministries, mainly the ministry of electricity.

He also stressed on the fact that these projects are within the framework of the Egyptian Vision for Development 2030 that aims to increase the efficiency of the extracted gas and achieve the conformity of the Egyptian products to the requirements of the international standards, as well as bridging the financing gap and deficit by gradually removing subsidies and giving more attention to the value adding industries to meet the domestic demand and export the surplus. He said that it is important to realize that the actions of the ministry aim to transform Egypt into a regional energy center through redrawing borders of its territorial waters, like what has been done with the State of Cyprus, settling arbitration cases and signing memorandums of understanding with energy exporting countries.

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## Lecture on the book of Dr. Marwan Kanafani «On the Palestinians Only .. The Dialectic of Success and Failure»

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs organized on 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, a lecture to discuss the book «On Palestinians Only. The Dialectic of Success and Failure» by Dr. Marwan Kanafani, political advisor to the late President Yasser Arafat. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, and a number of members attended this lecture.

Dr. Kanafani explained that his book revolves around the Palestinians, their struggle, their suffering and sacrifices, and the differences of their leaders and parties, as well as their quarrels and divisions, those that left many painful effects on the generations of our generations to recover our stolen land and the future of their homeland. And that our people have spent thirteen years in the difference and the battles of Fatah and Hamas since the 2006 elections, to the military decision in the Gaza Strip for the remains of the Palestinian body.

The writers criticize the factions and the political leaders for wasting progress on the just cause of the Palestinian people, their addiction to opinion, the desire to rule and not to recognize the other, to oppose accusations and sometimes to shoot.



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## Meeting with the Special Envoy of the Chinese Government on the Syrian Issue

The dialogue with the Special Envoy of the Chinese Government on the Syrian Issue, Ambassador Xie Xiaoyan, was an important step taken by the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), as part of its efforts to follow-up the Syrian crisis developments and the various international positions thereto, with the aim of exploring his field vision on the Syrian crisis and exchanging views with him.

In the meeting, held on 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2017, he was accompanied by Advisor Wang Yongzhao, as well as Ms. Yong Jingyan and Mr. Hong Ming, staff members of the Chinese Embassy in Cairo. They met with Ambassadors Ezzat Saad, ECFA's Director, Muhammad Badr El Deen Zayed and Muhammad Mustafa Kamal.

The Chinese Envoy put forward his vision, stating that stopping US support for some opposition groups, has effectively and strongly contributed in enabling the Syrian Regime forces to be victorious on the ground, and to regain control on a large chunk of the land that was under the Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL).

However, he pointed out that the battles currently underway between Russia and the US to determine the parties that should receive support on the ground and those that are classified as terrorist groups will not contribute to resolving the crisis.

He spoke about a controversy related to the unification of Syrian Opposition Front in face of the multiplicity of its parties and positions.

He stressed that China welcomes the call by Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, to expand the Astana negotiations by including China, Egypt, UAE and Iraq as observers during the negotiation process, this move that would contribute to the

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intertwining of international efforts and pave the way towards holding an expanded round of negotiations in Geneva.

In order to complement what he put forward at the start of the meeting, he reiterated in his concluding remarks, that so far as that very moment, there was still no clear vision as to the terms of the future settlement of the crisis.

While presenting ECFA's views, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad explained that the «Russian-Chinese» coordination stems from the common position of the two States on the importance of preserving Syria's independence and respecting the unity of its territories and maintaining its territorial integrity.

He also stressed the need set a comprehensive strategy on how to combat terrorism, not only militarily, but through activating all tools, and not to limit the perception of terrorism to a particular organization or region.

Ambassador Muhammad Badr El Deen Zayed, ECFA's member, spoke for his part, on several points, including: the upcoming arrangements under the confrontation between the US and Russia; whether these arrangements will preserve Syria's territorial integrity or not; whether the regime of Bashar al- Assad will be kept or not; and whether it will take part in future political processes or not.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Muhammad Mustafa Kamal, ECFA's member, pointed out that what is currently happening on the ground is a payment of the high price for the many mistakes made in the crisis by all sides, with the Arabs shouldering the greatest share of responsibility in this regard, and with the Arab League to be blamed for not having played an active role.

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## Meeting with Ms. Radhiah Achouri, New Director of the United Nations Information Center (UNIC) in Cairo

On 16th of October 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received Ms. Radhiah Achouri, New Director of the United Nations Information Center (UNIC) in Cairo, with participated of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of ECFA, and Ambassador Hisham El Zamaity, ECFA's Secretary-General.

Ms. Achouri expressed her aspiration to cooperate with the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) in arranging joint events, especially for youth to familiarize them with the most important international issues prevailing in the arena, in particular on subjects like disarmament, international security and others, which would contribute to acquainting youth of such important issues.

ECFA's Chairman welcomed the recently appointed Director of UNIC in Cairo, wishing her success in her new mission in Egypt, and emphasizing that ECFA welcomes the cooperation with the UN in all areas that realize the common good. He added that the issue of disarmament is of great significance within the top priorities of both ECFA and Egypt's Foreign Policy.

Ms. Achouri reviewed the previous experience she gained during her work with peacekeeping operations in Iraq, Libya, Mali and the Sudan, stressing the need for Influential States in Africa, such as Egypt, to pay more attention to the issue of sending staff to UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa, especially in light of the decline in the size of staff contributions by Western States in those operations.

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## A Dialogue with Deputy Director of Planning at Hungary's Foreign Ministry on Develop- ments in the Middle East

In the afternoon of the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, and at the request of the Peter Kivek, Hungary's Ambassador to Egypt, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) has received Zoltan Marky, Deputy Director of Planning at Hungary's Foreign Ministry, accompanied by Hungary's Deputy Ambassador to Egypt.

The Hungarian visitor inquired on the current developments both in Egypt and in the Middle East, referring to the session of rich discussions that was held by Hungary's National Security Adviser with members of the Council at the advent of the 2017.

Egypt's former Ambassadors to Hungary, Ambassador Ali El-Hefny and Ambassador Hisham El-Zamaity, responded to the guest's inquiries. This comes especially against the backdrop that Hungary was the first European Union Member State to support Egypt's 30<sup>th</sup> of June Revolution, and to openly express its support to the People of Egypt in its revolt against the fascist rule, that has earnestly sought to obliterate Egypt's Identity.

The two ECFA Members pointed out that the special relationship between President El-Sisi of Egypt and Hungary's Prime Minister, Victor Urban had opened up horizons for increased prospective cooperation between the two States both in political and economic fields as well as in the area of technical education.

ECFA Members also presented an assessment of the situation in Gaza and Libya and on the relations with Sudan and Ethiopia within the context of construction of the "Al-Nahdah – Renaissance Dam". For his part, the Hungarian guest reviewed Hungary's policies within the European Union and its keenness to maintain a margin of independence and prevent any party from interfering in its internal affairs.

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## China's Envoy asserts his Country's eagerness to establish a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its Capital

On Sunday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) has received the Special Envoy of the Chinese Government on the Middle East Issue (Peace Process), Ambassador/ Gong Xiaoheng, and his accompanying delegation, where the discussions dealt with the developments in the Palestinian National Reconciliation Process and its implications on the Peace Process, the role of Regional and International Powers, as well as Egyptian-Chinese coordination that aims to change the current status quo in the Peace Process. The issues were discussed in the presence of Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA's Chairman, Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA's Director, and Ambassador/ Dr. Muhammad Badr El-Deen Zayed, ECFA Member.

During the talks, China's Envoy reviewed the outcomes of his round of consultations with both Israeli and Palestinian officials. He stressed that there has been a change in the Israeli stance, manifested by their assurances and keenness to provide assistance to the Palestinian side and the Gaza Strip, for reconstructing the Strip, putting forward some projects before the Chinese side in this regard.

On the Palestinian side, there were clear divisions and differences of views regarding what is being proposed by the Israeli side and what is being promoted regarding what is called "a new US Proposal for resolving the conflict" (regional or economic).

For his part, China's Envoy stressed his country's eagerness to coordinate with Egypt to bring the peace process to a successful end, establish a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem

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as its Capital, and seek a comprehensive solution to resolve the Region's Crisis.

The Egyptian side welcomed that, stressing the importance of Israel's taking the initiative, and showing good will to prove the change of its stance, for example by freezing the building of settlements on occupied Palestinian Territory. It is equally important that the US makes a serious move to solve the crisis especially that the new US Administration is preoccupied most with the Iranian threat, viewing it as the top priority threat to peace in the Region.

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## Meeting with Ambassador of Belgium in Cairo

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) welcomed M.Y.S Libille de Cartier, Belgian Ambassador in Cairo, where Egypt-Belgium bilateral relations were the focus of discussions. Other topics were also addressed during the discussions, including areas of bilateral cooperation and means of coordination between the two countries in the areas of combating terrorism and resolving many of the Region's crisis.

The following dignitaries were present at the meeting: Ambassador Mounir Zahran, ECFA's Chairman and Their Excellencies Ambassadors Muhammad Shaker, Hussein Kamel, Farouq Mabrouk, Muhammad Moustafa Kamal, Adel El-Saloussy, Muhammad El-Ashmawy, Muhammad Mounir Abdul-Lateef, as well as Eng. Ismail Othman, Dr. Eng. Nabil Shuaib, and Maj. Gen. Muhammad El-Shahawy.

The meeting began with the Belgian Ambassador reviewing the significant developments that the State of Belgium is currently witnessing, Belgium's keenness to build balanced relations with the world States and the enhancing of European integration process through promoting the Union's working mechanisms. She also addressed Egypt-Belgium bilateral relations, which date back to the 1940s. She also touched on Belgium support to all economic reform steps undertaken by the Egypt State.

She concluded her speech by expressing Belgium's desire to strengthen cooperation and coordination with Egypt in all areas, foremost of which is combating terrorism and fighting religious extremism and militancy.

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## Meeting with the Deputy Director of the Eritrean Center for Strategic Studies

• On the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) was visited by Mr. Yamani Biani, Deputy Director of Eritrean Center for Strategic Studies (ECSS) and Head of African & Middle Eastern Studies Unit at ECSS, accompanied by Mr. Habeeb Muhammad Othman, Media and Cultural Attaché at the Eritrean Embassy in Cairo. The visitor was received by Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA's Chairman, and Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA's Director. **(The meeting agenda was as follows):**

- The Eritrean guest noted that he visits Cairo from time to time for consultations with similar think tanks in Egypt on issues related to bilateral and regional relations, especially the Africa ones, as well as the situation in the Horn of Africa, In addition, he wishes to establish a partnership with ECFA.

- For his part, ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Zahran, pointed out that in the middle of the first decade of the third millennium, the relations between former Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Eritrean leadership had been good. The UN issued several resolutions in 2004 and 2005 regarding demarcation of the Eritrean/Ethiopian borders and for peace-keeping on the borders between the two countries.

- The honorable guest noted that the crisis between the Arab Quartet and State of Qatar, has led the latter's falling further into Turks' and Iranians' arms. Ambassador Ezzat Saad commented saying that Doha has always had close and coordinated relations with Ankara, and such close relations were never a reaction to boycotting Qatar since last July 5<sup>th</sup>, and the same equally applies to its relations with Tehran.



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## Dr. Yassin El-Ayouty's Lecture

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, the Council received Dr. Yassin El-Ayouty, Professor of International Law in New York University at the headquarter of the Council. The lecture, was attended by the ambassadors, the Chair and the honorary Chair, the Director of the council and a number of members, as well as some non-members of the council.

The lecture focused mainly on the topics of democracy in the United States of America, comparing them with the attributes of governance in the Islamic state established by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and maintained by the caliphs after him, as well as a brief comparison between American democracy and the current situation in Egypt. In addition to the above, the lecture addressed the factors of the collapse of the current American administration and the recent American recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The lecture, which included some questions and inquiries, concluded that the current American democracy is a false democracy that is very different from the democracy that the founding fathers of the United States wanted. They also differ completely with the principles of acceptance of the other and tolerance and consultation, which dominated the Islamic nation Muhammadiyah at the time of the establishment of the first Islamic state in the era of the Prophet peace be upon him and the successor of the caliphs after him. The United States, which is called to champion the nations to achieve democracy and equality in their own countries, are revoking their principles. It is still dominated by the racist outlook of black Americans of African descent, dominated by a capitalist materialism that enriches wealth and impoverishes the poor.

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## A Meeting on the Developments of the Situation in the Iraqi Arena...Post 'ISIS'

In the context of the developments inside Iraq and the political and societal changes that have taken place in the past period, especially in the post 'ISIS' era, on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2017, the council organized a meeting with Dr. Mohamed Turki, the Arab affairs officer in the office of Mr. Ammar Al-Hakim, head of the coalition of the Iraqi National Alliance (Chairman of the parliamentary majority in the Iraqi Council of Representatives), accompanied by Mr. Ahmed Hassan Al-Ameed, Advisor to Dr. Mohammed, and journalist in the newspaper Al Watan, and the meeting was attended by the Chair and Director of the Council and a number of its members.

**During the meeting, the following points were emphasized:**

- The depth of the strategic relations between Egypt and Iraq, and the need not to limit them to the diplomatic side only, but must be expanded to include all political, economic and cultural fields.
- Intensify the effort and coordination (Egyptian-Iraqi) in order to restore the Arab decision to the point of moderation, and return it to its historic capitals (Cairo - Baghdad - Damascus).
- Arab and Iraqi need for the Egyptian role as the pillar of the Arab tent, which is keen on Arab interest other than the other roles.
- Emphasize the unity and independence of Iraq as a cohesive bloc, and reject all foreign interventions that seek to break up Arab countries.
- Emphasize on the independence of the Iraqi decision and its non-dependence on any regional or international forces, foremost of which is Iran.

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- The need to address the problems of national minorities in the Arab countries through the establishment of an integrated human rights system that preserves the rights of all minorities regardless of their affiliations.
    - The necessity of opening up Iraq to its Arab environment and developing its relations with the Arab countries.
    - The need to address the situation of some of the military blocs, which was formed against the backdrop of the confrontation with the organization 'ISIS', similar to the 'militias of the popular Shiite crowd', as these blocs will have serious effects on the sectarian issue in the country.

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## Meeting with the Counselor at the US Embassy

On 27<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, the Council welcomed Mr. Matthew Lo, Deputy Counselor for Political Affairs at the American Embassy in Cairo, at the latter's request, to discuss a number of current issues and developments in the region, in the presence of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, and Dr. Osama al-Ghazali Harb member of the Council, and Mrs. AnisaHassouna member of the Egyptian House of Representatives and Vice-President of the Council.

The meeting dealt with a number of issues, where the guest asked about the situation of civil society organizations in Egypt and the conditions of the detainees belonging to those organizations inside Egyptian prisons and the applicable provisions.

In response to the guest's comments, it was confirmed that many of the detainees were released with a presidential pardon, where the names of the detainees are examined and lists of those who deserve amnesty are prepared. The standards shall apply to him and the President of the Republic shall be given the opportunity to issue amnesties.

As for the Muslim Brotherhood, it was stressed that the anti-terrorist stance is the result of the violence and terror committed against the Egyptian people, the communication with foreign parties to harm Egyptian national security, the promotion of false news and the use of religion for political purposes.

On the situation in the region and specifically the recent decision on the declaration of the US President Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the guest said that the US President consulted with leaders of the countries of the region before the decision. Ambassador MounirZahran commented that the resolution would fuel conflict and hostility between Muslims and Jews

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would not lead to a two-state solution and would not lead to the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict; but that it came without consultation with the leaders of the region. Trump contacted the leaders to inform them of his decision and not to consult with them. Dr. MounirZahran referred to the statement issued by the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on the decision of the American president, which rejected President Trump's decision, which would affect the credibility of the United States as an honest broker to settle the conflict in the Middle East.



## Chapter III



### Council's Visits Abroad





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## Visit of the Council's Delegation to India

During the period 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, a delegation from the Council visited the State of India, during which the third dialogue session was held with the Indian Council for world Affairs (ICWA), which is overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Egyptian delegation was lead by Ambassador/ Dr.Mounir Zahran, and the membership of the following Ambassadors/ Dr.EzzatSaad, Director of thr Council, Dr.Kheir El-DeenAbdullatif and Dr. Mohamed Hegazy, member of the Council. The Indian side was lead by Ambassador ShriNalinSurie, Director of the Council, and other members including; Mr.Aganish Kumar, Deputy Director General of the Council, Ambassador Sheel Kant Sharma, Ambassador Sibal Kinwal, Dr.Nivedita Ray, Dr.Omair Anas, Dr.Zaker Hussein, Dr.Fazzur Rahman Siddiqui, Dr.Kwamaraswamy P.R, and Mr.PiyushSrivastava. Also present at the Egyptian Embassy in New Delhi were Counselor Nivine Al-Husseini and Secretary-General Omar Abuzaid. After the third dialogue session, an interview with Indian Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Relations Ambassador Sinhar Ama was arranged on the afternoon of 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017, due to the illness of the Secretary of State.

The visit took place in the wake of President Sisi's successful visit to India last September which established three main pillars of relations between the two countries: political and security cooperation, economic and scientific cooperation, cultural cooperation and strengthening relations between the two countries and peoples.

In this context, the seminar focused mainly on a number of key themes, which focused on ways to advance Egyptian-Indian relations and enhance the areas of partnership between them,

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especially in the economic field, in the context of Egypt's implementation of the economic reform program and the need to consider signing a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement with India. Such as the similar agreement with China, in light of the commonalities and ways of benefiting from the Indian experience in the fields of renewable energy, small and medium enterprises and security cooperation in the field of combating terrorism.

It has been confirmed on the need to coordinate between the Egyptian and Indian visions on the regional situation, the geopolitical landscape in West Asia and North Africa, especially under the new American administration, and the rise of new global and regional forces such as Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, Israel and other countries in the absence of an effective role of the Arab League.

The two countries should play an active role in settling the region's conflicts, foremost of which is the Palestinian issue to achieve security and stability in the region as a whole and coordination of efforts at the international level in the field of reform of the UN Security Council to ensure equitable representation of the developing world. Combating terrorism from a global perspective and pursuing the United Nations' agenda for sustainable development 2030, has been discussed during the session.

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## ECFA Members visited Wadi El-Natroun Monasteries

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs organized a one-day visit for its members and their families to Wadi Natroun monasteries in Beheira governorate. The visit included the Anba Bishoy Monastery, Paromeos Monastery, Al-Syrian Monastery and the St. Mark Monastery.

The visit, as ECFA members stated, was an opportunity to learn about the history of monasteries and their social and cultural role in conveying the message of peace they are carrying.

The members praised the cultural and educational standard of the monks, which in turn will contribute to conveying their message to visitors. They also noted that the warm welcome accorded to visitors supports the monasteries' message as well.

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## Visit of ECFA Delegation to Sudan

Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, a delegation representing the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) paid a visit to Sudan. The visit aimed at continuing communications and exchange of ideas with the Sudanese Council for Foreign Affairs (SCFA), the party which originally called for the visit, in addition to holding an important meeting between ECFA's Board Members and Sudan's Foreign Minister, Professor Ibrahim Ghandour. The delegation was formed of Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA's Director, Ambassador/ Marwan Badre, Ambassador/ Dr. Salah Haleemah and Ambassador/ Dr. Muhammad Badr El-Deen Zayed.

Issues discussed during the meeting with Sudan's Foreign Minister varied and included bilateral relations, Al-Nahdha "Renaissance" Dam and other urgent issues in the Arab region.

In the meeting, Sudan's Foreign Minister expressed his appreciation of the roles played by both ECFA and SCFA in driving the two Countries' relations towards growth and mutual understanding. Within the context of his speech, and in relation to what ECFA's delegation has raised, Sudan's Foreign Minister emphasized the importance of developing the relations between the two Countries in all areas. He confirmed his appreciation of what has been raised by ECFA's delegation, reiterating his valuing of the proposal concerning the creation of an Organization for Security and Cooperation in the Red Sea amongst the States bordering its shores, including Arab League Member States that are Members of the African Union.

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## Visit of ECFA Delegation to The Ethiopian Foreign Relations Strategic Studies Institute (EFRSSI)

On the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, a Delegation representing the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) paid a visit to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where the Delegation held consultations with the Ethiopian Foreign Relations Strategic Studies Institute (EFRSSI). The Delegation included ECFA Director, Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad, together with two ECFA's Members, Ambassador/ Marawan Badr and Ambassador/ Dr. Muhammad Badr El-Deen Zayed.

The Consultations Agenda included dealing with bilateral issues related to Nile Basin and “Al-Nahdah Dam” Renaissance Dam, as well as opportunities and areas of economic cooperation between the two countries.

**The Agenda also addressed Regional Issues that included:** Regional Cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the Horn of Africa Region, the Situation both in Africa and the Arab World, Terrorism Issues, being a common threat to both parties, and Egypt-Ethiopia Cooperation, with aim of contributing to the implementation of the African Union (AU's Development Agenda 2063).

**The Consultations has lead to major Outcomes & Recommendations, the most prominent of which are as follows:**

Interventions by Ethiopian side reiterated Ethiopia's stand-point towards the most important subject issues that were on Agenda and raised in the Consultations between the Delegations of ECFA and EFRSSI, holding Egypt responsible for the

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historically strained relations, accusing Egypt of being behind all Ethiopia's problems, be they internal or with Neighbouring States, and blaming Egypt for the low rates of economic and social development, attributing all of that to Egypt's attempts to monopolize Nile Water, depriving Upper Nile States of benefiting from it.

In its interventions, the Ethiopian side presented its view points on issues that were included in the Agenda and raised during Consultations between the Delegations of ECFA and EFRSSI echoing the same standpoints that have been previously repeated, in regard to the dossier of Nile Water, the Renaissance Dam among other matters.

On its part, the Egyptian side has delivered specific messages in response to what was raised by the Ethiopian side, reiterating that the dossier of Nile Water will remain a major concern to Egypt, for many decades to come, stressing the need for implementing an Integrated Strategy to deal with this dossier, either in light of previously-drawn Strategies, or based upon updating those Strategies in order to keep pace with National, Regional and International Variables.

## Chapter IV



Council's Members activities





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## Round Table about «The New US Administration Policy in the Middle East and the Prospects of Egyptian-American Relations»

On January 22<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held a roundtable discussion on the «New US Administration Policy in the Middle East and the Prospects of Egyptian-American Relations» following the winning the Republican candidate Donald Trump in the 2016 US presidential election.

The ECFA seminar highlighted features of the American foreign policy, in light of several indicators including Trump's statements and promises during his election campaign, his selection of his administration and advisers, and his inauguration speech on 20<sup>th</sup> January, with special emphasis on Middle East issues, terrorism and the peace process in the region, his promises to transfer the US embassy to Jerusalem, and cancel the Iranian nuclear agreement.

Experts in American affairs, including diplomats and a number of specialized academics, participated in the discussion. Ambassador/Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chair opening the seminar, and Ambassador / Dr. Hussein Hassouna, Coordinator of ECFA American Affairs Committee moderated it.

In general, the views of the 11 ECFA members were varied in the three-hour roundtable discussion. Each presented his or her own vision, which was complementary to what others had presented in an integrated analysis of the subject of the discussion, as evident in the following interventions:

- Ambassador / Dr. Mounir Zahran noted that, Trump did not focus on the fundamental issues related to the Iranian nuclear deal, the relationship with China and the future relation with Russia, adding that the first 100 days are very specific to

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the parameters of the new American policy after the completion of the new administration and its institutions and after it starts its functions.

For his part, Ambassador Hussein Hassouna the Coordinator of Permanent Committee of American Affairs at the Council, said that the Egyptian position revolves round aspiring to re-establish relations with the United States, especially on issues of common concern, more specifically, combating terrorism and reaching a peaceful settlement to the regional crisis.

- ECFA member, Atef al-Ghamri stressed that the pro-Trump movement, which brought him to power, is not the result of a present moment in time. It is the result of a state of unrest that began 30 years ago and developed into a rebellion in 2016, or an influence on decision-making, and that interest groups and lobbyists have the final say.

With regard to thinking about relocating the American Embassy to Jerusalem, it would mean that the United States would be losing its constant claim that it is an honest mediator – on which it has long insisted and which requires that it commits itself to leaving the status of Jerusalem to be determined only in the final status negotiations.

- While Dr. Mohamed Kamal Member of ECFA, said Trump believes that the reason for his victory is the difference of his vision from traditional American policy, he said, he will maintain this difference, but there are real questions about the American institutions' ability to change their vision.

- Dr. Mona Makram Ebeid Member of ECFA, stressed Egypt's need to cooperate with the Trump administration with a new formulating a new vision and policy to combat terrorism, which reflects the Egyptian position that refuses to deal with armed groups.

- In this regard, Ambassador Ezzat Saad Director of ECFA, said that evidences indicate to the possibility of significant improvement in US-Russian relations, in a way that may positive-

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ly impact the settlement of some of the problems of the region, but we must not ignore the role of other institutions within the United States, which are not keen on a normalization of relations and cooperation with Russia, such as the Congress and the Defence Department.

- Ambassador Ihab Wahba pointed out that Trump adopts a confrontational approach in all his declared positions, in collision with large segments of American society, as well as a foreign collision approach, like what happened with Mexico and China.

- Ambassador Mohamed Tawfiq said that, the good relationship between the presidents of the two countries, “Sisi and Trump”, would give a strong impetus in the direction of rebuilding the bilateral relations on a more solid basis to serve the interests of the two parties. He also stressed the importance of balanced relations.

- While Ambassador / Dr. ELSayed Amin Shalaby stressed that Trump’s positions and views towards the world will play an important role in shaping the world order, which will reflect on Egypt and the region.

- In conclusion, Ambassador Hajar Al-Islambouli said that in light of the chaos sweeping the region, Egypt needs to formulate a more functional role in order to be able to present it according to its vision and perception of these crisis.

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## The Third ROK-EU International Conference on Middle East And North Africa Affairs (MENA)

**With the invitation from Korean Foreign Minister Ambassador/Dr. Ezzat Saad – Director of ECFA participated in the Third ROK- EU International Conference on Middle East and North Africa Affairs on 14th -15th of Feb.2017. In his intervention Amb. Saad stressed on the following points:**

1- There is no dispute over the truth that the New American Administration doesn't own any strategic vision about the region, but it only has some impressions on it.

This offers the chance for the leaders of the region that will visit Washington- of that they actually visited like King Abdullah King of Jordan or Netanyahu prime minister of Israel – to meet the new President to explain its perception and ideas about the track of relations on the dual level and the vision of those leaders on the regional situations and what the United States expects in this regard.

And here we expect that there will be points of convergence, and other of dispute, between the new administration and each country of the region. Taking into account the personality of the new president and his background, each country of the region has to create common ground bigger with the relations with the United States and diminish the points of difference as much as possible. For example, concerning Egypt, and by virtue of its weight regionally and internationally, and next to its war on terrorism that there is a big Egyptian/ American agreement around it, the peace process and the situation in Jerusalem, and they are two disputable issues between the two sides, in need of a deep discussion between Cairo and the new administration.

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2- Notwithstanding the above, the statements of the president during his presidential campaign and his inauguration speech on the past 20<sup>th</sup> January, and also the short period that past on his rule till now, to a couple of important indicators that help in understanding the general frame for his foreign policy towards the region:

The administration will continue, most probably, on the same approaches of the previous administration. In terms of adopting cautious attitude about interference in the affairs of the region, where the focus will be on the agenda of the Interior, as confirmed by Trump in his inauguration speech, next to the issue of the combat of terrorism naturally. However, it is difficult to accept what some people say that the new administration has begun, in the three previous weeks, in the adoption of the previous administration's strategy in a number of issues for example the stand on Russia and the issue of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory. So that the view of what passed for the administration in this regard confirms that it issued what amounts to a coherent strategy. For example, what was released on Russia is a joke as the American president in the United Nations mentioned "that the sanctions will continue until Ukraine comes back" and that "the situation in East Ukraine. It requires a clear and powerful condemnation on the action of Russia." All this at a time when the president issued positive signals about Russia and President Putin.

Similarly, Michael Flynn warnings to Iran closely related to its rocket experience early February, does not reflect anything. And even imposing some sanctions on Iran, no reason to believe that there is a real long-term strategy behind this warning, and it released before it starts Foreign Minister Rex Tillerson his work both as foreign minister or a key member of the National Security Council.

It is clear that the US reaction on the experience of the Iranian ballistic missile is no coordination or consultation with others

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in the Iranian nuclear deal partners, and who confirmed some of them, such as Russia and China that this experience does not violate Iran's obligations under the deal, particularly and that the International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed that Iranian missiles can not carry nuclear warheads.

Well, we can not say that the US administration's strategy on the peace process in the Middle East, or how to deal with the Israeli government in this regard, despite the ambassador's remarks Nikki R. Haley the ambassador of the United States in the United Nations in which she indicated that the "Israeli settlements may not be helpful to achieving the goal of peace".

Or the White House statement is expected in which the Israeli government has appealed against the expansion of Jewish settlements outside the current borders of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, pointing out that this expansion «may not be useful in achieving the goal of peace.»

And briefly, the problem here is the contradiction between these statements and actual situations. Trump administration has resorted already to change the previous administration's policy toward immigration and trade are severely affecting the relations with the countries concerned. In any case, we should wait to see if Foreign Minister Rex Tillerson and Defense Secretary James Mattis to have the ability to influence Alrves Trump and his top aides in the White House and push them towards adopting more moderate policies.

- That regardless of the state of fragmentation and division that the Arab world experienced and generally the Middle East, and is in itself a challenge to any possible strategy of US foreign policy toward the region, but the dual challenge the most pressing, and that management needs to formulate a leisurely clear to face him:

-The Political discourse for the president, linked to his campaign against immigration and terrorism, and his insistence on the use of exasperating phrases such as «Radical Islam» or «Islam is a terrorist,» and that the former president, Obama refused

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to use it. And it had begun with far-right leaders in Europe in the use of Trump's speech such as Marine Le Pen in France and Khaldr in the Netherlands, among others. And the United States should be aware that this policy provides a new environment, an incubator for terrorism, and a justification for all the terrorist organizations to step up its strikes and spread violence and recruit more extremists and supporters.

-The position of the new administration of the Arab / Israeli conflict. During his election campaign, Trump did not hide the complete bias of the State of Israel, which turned out in his appointment as ambassador knew binding to the movement of Israeli settlement activity and intense enthusiasm for it, and even the appointment of his brother-US special envoy to the peace process. And we all know Trump's position which sought to prevent the issuance of UN Security Council Resolution 2234 condemning the private settlement, which allowed the previous administration by passing last December 2016.

-And Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took advantage of it all and began acting in the utmost freedom to impose the agenda of the far-right settler, assisted by the Knesset passed a law on 6<sup>th</sup> of Feb (Adjustment Act) with the proceeded settlements, ignoring all the provisions of international law and the relevant international resolutions.

-Here it must include the possible risks US strategy towards the region move clear and decisive and serious to push the peace process stalled for eight years, and to deliver a message to Palestinians that there are limits to Israeli practices that violate the rights of the Palestinian people in their future state.

-And the new administration should be aware that talk about measures for the club trust between Arabs and Israel and start normalizing relations between the two sides, will not be achieved before taking the Washington and Tel Aviv serious steps towards peace, especially an immediate halt to settlement activity and the confiscation and demolition of homes of the Palestinians.

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-And cannot justify any Arab leader normalization with Israel or confidence-building measures in front of his people, perhaps with the exception of Qatar, if they asked him to Washington so.

-This is a big challenge, not to mention what could be caused by a US decision to move the embassy to Jerusalem from the reaction of Palestinian and Arabic and Islamic.

3- That as long as we have recognized that Trump's policy will not differ much from Obama's vision concerning the degree of commitment and engagement in the region's affairs, except for the issue of terrorism, and also that the president sees relations with friends and allies of the United States as a «deal», in other words it is correlated to impose on friends and allies obligations and responsibilities towards the United States, the Arab country by itself have a major responsibility in the search for their interests and can expect - and be ready at the same time - that the US side will be demanding conversely in several files. For example they should not exclude these countries that can ask management to each on the ground contributing troop to fight Daesh, whether in Syria or Iraq or Libya or Yemen. Similarly, Washington may ask its allies in the region to cope with the imposition of economic sanctions on Iran or contribute military forces to secure the waters of the Gulf and the Red Sea, or participate in free of duties in region to deter Tehran. Trump's administration has also managed to be pressing to take steps to normalize and build trust with Israel, which receives unconditional US support, before they take steps to express its good intentions regarding the peace process.

4- Finally, and taking into account the depth of the region's problems and the chaos that pass by it, all international actors must play a role in restoring stability in the strategic importance of this vital region and helping the region in solving its economic problems and the political and the security services and other .In this regard, China and the European Union, Russia, Japan, Korea, etc., are invited to contribute to solving these problems. It is no longer the United States alone that can do anything alone.



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## Participation of the Ambassadors / Mounir Zahran, Mahmoud Karem, at the fourth meeting of the Committee of Arab League on arms control and non-proliferation issues

On 20<sup>th</sup>- 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2017, Ambassador MounirZahran, Chairman of the Council, and Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, Member of the Council, participated in the fourth and final meeting at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo under the chairmanship of Prince Turki Al Faisal and the participation of all members, with the exception of the Iraqi Member Dr. Muhammad al-Shara who was absent. **The proceedings of the meeting were as follows:**

- A meeting was organized between the Committee of Elders and the Committee of Senior Arab Officials, chaired by Tunisia. The delegation of Egypt was headed by Ambassador Hisham Badr, Assistant Foreign Minister for Multilateral Affairs. The Chairman of the Committee of Wise Men spoke briefly about the meeting with the representatives of the three depositary countries in Amman in January 2017. He explained that they had not presented any new or even disappointing developments in the region.

- Dr. Khaled Toukan (from Jordan) spoke about the interest of the Committee of Senior Wise People on the peaceful use of atomic energy to strike a balance between the political and peaceful aspects of the establishment of a free zone from Weapons of Mass Destruction.

- Ambassador Hisham Bader reviewed the developments of the situation since the review conferences, especially for the year 2010, and did not give hope to progress in the file

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of the region by allocating a conference focusing on organizing a conference devoted to the establishment of the region before the end of 2012, and then postponed after the appointment of a Finnish facilitator. The Conference of the NPT Review Conference failed in 2015, even after the paragraphs on the Middle East Conference were drafted in the final document of the Conference by the Algerian President of the Conference after consultation with the parties concerned. Finally, the objection of the United States, Britain, Canada on the document, blaming the Arab States.

- Ambassador Mahmoud Karem and Ambassador Wael Al-Assad spoke about the facilitator's failure in his mission and the inclusion of topics on the agenda of the conference.

- Ambassador Mounir Zahran spoke of the error committed by the non-nuclear states, including the Arab states, since 1968 on negotiating the NPT by not specifying a specific timeframe for nuclear disarmament in Article VI, as well as on nuclear disarmament commitments at Review Conferences including the Middle East resolution at the 1995 Conference, or the 2010 Review Conference of the Middle East Conference, which set the beginning of the Conference (before the end of 2012) and did not set a time limit for the end of the Conference.

- The Committee of Elders met with the European Union's Polish envoy for disarmament, Mr. Jacek Bylica, who spoke in general terms about the European Union's influence on the establishment of the region, non-discrimination in its policy of cooperation with Arab States and the impact of the right to peaceful use of atomic energy, and that they share their experience with other countries without discrimination, including Iran, and the protection of nuclear materials within non-proliferation norms.

- Mr. Bylice did not respond to all the questions addressed to him about moving stagnant water to create the area, reviving the mission of the Facilitator, or reviving the mandate

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of the Middle East Conference based on the results of the 2010 Conference.

- The Committee of Elders was exposed to the five pillars of its work, as was presented in the report of the third meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, and formulated in the final report, including recommendations for each.

### **Final Recommendations:**

- Demand that all countries in the region join international instruments on weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, biological and chemical weapons) and submit their instruments of ratification to the Security Council before the end of the 2020 Review Conference.

- Coordinating the positions of the Arab Group with other geographical and political groups in the preparatory committees of the Conference itself.

- To request Arab and other non-nuclear states to amend the rules of procedure of the Review Conference starting with the Preparatory Committee to allow civil society organizations to participate in the deliberations of the committees concerned with reviewing the progress of the treaty, not only in one session devoted to civil society organizations. These organizations support the Arab demands, as well as the decision-making process in the Conference, by being a majority, not by consensus, to avoid repeating the arbitrariness of one or more delegations by defeating the Conference in a dictatorial manner.

- Regarding the Israeli nuclear capability item at the IAEA General Conference in September 2017, the wise people agreed that it should be included on the agenda of the next General Conference and that a draft resolution be consulted with countries that had previously supported it in previous conferences and those that did not support it, during the political and geographical groups in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and were

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invited to vote at the General Conference after ensuring its success only.

- Presenting the results of all these contacts to the next meeting of Arab foreign ministers
- Continue to show progress in preparing for the establishment of the Middle East region on the meetings of the Arab foreign ministers and the Arab summits from now until 2020 for possible positions in the light of the deliberations of the preparatory committees for the next review conference.
- Define the roles to be played in the preparatory process in the Arab capitals, the meetings of senior officials of the Arab League, and in Vienna on Israel's nuclear capability item.

The Committee of Wise Men met on February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017 with the Secretary General of the League of Arab States. The Committee's Chairman, Prince Turki Al-Faisal, handed him the final report of the Committee of Wise Men in preparation for presenting it to the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers and the next Arab Summit in Amman. For his part, the Secretary-General thanked the Committee for its efforts in preparing the report within the time frame.

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## Participation of Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran with the Egyptian Delegation who Visit NATO Headquarters, Brussels

At an invitation by NATO to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs –via the Egyptian Embassy in Brussels - the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Office of the Assistant Minister for Multilateral Relations, arranged for the visit by selecting participants in the Egyptian delegation headed by Ambassador Mounir Zahran ECFA's Chair. The delegation included Ambassador Wafaa Bassim, Deputy Assistant Minister for Security Organizations Ambassador Ahmed Salama, other members of the Foreign Minister's Office, and a number of media professionals.

The NATO Secretariat prepared a partnership program with seven countries south of the Mediterranean (Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania), as well as a program of meetings and lectures with NATO officials.

The topics that the NATO Secretariat officials focused on were cooperation and partnership with the Mediterranean countries. They started with a policy of openness.

NATO officials spoke of changes in the organization's functions after the end of the Cold War, an increase in its defense plans after tension with Russia due to the Ukraine crisis, as well as its southern Mediterranean missions and prospects of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

NATO officials also noted to the cooperation with Egypt in combating terrorism, crimes and weapons of mass destruction and in clearing mines, with particular reference to crisis in the region, particularly in Libya, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Somalia.

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## Participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad in a seminar entitled «Future Vision on the Developments of the Peace Process under the New American Administration»

On Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> 2017, Ambassador Azzat Saad, Director of the Council, participated in a seminar entitled «a Future Vision on the Developments of the Peace Process under the New American Leadership», organized by Afro-Asian Solidarity organizations, with the participation of a number of former ambassadors and experts from the Arab world; including a number of members of the Council and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The seminar aimed at shedding light on the Arab and international vision on the prospects and future of the peace process under President Trump Administration.

The symposium stressed Egypt's continued support for the Palestinian cause, which has been consistent throughout its history, despite the recent position taken following the withdrawal of its project to condemn the settlements in the Security Council and the affirmation that the Egyptian position will continue to be an essential engine for Arab and international mobilization and support for the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, and condemnation of settlement.

This is what has been crystallized in the clear European position in its strong condemnation of Israeli settlement expansion and the call for the need to return to direct negotiations between the two sides, as confirmed by the Paris Peace Confer-

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ence last year, as well as the recent Russian call for an initiative to relaunch negotiations between the two sides.

The work of the symposium concluded that President Trump's confusing vision does not hide the clear American bias toward Israel, which was evident in his appointment of his son-in-law, Jaride Koechner, of Jewish religion, to follow up the peace process in the Middle East and Ambassador David Friedman as ambassador in Israel also Jew; and the current position of the administration is no different from the extremist position of the previous administrations by calling for bilateral negotiations or a tripartite summit between Abbas, Netanyahu and America, or through a regional conference, which could represent a dangerous step to a major vague deal.

This position places on the shoulders of all parties, especially the Palestinians, the need to work to end the division and to form a united Arab Palestinian position, and to benefit from the Western position that supports the pressure on the new administration.

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## Meeting of the honorable Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad with representatives from the Iraqi Kurdish parties.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2017, ambassador/ Dr.Ezzat Saad Director of ECFA, was welcomed by Mr. Ragaai Fayed, the manager of the Kurdish Studies Center in Cairo, Mr.Sherko Habeb, the head of Kurdistan Democratic Party in Cairo launched in 2002, and Dr.Yassin Raouf, President of the National Union of Kurdistan that was opened in 1997 after Galal Talbany's visit to Cairo.

The meeting aimed at discussing possible cooperation between the two Kurdish parties and the council. Furthermore, the meeting included a discussion on the latest developments in the Kurdish case that mainly revolves around demanding independence and self-determination in addition to discussing the contributions of the Kurdish Peshmerga forces to the Iraqi forces' battle against ISIS and the Kurdish governments' efforts in offering aid and support to those displaced from Iraqi towns, specially the Yezidi minority in Kurdistan.

Moreover, the council emphasized the Egyptian support for the Kurdish cause that has been maintained ever since Abdel Kareem Qasem's visit to President Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1958 and the current support provided by Egypt; not only to the Kurdish government, but also to the efforts of the Iraqi government in its battle against terrorism and the willingness of the religious Egyptian institutions to spread awareness and reinforce the culture of tolerance and acceptance.



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## Participation of Ambassador/ Ezzat Saad in (Egypt in the industrial and trade conference gathering the Belt and Road initiative members)

To complement Egypt's accession to the convention, that involves the Belt and Road Initiative members, signed by President Abdel-Fatah El-Sisi and the Chinese president Xi Jinping to present the investment plans to the participating States, after the establishment of a supervisory committee, since the target of the trade between its members is 2.5 trillion in 10 years, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, participated in the first round of the industrial and trade conference gathering the members of the Belt and Road initiative on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2017.

This comes at a time when Beijing has formulated a new vision regarding the initiative. This vision included three links extending to Europe, Central Asia, Russia, Western Asia, the Gulf States and the Mediterranean region. The visit's aim is to increase the number of member States to 65 States, 50 States having already joined.

The Conference included several meetings to explore the investment opportunities in Egypt, the Suez Canal's economic territory, Egypt's vision for 2030 and Egypt as a gateway to investment in Africa.

Several trade and economic delegations, ministers and officials, the heads of Egypt and the world's largest corporations, financial institutions and banks attended the conference.

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## Participation of Ambassador/ Ezzat Saad in Moscow Sixth International Security Conference

The Moscow Sixth International Security Conference, organized annually by the Russian Defense Ministry to discuss regional and international security issues in various regions of the world, particularly those of Russian Federation is interest such as the Central Asia and the Middle East regions. The Conference was held in Moscow on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2017, with the participation of representatives from more than 85 countries around the world, including Egypt, with official delegations and civil society organizations from these countries, including 20 Defense Ministers - in the absence of any official US or Western European participation –from Russia’s allies and friendly countries, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS Group.

- The conference opened with a speech by Russian President Putin, who has confirmed that, the combating of terrorism in the Middle East and finding a settlement to conflicts require a balanced and unified approaches, calling for the establishment of a unified international front to confront the common threats to global and regional security in the Middle East.

- Secretary-General of the United Nations for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman had a speech at the opening Session focused on the current situation in Syria.

- The two Russian Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs confirmed the America’s Air strikes on Al Sh oairat Air base caused to complicate chances of establishing a broad international counter-terrorism front, demanding the need for a broad international investigation into the use of banned chemical ma-

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terials by experts under the supervision of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on a geographically balanced basis.

- Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, who participated in the conference, said that the conference tackled the issues of: Global Security: Challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, European Security: Prospects and Trends, Security Risks and Balance of Interests in Asia and the Pacific. There have also been extensive discussions on the issues of: the Middle East ... the modern objectives of countering terrorism and extremism, the security of information space and freedom of access: contradictory relations and ballistic missile defense systems: implications for global and regional security and security in Central Asia: the Afghan factor, regional aspects of Military / Military Cooperation.

Ambassador Saad added that the Middle East region received special attention from the Conference, particularly with regard to the crisis in the region and ways to deal with them, with special emphasis on international terrorism as a threat to international peace and security. In this context, the need for international cooperation to combat terrorism, the Palestinians' full and legitimate right to an independent state, and the end of the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories as one of the main root causes of terrorism in the region were emphasized.

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## Report on the Participation of the Council in the work of the Preparatory Committee of the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 2020

From 2<sup>nd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> of May, the delegation of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Pugwash Association participated from Ambassador Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Ali Al-Saidi and Dr. Yusri Abu shadi, members of the Egyptian Council.

The delegation was joined by the Egyptian delegation headed by the Ambassador of Egypt in Vienna and its representative to the international organizations in Vienna. 114 States parties to the Treaty, as well as the United Nations and the IAEA participated in the work of the Committee. The Arab States participated in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee with the exception of Bahrain, Yemen, Mauritania, Somalia and 48 non-governmental organizations.

At the end of the Conference, the Chairman of the Committee presented a procedural report on the preliminary Preparatory Committee meetings, including the agenda, organization of meetings, participating delegations, observer organizations and non-governmental organizations, organization of work in the Preparatory Committees for 2018 and 2019, and the 2020 Review Conference. He also summarized the deliberations of the Preparatory Committee, His delegation (Netherlands) The Secretariat explained that, it is under the assumption that in ac-

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cordance with the decision to improve the mechanism of review of the treaty adopted in 2000 - that the summary prepared for the deliberations is realistic and under his responsibility and will be presented to the meeting of the second preparatory committee in Geneva which will be held from April 23<sup>rd</sup> to May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018, this summary was made available for comments by delegations at the Committee's last session on 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2017 and not for amendment, as well as an estimate of the expenditures of the 2020 Review Conference, including the expenses of the preparatory committees.

**A number of observations have been made on the Chairman's summary of the deliberations:**

- The summary did not reflect the division of the Committee's deliberations according to the agenda or the pillars of the treaty or the division between three main themes and other topics.
- The Chairman of the Committee was pleased to compliment the nuclear Powers with respect to their compliance with the provisions of the Treaty in relation to the topics of nuclear participation within the framework of the NATO military alliance or in cooperation with some States that did not accede to the Treaty (eg, US cooperation with India and Israel).
- The demands of the vast majority of non-nuclear-weapon States (the Non-Aligned Movement) to demand that Israel subject all its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty have not been mentioned; and the United States must intervene to delete the signal.
- The President took into account Egypt's position on the lack of reference to the need to convene in the Middle East Conference prior to the 2020 Conference, and stressed the need to establish the region and implement the resolution of the 1995 Conference; which was raised by several countries, including Indonesia.

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- The Egyptian statement at the closing session clarified the above, adding that the Chairman of the Committee did not mention in the summary why the 2015 Review Conference failed, namely that three countries broke the consensus on the final document, namely the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada.

- Several delegations of the Non-Aligned Movement referred to the intention of the Chairman of the Committee to reduce the role of non-nuclear states, in particular the Movement state which includes more than 120 States, which had participated in the Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations Committee in New York, which had begun in March 2017.

- The President also did not give sufficient attention to the dangers of nuclear explosions on the humanitarian aspects, a subject which was emphasized by Austria and most delegations. The Indonesian delegation also criticized the imbalance in the presidential summary between the three pillars of the Treaty and the need not to prejudice the inherent right of non-nuclear states to the peaceful use of nuclear energy without pressures or restrictions imposed by some nuclear powers.

- Iran criticized the lack of reference to the summation to the request of a large number of countries to invite the Secretary-General and the countries deposited for the postponed conference on the establishment of the Middle East before the start of the 2020 Conference.

- The American delegation thanked the Chairman of the Committee for the summary prepared on his responsibility and promised to present a US paper reflecting their understanding of the process of reviewing the Treaty as a working paper for use in the Second Preparatory Committee.

- The Delegation of Ireland made a statement on behalf of the new agenda countries (including Egypt) and called for correcting the President's summary to reflect safely the deliberations that took place, with particular reference to the need for the nuclear

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states to submit periodic and genuine reports on their actions to reduce their nuclear arsenals, and criticized the paragraphs on the Agency's role in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and its reference in the summary to the additional protocol being mandatory, while it was optional and subject to the discretion and sovereignty of Member States, individual States.

- In spite of the objectivity of the Chairman's summary, he was biased towards the nuclear powers not to show their violations and their deceleration in nuclear disarmament and their violations of Article I obligations with respect to nuclear participation with non-nuclear-weapon States of NATO. The Chairman of the Committee also did not refer to the convening of the Middle East Conference. However, the summary did not mention the most important interventions made by non-governmental organizations, particularly the need to amend the list of procedures of the 2020 Review Conference, especially the legal quorum for decision-making and the role of these organizations in the deliberations of the Conference on the articles of the Convention.

- The Delegation of China criticized the inclusion of a number of topics for negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament, which had not been in operation for 20 years, and had been endorsed by the Delegation of Chile.

- The delegation of Canada referred to the disregard of the summary of the role of women in disarmament processes and the revision of the Treaty, especially since women represented only about 20 per cent of the Preparatory Committee, while Security Council resolution 1523 called for balanced participation of women in all international forums.

- A number of delegations called for increasing the participation of NGOs in the review process in support of the demands of our Council. The summary of the participation of 48 organizations in the work of the Committee and the dumping of 18 statements in one session is insufficient. This is support to what ECFA's delegation asked for.

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## Participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad in the Third Annual Conference of the Group of Strategic Vision «Russia - the Islamic world»

On the 15<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> of May 2017, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, participated in the Third Annual Conference of the Group of Strategic Vision «Russia-the Islamic World» held in the Chechen Republic, in the presence of the Chairman of the Group «Rostom Minkhanov» The President of the Republic of Tatarstan, the President of the Republic of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov, the Coordinator of the Group, Ambassador Veniamin Popov, as well as the Presidents of the Crimea and Dagestan Republics, with the participation of 34 representatives of foreign guests and 23 representatives of the Russian Federation.

### **A number of points have been emphasized:**

- Russian President Vladimir Putin, has confirmed in a letter read by the Deputy Foreign Minister and the representative of Russian President in the Middle East Ambassador Mikhail Bogdanov, stressed that «the crisis in the modern system of international relations requires the creation of conditions for a constructive and effective dialogue and cooperation with partners in confronting Terrorism, the search for a peaceful settlement of regional crisis and the importance of working with all partners with a view to strengthening international security and stability, building peace, a just and democratic order and a world without any form of intolerance, discrimination, domination or dictation»
- Rostom Minikhanov, the Chairman of the Group noted that «Terrorism and extremism are not only



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a threat to Islamic countries but all countries, which requires working with all partners to address these challenges, stressing that Russia continues to pursue a policy of rapprochement with Islamic countries, especially as Russia considers itself part of the Islamic world.»

- The President of the Chechen Republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, noted that «Russia is still the most loyal ally in the defense of Islam, especially as it is among the countries that adopted effective measures to combat terrorist organizations»

- In his intervention, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, stressed the importance of activating the stated goal of the group since its establishment more than ten years ago in achieving rapprochement and interaction between Russia and the Islamic world on the basis of mutual cooperation in various fields to achieve common interests and mutual benefits, which strikes the world and the Middle East in particular.

He also pointed out that Egypt always urges Russia to engage in the problems of the region with its positive contributions to restoring security and stability to this vital part of the world, especially since the Russian role is known for its integrity and for its bias towards a particular party. Its role is shown in the Syrian tragedy and its attempts to bring together the various parties at one table to defeat terrorism and preserve Syria's territorial integrity.

He concluded by stressing that this welcomed Russian role in the region is due to the depth of Russia's knowledge of its problems and its international historical and cultural interaction with the region for many reasons, most notably the Islamic component of Russian society, a component that is truly a factor of rapprochement between Arab and Islamic countries and Rus-

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sia. Hence the concern of the two sides - among other things - to confront terrorism and to reject the distortion of the Islamic religion by a few deviant criminal of its children. It is regrettable that it is the Muslim peoples who today pay a heavy price for the waves of terrorism that strike our countries and impede economic and social development and stability.

It should be noted that at the conclusion of the meeting, the group issued a statement confirming that «Russia and the Islamic countries should pay special attention to the issue of promoting trade, economic and investment cooperation, which is the solid basis for political interaction and other.» The fact that «Russia is part of the Islamic world, this cooperation among our countries has the nature of strategic cooperation. The participants in the meeting highly appreciated Russia's relations with the Muslim world and expressed the hope that Moscow will continue to play a constructive role in settling regional and international conflicts».

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IRCICA and CASS 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress  
“China and Islamic World: Mutual Learning of Civilization”  
Session IV: Joint Development under the Initiative  
of “Belt & Road: China and the Islamic World”

*Intervention by Ambassador EzzatSaad*

Introduction

Throughout history, China has always enjoyed a special and important place in the mind and heart of Arab and Islamic Countries. They have seen it as a unified stable center of historical civilization. Both Arab countries and China have enjoyed a long standing history of mutual cultural and economic interaction in a common endeavor to pursue prosperity. The Cultural Belt of this Silk Road was the melting pot of human and cultural exchange between the two sides.

Today, China has become a major economic powerhouse in the world<sup>(1)</sup>, it has made several trade agreements with various nations and participated in all major trade forums across the globe. China’s recent initiative to build New Silk road<sup>(2)</sup> (Belt and Road) for a Global political and economic governance, will have a major impact on Islamic nations, as most of the major connections of this link, both via land and sea, will at some point cross an Islamic country in Central Asia and Middle East. This really shows the importance of this initiative to Muslim World.

Recently at the opening of the Belt and Road forum<sup>(3)</sup> in May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized that how this road throughout the history has connected various religions and civilizations. He also mentioned that, not only goods but knowledge has been travelled through this Road. Therefore this Road will bring prosperity and development to all the countries linked through it<sup>(4)</sup>. In this context, President Xi said “History is

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our best teacher. The glory of the ancient silk routes shows that geographical distance is not insurmountable. If we take the first courageous step towards each other, we can embark on a path leading to friendship, shared development, peace, harmony and a better future.”

The emerging economies and developing countries are very supportive of the economic factor that fueled the inception of Belt and Road initiative (BRI). Particularly, due to the under representation of these countries in the current International Financial Institutions and the failure of the existing global economic governance framework to fairly represent the interests and national priorities of these countries.

### **China and the Islamic World:**

Islam came to China in 616-18 AD and still today it has been existed in the form of 55 minority groups throughout China<sup>(5)</sup>. In the realization of this BRI (Silk Road), the participation from Islamic world plays a very crucial role because majority of this vast initiative is channeled through one or more Islamic nations. Therefore, it is very important for China to understand and realize about the importance of the Islamic world to this particular BRI<sup>(6)</sup>.

Historically, China has been always connected to Central Asian and Middle Eastern nations through Silk Road and with the help of this BRI, China will surely be able to connect and recreate huge trade and economic opportunities for both Islamic world and China. There is also a chance that such opportunities will make China and Islamic world closer and more prosperous.

In his speech at the opening of Belt and Road Forum, in Beijing May14, 2017, H.E President Xi Jinping emphasized certain key principles that must guide the implementation process of the BRI toward greater success. Among these principles, the President said:”we should build the Belt and Road into a road

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connecting different civilizations. In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we should ensure that when it comes to different civilizations, exchange will replace estrangement, mutual learning will replace clashes, and coexistence will replace a sense of superiority. This will boost mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual trust among different countries. We should establish a multi – tiered mechanism for cultural and people – to – people exchanges, build more cooperation platforms and open more cooperation channels. We should strengthen exchanges between parliaments, political parties and non-governmental organizations of different countries as well as between women, youths and people with disabilities with a view to achieving inclusive development”.

The President said that China will put in place mechanisms to boost Belt and Road cooperation, among them will be “a network for cooperation among the NGOs in countries along the Belt and Road as well as new people – to – people exchange platforms such as a Belt and Road news alliance and a music education alliance”.

Thus cultural exchange, mutual learning and cultural diversity are all principles that are in the heart of the BRI.

Organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)<sup>(7)</sup> has a long standing links with Chinese government, both China and OIC have stand together on various platforms to enhanced cooperation on political and economic levels and they have together condemned all forms of terrorism, which is the major threat to the development in the region. The Islamic World has accounted for 73% of the world oil reserves, rich in mineral resources. Moreover, Islamic Banks are playing increasingly active role in inter – state financing.

Over the next decade, China –Arab trade volume is expected to grow from 240 billion USD in 2013 to 600 billion USD. China’s non – financial investment in the Arab World is expected to increase from 10 billion USD to over 60 billion.

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According to some Chinese scholars, China should use the OIC as a platform to advance energy cooperation with the Islamic Countries along the Silk Road Scheme, so that China and Islamic World together can make greater contributions to global economic integration.<sup>(8)</sup>

If we take into account the expected enhancement of the strategic position of China's cultural diplomacy because of the Silk Road Strategy, then this would invite the Chinese side to think about having an institutional relationship with the OIC. This is important for the sake of enhancing cooperation in many fields related to culture (enhancing moderation, mutual trust and fighting extremism and terrorism and security cooperation).<sup>(9)</sup>

Ultimately, as it has been the case with the ancient Silk Road, Islamic and Arab Countries will be the natural partners of the New Belt and Road.

### **Importance of Middle Eastern Nations**

The Middle East region is in distinctive geographical position connecting three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. The relationship between China and the Middle East is deeply impacted by the international system and regional patterns, as well as the adjustments of China's own developmental and diplomatic strategies.

China's strategic coordination with the Arab World is an important part of its BRI vision and China has proposed a comprehensive cooperation strategy known as "1+2+3"<sup>(10)</sup>, "One" refers to the need of increased cooperation on energy, covering a range of issues that include oil and natural gas production, ensuring the safety of energy transport routes, and establishing a mutually beneficial, long – term China – Arab energy relationship. "Two" stands for the two wings of infrastructure development, construction and trade investment facilitation. "Three" relates to breakthroughs that need to be made in the high – tech areas of nuclear energy, aerospace satellites, and new energy in

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order to upgrade practical cooperation between China and the Arab World. This strategy seeks to build a reliable China – Arab Strategic cooperative relationship based on long – term friendship.<sup>(11)</sup>

In recent years, China has increased its trade with its Middle Eastern counterparts<sup>(12)</sup> by various folds and it is estimated that with the help of this new framework of Road and Belt, the only possibility is more trade and relations<sup>(13)</sup>. The stake of Middle Eastern countries is very huge in China's Silk Road visions <sup>(14)</sup> as the total trade between them stood at 209 billion in 2012. The recent support from Islamic countries with the Chinese led Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB), which is considered the main financing institution for the infrastructure projects along the Silk Road, is strong evidence of joint cooperation.

As Middle East remains the major energy source for Chinese energy needs<sup>(15)</sup>, it is very pragmatic to think that the partnership between two sides is only going to grow with the help of this new framework<sup>(16)</sup>. Chinese government has recently encouraged various Chinese companies to invest more and increase commercial dealing in Middle Eastern region.

In near future, major role of China's Silk Road policy will revolve around the trade and commerce in Middle East<sup>(17)</sup>. In future, Middle East will surely acts as a huge market for Chinese excessive industrialized producing capacities<sup>(18)</sup>. Bilateral trade between China and Middle Eastern countries, in particular the GCC countries, Iran, and Turkey are expected to increase, along with Chinese investments in infrastructure projects throughout the region.

Since the early 2000s, the relations between China and the Arab Countries have experienced a gradual institutionalization. Today the China- Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF), established in 2004, is the institutional framework for cooperation between the two sides.

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To conclude, today China and the Middle East need to cooperate with each other more than any period in the history of mankind, large scale of energy imports, diversified economic relations, the solidification of the power ambitions and current diplomatic conversation have made China to gradually increase its participation in the economic governance of the Middle East. This participation is not limited to energy but also in other fields such as construction and infrastructure building, finance, defense sector, agricultural sector...etc.

### **Major Challenges and possible solutions**

Terrorism represents a serious challenge to the implementation of BRI, especially in the Middle East in the light of the turmoil in Yemen, Syria, Iraq and Libya. In addition, one of the main root causes of instability and terrorism in the region is the Israeli Military occupation of Palestine and other Arab territories. Israel is doing everything, with the unwavering support of the United States, to altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian territory occupied since June 1967, including East Jerusalem. The Israeli measures include: the construction and expansion of settlements, transfer of Israeli settlers, confiscation of land, demolition of homes and displacement of Palestinian civilians, in violation of International Humanitarian Law and relevant norms of International Law and UN Security Council.

The occupation, which marked its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary last June, 2017, has deeply scarred generations of Palestinians, humiliating adults and children alike with body searches and endless delays as people attempt to reach work, school and family in nearby yet increasingly unreachable towns.

In this regard, and as president Xi emphasized in his above-mentioned opening speech of Belt and Road forum: “we should intensify counter- terrorism efforts, address both its symptoms and root causes”. He added:” we should work to resolve hot-



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pots issues through political means, and promote mediation in the spirit of Justice”. Even if Chinese Foreign Policy has traditionally been based on principles of non – interference and non – intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, I do believe that Beijing can play an important role in finding a just solution to this conflict, especially with the rise of its economic and geostrategic interests in the region on the one hand, and its good relations with all parties concerned on the other. It has to be noted that China declared full support for the Arab League, within its “China – Arab states Policy Paper”, a claim strengthened also by its endorsement of an independent and sovereign Palestine, with the 1967 boundaries and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The other challenge has to do with the financial resources. The total investment in the ongoing BRI could roughly amount to 1.4 trillion USD<sup>(19)</sup> in the coming years<sup>(20)</sup>. However, the total investment needs in Islamic countries of Central Asia and Middle East are much greater and the requirement of huge investments in the coming years creates a challenge of finding various sustainable sources of investment.

However, with the aid of the Chinese government, the New Silk Road has the required funding and financial tools to ensure its realization. The Silk Road Fund, with a capital of \$40 billion, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, with a capital of \$100 billion, are doing their part in ensuring the fulfillment of the project, as well as other financial institutions including the BRICs New Development Bank, the World Bank and Chinese financial institutions (ICBC, CDB, and CADFund).

At the Belt and Road Forum, for International Cooperation in Beijing, in May 14, H.E. President Xi Jinping up scaled financial support for the BRI by contributing an additional 100 billion RMB for the Silk Road Fund. Coupled with encouraging financial institutions to expand their overseas RMB-fund businesses to the tune of 300 billion RMB, the special lending scheme by

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CBD and the EXIM Bank of China, worth 250 billion RMB and 130 RMB respectively, the allocation of funding will help bridge the financial gap and will serve as a major stride towards the fulfillment of the initiative.

In addition to, President Xi's aforementioned commitments, declared at the Belt and Road Forum, China's allocation of 60 billion RMB to assist developing countries and participating organizations, as well as the assistance fund for South-South cooperation, will undoubtedly play a major role in enhancing cooperation on innovation.

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(2) <http://english.gov.cn/beltandroad/>

(3) <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2017/05/economist-explains-11>

(4) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/12/chinese-president-belt-and-road-initiative>

(5) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam\\_in\\_China](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam_in_China)

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(9) Ibid.

(10) XumingQian: The "One Belt, One Road" Strategy and China's energy Policy in the Middle East, May ,20,2017.<http://www.mei.edu/content/map/%E2%80%9Cone-belt-one-road-strategy-and-china-energy-policy-middle-east>

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(18) [https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d516a4e78597a4d/share\\_p.html](https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d516a4e78597a4d/share_p.html)

(19) <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/13/business/china-railway-one-belt-one-road-1-trillion-plan.html>

(20) <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/china/belt-road-initiative-china-plans-1-trillion-new-silk-road-n757756>

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## Participation of Ambassador Dr. EzzatSaad in the work of the Third Forum of the Silk Road «Economic Belt and Practical Cooperation»

In the period of (11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) of July 2017, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council participated in the Third Forum of the Silk Road Tianshan, on the Silk Road “economic belt and practical cooperation”. **His speech including the following points:**

To start, I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to the organizers and sponsors of the forum for the hospitality and reception. I believe that the topics we will discuss today and tomorrow reflect the common desire to achieve common development, prosperity and regional and cross-border integration in order to enhance communication between them; As defined by the high-level initiative proposed by His Excellency President Xi Jinping. Analyzing the impact of the Middle East «Belt and Road Initiative» is useful for understanding the real purpose of this great project, given its geographical location. Although many Middle Eastern countries will not be covered by the major infrastructure projects envisaged by the initiative; The region compensates for this and becomes more feasible and beneficial in the context of the growing Sino-Arab relations in recent decades.

- According to the main document issued by the National Development and Reform Commission (China) under the title «Vision and Procedures in the framework of the joint construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Silk Road of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century», our region is involved in both land and sea routes. The first, officially called the Silk Road Economic Belt, is not a single route, but a combination of six corridors stretching from

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Southeast Asia to northern Europe. The Middle East is the last part of the so-called economic corridor between China, Central Asia and Western Asia, which extends from this beautiful province, Xinjiang, through Central Asia to Iran and Turkey.

- According to the policy paper on the Arab region and China (presented by the Chinese president in January 2016 during a speech at the League of Arab States, the Silk Road offers the corner stone on which practical cooperation can be built on mutual benefit and win-win results for China and Arab countries, The first is between investment and trade cooperation projects. The initiative represents an investment opportunity not only to enhance cooperation in the field of infrastructure, in addition to a wide range of projects, especially the energy sector, trade, green cities, local exchanges, etc. The initiative provides the Middle East countries with the opportunity to become financial centers for the internationalization of the 'Yuan'.

While Arab countries provide nearly half of China's crude oil imports, China is the main trading partner of more than 10 countries in the Middle East, with more than US \$200 billion worth of trade deals.

- President Xi highlighted the development of infrastructure and investment facilitation as key areas of focus and priority of renewable energy cooperation to help promote Sino-Arab relations. In addition to fruitful political dialogue, China has entered into a strategic partnership with eight countries and signed various agreements with six other countries and committed themselves to cooperate within the framework of the initiative.

- China's cooperation in the Middle East has recently been fruitful: eight countries in the Middle East are members of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which is the main

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financial institution for infrastructure projects for countries along the Silk Road.

- Moreover, the construction of the China-Pakistan economic corridor and the Gwadar-Chia oil pipeline will bring oil from the Gulf to China very quickly, reducing the shipping time from 16 weeks to only two weeks. We are already seeing evidence of a long-term strategic vision to enhance energy cooperation.

- The MENA region is one of the largest markets for China's trade, and vice versa. In the case of Egypt, connectivity is an integrated goal: Albrex complies with the Egyptian vision and will help to achieve a critical commercial and financial trading network that will culminate in the creation of a tangible trading system linking Europe, Africa and Asia. In this regard, strengthening the link between the Middle East, North Africa, Asia and Europe will benefit the common development of the parties concerned.

- It is important to note that this linkage will benefit not only China but also all countries within the framework of the Initiative. This crucial and strategic initiative can integrate other initiatives and sub regional organizations within it, including the Eurasian Economic Community, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, to enhance the economic returns of the Middle East and to promote the universality of this development network.

- In addition, the Middle East is one of the regions where young people represent a large proportion of the total population, looking for new horizons and looking for a great investment opportunity in manufacturing, and the region is seeking further industrialization and development. In addition, North Africa and West Asia are keen to promote industrial cooperation; therefore,

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China's extensive technologies and expertise will be of value to development as defined by the new industrial revolution and will help enable small companies to maintain regional growth.

- There is also broad scope for strengthening financial linkages and cooperation in various areas and there is a need to establish a stable and sustainable inter-regional financial system to mobilize public and private funding for investment in the Institute. This will be a means of securing funds to help realize the vision of the Initiative. Indeed, a large number of countries under the Belt and Road Initiative, particularly Egypt and Kazakhstan, have competed as bilateral exchange agreements with China, which will undoubtedly increase investment and boost trade.

- The development of roads, ports, railways and airports is essential to the success of this initiative. Unlike initiatives that lack a clear road map, the new Silk Road - with the assistance of the Chinese government - has provided the required funding and financial instruments to ensure it. The Silk Road Fund, with \$40 billion and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank with a capital of \$100 billion to ensure the implementation of the project, as well as other financial institutions, including the New Bank for Development of the Brix Group, the World Bank and the Chinese Financial Institutions. (ICBC, CDB, CADFund). However, there is still a funding gap. The ADB estimates that the infrastructure gap in Asia needs about \$ 8 trillion over the next 10 years, which means the need to mobilize more public and private funds from different sources. At the First International Belt and Road Forum held in Beijing on May 14, President Xi Jinping gave financial support to the initiative by contributing an additional 100 billion yuan to the Silk Road Fund.

- In partnership with other financial institutions, the investment fund of the initiative has been increased to 300 billion

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yuan and the private lending system of the CBD and the China EXIM Bank has increased by 250 billion and 130 million yuan respectively. Therefore, the allocation of funding helps bridge the financial gap in this regard and will be a major step towards the realization of the initiative.

- In addition to the commitments of President Xi, announced at the Forum, China has allocated 60 billion Chinese yuan to assist developing countries and participating organizations, as well as the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund, which will undoubtedly play a major role in the enhanced cooperation on innovation.

- In the end, I believe that the Silk Road Initiative has the potential to overcome the potential for increased connectivity between three major continents, as it provides a lesson in global integration. It will expand regional development in industries and services to bring about a new revolution in manufacturing and services, helping to achieve development and prosperity in the Middle East



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## ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran's participation in the activities of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law,

- ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, has participated in the activities of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law Round table, held from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2017, on “Forty Years after the Adoption of Additional Protocols I and II to the 1949 Geneva Conventions: New Disputes, Parties and Horizons”, where many issues have been discussed, on top of which was the issues of: the non-compliance to Additional Protocols I and II to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, by International Forces, including Peacekeeping Forces; the violations that might be committed by those forces, which are also violations of International Humanitarian Law; the failure to hold governments accountable for violations committed by their forces, which makes it imperative to improve the drafting of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) signed between the UN and those States, so that peacekeeping forces are trained and made aware of the provisions of International Humanitarian Law.

There has also been a legal discussion among experts on the use of combatant forces in inter-State disputes, which could cause victims death and injury and unjustified destruction of civilian aims and not to distinguish between war and humanitarian objectives, which is prohibited in accordance to the Additional Protocols, and third common article to the Geneva four agreements. A number of subjects were discussed, including the illegal intervention by the United States and Britain in the use of force in Iraq. Participants also talked about the guar-

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antees provided by international humanitarian law to civilians and to persons detained in prisons and the need to observe humanitarian rules. Also the Round table discussed the issue of the importance of women's participation in the implementation of international humanitarian law .In addition, the Round table included a session about the subject of the end of the mandate of the war crimes tribunal in the former Yugoslavia in November, and the Court's achievements were reviewed.

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## Ambassador Ezzat Saad participated in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Summit about “The Role of Think Tanks in Drawing the Future in the MENA Region”

Ambassador Ezzat Saad Director of ECFA participated in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Summit about “The Role of Think Tanks in Drawing the Future in the MENA Region” which convened from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2017, at the Dead Sea, Jordan. At the invitation conveyed to the Executive Directors of Think Tanks in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region, Ambassador Ezzat Saad has participated in the activities of the Summit, held under the auspices of HRH Prince Al-Hassan Bin Talal, and was divided into five sessions on: (i) Meeting the challenge of Extremism and Radicalization in the MENA region. (ii) Economic Development and Cooperation. (iii) Why think Tanks matter more than ever Before in MENA. (iv) Regional Security. (v) Helping Build a Better tomorrow: The Role of MENA’s Think Tanks.

During the fourth session, which was dedicated to the theme of Regional Security, titled “The potential of Making Peace ... Addressing both Traditional and Non-traditional Challenges in the Region”, Ambassador Ezzat Saad emphasized that, security, in its various dimensions, has increasingly become a challenge for the region and the world at large, and there is no short-term nor simple solutions to the security dilemma in the region, which makes it imperative to look for consensual solutions to all disputes amongst States, especially in the Arab World, in order to confront regional forces seeking to destabilize the region.

The Summit concluded with a number of important recommendations in relation to revitalizing the role of the Research and Thought Centers and increasing their effectiveness.

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## participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad soon on Joint Symposium on The Emerging Strategic co-operation between Egypt, Cyprus and Greece: Energy and Security

Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, participated in the Joint Symposium, convened by the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (American University in Cairo), the Institute of International Relations (Greece), and the Cyprus Center for Green Development and Energy Policy, about the “Emerging Strategic Cooperation amongst Egypt, Cyprus and Greece: Energy and Security”, held on 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2017, where the Symposium included two themes: (i) cooperation amongst the three States in the field of energy; and (ii) cooperation and challenges in the eastern Mediterranean region.

In his speech, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, noted the importance of strengthening cooperation among the three States in the field of Natural Gas; building a strategic alliance amongst them, adding Libya, once its stability is restored; linking major gas fields among Egypt, Greece and Cyprus in anticipation of the start of exporting gas to Europe; and working together to develop a comprehensive strategy for the gas industry.

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## Participation of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in a Conference on “Egypt and Indonesia – A Vision for the Future”

On the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, commemorating the commencement of diplomatic relations between the two sides, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad Participation in the Conference was held in cooperation between Embassy of Indonesia in Cairo and the Al-Hiwar Centre for Political and Media Studies, on “Egypt and Indonesia – A Vision for the Future”, on 4<sup>th</sup> of Oct, 2017 with the participation of H.E. Mr. Hilmi Fawzi, Ambassador of Indonesia to Cairo; H.E. Mr. Hassan Wirajuda, Indonesia’s former Foreign Minister and Director of SETARA Institute for Democracy and Peace (an Indonesia-based NGO); Prof. Dr. Sri Adiningsih, Chairwoman of the Presidential Advisory Council of the Republic of Indonesia; Mr. Cedrato Danciprato, Member of Indonesia’s Presidential Advisory Council and Spokesman of the Indonesian Consultative Council; Sir Azyumardi Azra, Professor of History and former Rector of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta; in addition to a number of parliamentarians and representatives from Al-Azhar Al-Sharif as well as academics. The conference was held in two sessions; the first addressed the theme of “Egypt and Indonesia, Strategic Cooperation in face of Challenges”, and the second dealt with the theme “Cultural Relations and their Impact on Political and Economic Aspects”.

During the Conference, it was emphasized that this event is important, being an opportunity to exchange views on common interests in all fields that bring countries together, those fields

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which have witnessed a great momentum following the visit by President El-Sisi to Jakarta in September 2015.

During the second session, which was Chaired by Ambassador Saad noted the importance of enhancing cultural, scientific and technical cooperation which is inseparable from political cooperation or political relations among States, any States. In the case of Egypt-Indonesia Relations, in particular, such relations derive their value and strength from the history of these relations as well as from cultural and civilizational commonalities that are common to the two countries.

Moreover, cooperation in fighting terrorism and promoting religious tolerance is as highly cultural as it is also political, especially if we take into account the fact that adopting a security approach alone in face of the phenomenon of terrorism is not only insufficient, but also requires concurrently adopting another approach related to culture, concepts and religious discourse... etc.

Regarding bilateral cooperation between the two countries under El-Sisi Presidency, he stressed that Egypt's political leadership attaches great importance to strengthening cooperation with Indonesia at all the levels, including at the cultural level. This is reflected in the signing by the two countries of four Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) among Egyptian and Indonesian Universities during 2017, in addition increasing the number of scholarships awarded by Al-Azhar University to Indonesian Students from 20 to 100 scholarships annually, as an outcome of the visit by Grand Emam of Al-Azhar, Dr. Ahmad At-Tayyeb to Indonesia, on 21<sup>st</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> of February 2017.

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## Participation of Ambassador Mahmoud Karem in the work of Moscow's Conference on Nuclear Non-Proliferation

On 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> of October 2017, Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, board member of the Council, participated in the work of the Moscow Conference on Nuclear Non-Proliferation, in a broad international participation of more than 300 experts and international officials from more than 44 countries, including a delegation from North Korea and a large delegation from Iran.

It was clear during the discussions that the nuclear states were deeply concerned about the other way to conclude a nuclear arms treaty, which is opposed by the nuclear states and some non-nuclear states that protect the nuclear umbrella and allow the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territories based on agreements emanating from the NATO. Everyone is concerned about the impact of this track on the NPT and concern about growing international support for this process, and about the threat of withdrawal from the NPT, whose sixth article has not made any tangible progress.

Some stressed on the importance of Russia's next role in bringing together views, especially in proposing a way out for the Middle East (declaring the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone).

Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, commented on the remarks made by Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, the new representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations. He highlighted the Arab concern about the lack of progress in convening a conference on the Middle East, stressing the need for Ms. Izumi, and her administration, in cooperation with the UN Secretary-General,

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to assume responsibility and play an active role beyond the role of the «former facilitator», and stresses that it is difficult to reproduce the same precedent, which led to this failure to be held within an agreed time frame in the midst of a constructive role for the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

In this context, Ms. Izumi explained her understanding of Ambassador Karem's assertion that she will start consultations with several countries, including Egypt, to guide the opinions and define the new international role required. She said that they do not want the Middle East to be stuck in the coffin of a process. 'The dialogue' between the parties is important, but they have recently noticed the division of the Arab position in New York and its inability to speak with one voice.

Ambassador Karem delivered a speech at the 4<sup>th</sup> session, during which he reviewed the most important challenges that hinder the efforts of nuclear disarmament from the Middle East region and make it a free zone. He stressed that the first of these challenges is the absence of a clear plan of action with a time frame agreed upon by all parties. This is in addition to the lack of political will, as well as the clash of defense and security doctrines among the regional parties in the Middle East, including examples of delays in regional cooperation, especially on the issue of nuclear disarmament, on the pretext of threats from non-state actors from Iran, the policies of regional hegemony, and its attempts to export revolutions to neighboring countries. He pointed out that despite these threats; Israel's involvement with some of its regional neighbors on these threats makes it a successful platform for regional cooperation, including negotiations on nuclear weapons.



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## Participation of Ambassador/ Mounir Zahran in Amman Security Forum

At the invitation of Amman Security Forum, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of ECFA, as well as Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem, and Mr. El-Sayed El-Ghannam, First Secretary at Egypt's Foreign Ministry, Disarmament Affairs Department have participated in the Forum during the period (15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> of Nov.2017).

The Forum has addressed a number of regional and international issues concerning the region, and the agenda for disarmament, non-proliferation and terrorism. The Forum was opened by Ms. Deborah G. Rosenblum, Executive Vice President at the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), on behalf of the Initiative's Chairmanship (Founder & CEO, Former US Senator Samuel Augustus Nunn Jr.). The Initiative is funded by Amman Nuclear Forum and Dutch Government.

Among the participants in the Forum was Ambassador Adam Bugajski, Poland's Permanent Representative to the UN Office and the International Organisations in Vienna, and prospective Chair of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in Geneva in late April and early May 2018. Ambassador Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov, of the Russian Federation, Under-Secretary-General of the UN Counter-Terrorism Office, has participated in the Forum opening ceremony.

Speakers at the Forum included Minister Khaled Touqan, Chairman of Jordanian Nuclear Energy Authority, Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem and Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran. The

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Forum has addressed themes that included topics related to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); the concluding of a Treaty on Prohibition (Banning) of the Production of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in July 2017, and the boycotting thereof by Nuclear States and their Allies.

Ambassador Dr. Munir Zahran pointed out the importance of working to ensure the success of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, by accelerating the establishment of a Free Zone from Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) prior to the onset of the Conference. He also noted how important it is to review and amend the Conference's Rules and Regulations so that decisions are made by a two-thirds majority according to Article 18 of the UN Charter, and Civil Society Organizations are allowed to take part in all Deliberations, Committees and Preparatory Committees of the Conference, under all aspects of the Treaty similar to the pattern practiced in the Human Rights Council.

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## Participation of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in The First Conference on “Prospects of Arabic-African-Chinese Relations within the Context of Belt and Road Initiative”

On the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2017, at the invitation of the Association of Arab-Chinese Friendship, Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in the First Conference on «Prospects of Arabic-African-Chinese Relations within the Context of Belt and Road Initiative», held in Khartoum, Sudan. The conference was attended by Officials and Scholars from more than 20 Arab and African States, and a number of Chinese Scholars and Academics. The Conference was held in eight sessions.

In his speech, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Conference, titled “Political Implications of Silk Road in both Arab and African States», Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad touched on Silk Road, geopolitical rivalry in the Middle East and Africa, and ways of enhancing Sino-Arab and Afro-Chinese Cooperation, within the context of the Initiative, emphasizing that since it was launched in 2013 until now, the Initiative has been received with heated discussions by Academics, Think-Tanks as well as Local and International Media. Some observers interpret the Initiative as China’s Grand Strategy aimed at meeting China’s aimed at meeting China’s Security and Military Ambitions.

In light of the magnitude of the Initiative, it should be noted that it encompasses about three-quarters of world’s population and about 40 per cent of World Gross Product (WGP). Perhaps the Initiative’s most important impact, when implemented, lies in the further deepening of political and economic integration between China and the States that would be covered by the Belt and Road Initiative.

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Undoubtedly, the Belt and Road Initiative provides a rare strategic opportunity for AU's Agenda 2063, The Africa We Want, launched by the African Union in 2015, the very same year in which Sino-African relations were upgraded to the level of "Comprehensive and Collaborative Strategic Partnership".

The economic development that the Initiative would contribute to the Continent's States will have far-reaching important political impacts on both Arab and African regions, manifested primarily in achieving peace, social security and stability and in aiding gradual modernization of the global governance system.

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## participation of Ambassador Ali al-Hafny in the first forum of NGO Net work ( SIRONET) under the China Belt and Road Initiative

Representating the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), Ambassador Ali El-Hefny took part in the First Forum of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Network, held in the period between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, held within the context of China's Belt and Road Initiative. The forum was attended by some 199 NGO participants, including 104 NGO representatives from Foreign States and International Organizations, and 95 Chinese NGOs. During the Forum, Egypt was represented by: Sharaf Foundation for Sustainable Development, represented by Dr. Essam Sharaf, Egypt's Former Prime Minister and Chairman of the Foundation; Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), and Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization, represented by Mr. Essam El-Deen Ahmad Shiha, Secretary-General of the Organization and Member of Egypt's El-Wafd Political Party. Amongst the Public Figures who participated were: Romania's Former Prime Minister, Bulgaria's Former Prime Minister and Spouse of Tanzania's Former President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete.

**Four parallel sub-meetings for NGOs participating in the Forum were held, and during the third sub-meeting, he delivered a speech**, in which he addressed the need for the African Continent to promote the concepts of "self-reliance" and "self-sufficiency" at all levels, be it Continental, State or Local Unit Level. Therefore, Civil Society Organizations' role is important and complementary to State's role, and cooperation among these organizations and their Chinese counterparts is

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very important.

- He has touched on how significant Egypt's geographical location is, to the Marine Route of Silk Road, as it connects two continents (Africa & Asia), acts as a Hub for three continents, including (Europe), and a priority corridor for China, with 11 percent of International Trade and a large part of Chinese Commerce going through it. He pointed out the current and future growing importance of this corridor, in view of the diversified facilitations to be offered by Egypt to International Navigation, and the Mega-Projects being carried out along the Suez Canal Region in addition to the New Industrial Zones being established within the context of the development plan of this region, as well as the benefits to be gained by African States in East and South of the Continent as a result of such plan.

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## Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad's participation in the International Forum On the Belt and Road Port Cities

During the Period from 5th to 8th December 2017, with special invitation, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad was participated in the International Forum On the Belt and Road Port Cities, which held in Tianjin territory.

**Ambassador was stressed on his speech on the following points:**

1- Geographically, all of the Middle East is well centered within the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). For its unique geographical position, the Middle East is sometimes referred to as “the place where the Belt joins the Road”, meaning the terrestrial and the maritime routes. The maritime section of the project, as we know, is called the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road, which will go past the Eastern Shores of the Arabian Peninsula before reaching the Mediterranean Sea, passing through the Red Sea and Suez Canal.

2- The BRI is extensively detailed within the China's Arab policy paper, of 2016, which is the most important document assessing the relations of China with the Arab Countries. The silk and Road is mentioned twice in the document, both as legacy and prospect, and is presented as the cornerstone on which to build “Pragmatic Cooperation in the Principle of Mutual benefit and win – win results with Arab States”, and it has its own importance as the first among investment and trade cooperation projects.

3- China and Middle East Relations are not only based on energy but on trade as well. In fact, between 2001 and 2016, China's trade with the Med area countries rose from around 16 Billion \$

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to over 191 billion \$, overtaking the United States as a regional trading partner in 2010. The first countries as destinations for Chinese exports are turkey and Egypt in the Med and the UAE and Saudi Arabia in the Gulf. Thus the Maritime side of the BRI, trade flows are likely to increase in the Med. Basin through the acquisition of ports on both sides and thanks to the opportunities arising from the doubling the Suez Canal in 2015.

4- More important for the BRI is the rise of “the maritime economy”. In fact, some of the goals declared by the Maritime Segment of the BRI have already been achieved in the last decade thanks to not only to several acquisitions of shares in ports located in the region, but also China’s involvement in Seaport constructions in the Arab and African Countries, China has remarkable technology in this regard.

Seaports are important infrastructure, and are crucial pivots connecting a state’s national economy with the world economy. Also, seaports are the crucial pivots connecting the Marine countries with land – locked countries.



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## Ambassador Mounir Zahran in the occasion of handing over the European Presidency by Estonia to Bulgaria

At the invitation of the Egyptian-European Council's President, Mr. Mouhammad Abou El-Enein, Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA's Chairman, attended a Business Lunch on Wednesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, on (the occasion of handing over the European Presidency by Estonia to Bulgaria) after the expiry of its Presidency Term in December 2017. The lunch was also attended by Mr. Soon Sander, the Ambassador of Estonia and Mr. Popov, the Ambassador of Bulgaria.

Ambassador of Estonia spoke on a number of topics, including his role in coordinating common positions and exchanging information with European Union (EU) Ambassadors in Cairo. He also spoke on Egypt's Foreign Minister, Mr. Sameh Shoukry's visit to his country, Estonia, in 2017, noting that, he is the first Egyptian Foreign Minister to visit his country since its independence. He also touched on strengthening relations between the two countries.

Ambassador of Bulgaria, also spoke during the lunch, saying that Bulgaria's priorities under its Presidency of the EU would be to enhance EU relations with neighboring States. He also touched on the linkage between the primacy of security and stability in the Mediterranean States and reaching a settlement and reconciliations in Syria, Libya and Iraq.

Ambassador Mounir Zahran asked about the willingness of the EU to act as Mediator to settle the Middle East Problem in place of the US, whose credibility was lost after President Trump

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has announced the recognition of “Jerusalem” “AL-QUDS” as the capital of ‘Israel’, thus defying the resolutions of the international legitimacy. The Ambassadors of Estonia and Bulgaria agreed that they doubt the possibility of the EU acting as Mediator instead of the US, although the EU is a member of the International Quartet, and despite the EU’s Economic Power, which qualifies the EU to assume this role.

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## Ambassador Mahmoud Karem's participation in the annual conference of the European Consortium for Non-Proliferation

During the period from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, Ambassador Mahmoud Karem, board member of ECFA, participated at the annual conference of the European Union for Non-Proliferation in Brussels. The conference gathered the largest number of international experts in the field of non-proliferation, including the High Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Disarmament, and Ambassador «Jacek Bekica» the European Union's special envoy for disarmament and Non-Proliferation, and the Deputy Secretary-General of the Atlantic Alliance (NATO) and a host of other international figures.

- Mrs. Mogherini High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Relations and Security Policy explained the EU's interest in preventing nuclear proliferation, which represents the pivot of the Union for peace building and security policies, and she added that a short time ago, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed Iran's commitment to compliance with the provisions of the Convention (JCPOA). It is considered a success for the European Union in establishing effective verification materials at the heart of the Convention, adding that she went to Washington last week and made it clear to the Congress that Iran's agreement belongs to the world, not the United States and demanded to respect the Convention because there is no military solution for this problem nor the problem in North Korea.

- The United Nations High Commissioner for Disarmament said that, in her statement to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General had identified seven challenges to the world, in-

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cluding the proliferation of arms and the need for nuclear disarmament. She added that, we must now make an effort to ensure commitment to nuclear disarmament from nuclear states and to achieve additional reductions, especially atomic energy, and we must work to agree on points of convergence, not the other way around.

- NATO Secretary-General Mrs. 'Gottemoeller' (American) spoke of the challenges facing NATO in attempts to weaken the NPT through alternative frameworks; the North Korean problem and ballistic missiles, Russia's aggressive policies and the misuse of the veto by the Security Council and Russia's use of chemical weapons. **(The following ways to work with NATO were identified):**

- Support for international sanctions and the export control system for rogue states and stop the financing of rascal regimes.
- Support the Nuclear Non proliferation mechanism and Security Council resolutions to prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction.
- Increase information cooperation between NATO and other countries to exchange information.

-Regarding the establishment of a Free Zone of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East, the problem is expected to continue to threaten the success of the NPT Review Conference in 2020 unless the mechanisms, agenda and organizational aspects of the conference, including the list of conference procedures and the format of the final document that will determine the steps towards creating that area, are agreed upon now.

Chapter V



Council's Statements



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## Press release on US President Donald Trump's remarks at a press conference with the Israeli Prime Minister

15<sup>th</sup> of Feb. 2017

The statement by President Donald Trump after his talks with Netanyahu in Washington on February 15<sup>th</sup> 2017, that the two-state solution is one of the options to resolve the Palestinian problem that the two sides need to agree on, ultimately for the American position.

This statement is an introduction to determine what is required to put forward on the occasion of the visit of the President of the Republic to Washington in early March.

The two-state solution is the one adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 181 of 1947. The same resolution was based on David Ben-Gurion's declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1948.

Israel violated the provisions of the General Assembly resolution on dividing its march to control about % 72 of the land of Palestine under British Mandate. The map of partition of Palestine annexed to the partition resolution allotted % 56 of the land of Palestine to the Jewish state, including the city of Jerusalem, which has allocated about % 6 of the land of Palestine under the mandate, which need to be under an independent system under international supervision.

It should be borne in mind that the Palestinian territories under Israeli control until June 4<sup>th</sup> 1967 comprised % 17.5 of the Palestinians (Israeli Arabs).

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When the Palestinian National Council, which was held in Algiers on November 15<sup>th</sup>, declared the independence of the State of Palestine in 1988, with the establishment of a Palestinian state on % 28 of the historic land of Palestine. Yasir Arafat, in his capacity as president of the Palestine Liberation Organization, has admitted to Israel's control of % 72 of the land of Palestine.

Palestine has been granted the status of Observer State that is not a member of the United Nations (Non-Member observer state status).

The flag of the State of Palestine was raised in the flags of other Member States of the World Organization at the entrance of the Organization. The State of Palestine has joined many international organizations, agreements and conventions since then.

To date, 137 countries have recognized the Palestinian state, most recently Sweden and the Vatican, as well as five European parliaments (France, Britain, Spain, Ireland, Greece).

When the 2002 Arab Summit called for a two-state solution, it was conditional on a halt to the establishment of settlements and the establishment of a Palestinian state on the territory from which Israel withdraws to the June 4, 1967 borders of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, equivalent to % 28 of historic Palestine in exchange for normal relations with Israel . However, the two-state solution faces a rejection by Israel now, which is in direct contrast to the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel on 15 May 1948, which is based on the decision to partition Palestine No. 18 of 1947.

In the case of the new American administration, Israel is in the process of toppling the two-state solution and replacing it with



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the one-state solution of the Jewish state. In effect, this means the displacement of nearly two million Israeli Arabs out of it, and these are not Jews but Muslims and Christians. In all cases, under the one state in which the Israelis will control, the Palestinians will become second-class citizens, embodying the policy of apartheid in its ugliest form.

Thus, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs affirms that what the Palestinians have agreed upon cannot be disputed. That is, the Palestinian state should be within % 28 of the historic area of Palestine, with the need to remove the settlements established by Israel, unless the Palestinians themselves agree to exchange land with Israel equivalent to the land on which Israel built its settlements.

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## Press release on the Terrorist Incident Against Copts In Arish

26<sup>th</sup> of Feb.2017

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs has received the news about the incidents of “horrific” killing – to say the least-of Egyptian Coptic families and of the preceding and subsequent attempts by the forces of darkness to drive Egyptian citizens to abandon their homes and relatives and leave their city. Subsequently, thirty families were forced to leave their homeland and their families and migrate to the city of Ismailia.

Accordingly, this terrorist incident is a grave development in Egypt’s war against terrorism, and should not simply be a confrontation between the forces of darkness, on the one hand, and the armed forces and the police on the other, but must mobilize all Egyptians to defend the identity of their homeland and the dignity of their state. In this regard, it is imperative to clarify the dimensions of this terrorist incident for this mobilization to take place.

The Arish terrorist incidents are a grave development in the battle forced upon Egypt. Egyptians can only win with the people’s solidarity with their armed forces and police in this war, which targets Egypt’s identity and national and human fabric.

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## A press release concerning the terrorist attacks against the churches of Tanta and Alexandria

10<sup>th</sup> of April 2017.

The Egyptian people, including the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, have been terribly horrified by the vicious bombings perpetrated by the terrorists in St. Georges Church in the city of Tanta and the St Marks Coptic Orthodox church of Alexandria, killing nearly 50 innocent martyrs and causing at least 100 injuries.

The Council condemns these terrorist attacks with extreme feelings of sorrow and grief as it had previously condemned the terrorist bombing of Cairo's St Marks Coptic Orthodox church in January, 2017. Further, the council expresses its utter condolences to the families of all the victims of such despicable terrorist attacks and wishes them patience and consolation as well as immediate recovery for the injured.

The Council announces its support the decisions issued by the president on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April to deter terrorist attacks in Egypt. The decisions included the imposition of the state of emergency for 3 months, according to the provisions of the Egyptian constitution, in attempt to counter all those of who fund terrorist organizations or arrange for attacks and present them to justice.

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## Press release on the terrorist accident in the monastery of Anba Samuel in Minya Governorate

29<sup>th</sup> of May 2017

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs condemns in the strongest terms the criminal terrorist attack, which carried out by the gang of traitors and terrorists on 26<sup>th</sup> of May, to kill our dear citizens in cold blood. They were in a regiment of prayer in the monastery of Anba Samuel in Minya Governorate. These traitors, killers, cannot belong to any religion or Public morality. This brutal aggression increases cohesion hardness and strength and solidarity to defeat terrorism between Muslims and Christians. The Council deploras the martyrs of the nation in this heinous crime, wishing and pray for those injured a speedy recovery, and affirms its full support for the Egyptian armed forces to launch an attack Against these terrorists bases in Libya for the tuber and mopped eliminate them completely, even back to Egyptian security, safety and stability.

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## Statement of the death of Dr. Sherif Bassiony -Member of the Council

27<sup>th</sup> of Sep. 2017

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs wish to express his profound sadness and loss over the death of Dr. Sherif Bassiouni - a professor at DePaul University in Chicago -USA, and founder of the International Institute of Criminal Justice and Human Rights “The Syracuse”. Thus, the international community lost one of the fathers of international criminal law, who defended for the establishment of the International Criminal Court.

In his death, the Council lost one of its members who are proud of them and the academic family in Egypt as well.

To his family, friends and colleagues, we offer our sincere condolences of great sorrow.

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## Press release Concerning condolences to the victims of the national Police.

23<sup>rd</sup> of Oct. 2017

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) has expressed its deepest condolences for the motherland sacrificial victims, the brave policemen from counter-terrorism forces, who have courageously carried out their duty in the face of mischievous terrorists in the Oases Area on Friday, the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, where they sacrificed their lives for their motherland while dedicatedly performing the duty.

ECFA Members have offered their prayers and supplications to Allah Almighty so that he would honour the police martyrs, extend His Great Mercy to them, bestow patience and fortitude upon their families and relatives, and hasten the healing of their fellow policemen who were injured while fulfilling their duty, defending the homeland and citizens and their security.

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## Press Release on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Balfour Declaration

30<sup>th</sup> of Oct. 2017

On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, which came in a letter from the Foreign Minister of Britain at this time «Lord Rothschild» to establish a national homeland for Jews in Palestine, which was under the British Mandate.

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs confirms that this letter was issued under the name of a colonial state, does not own the land of Palestine, and therefore has no right to act in it. The UN General Assembly Resolution No. 181 of 1947 on the partition process of Palestine is a contradiction with the Balfour Declaration. This was based on the declaration of Ben-Gurion on 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1948 to establish the State of Israel, which expanded the control of territories allocated to the independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The Council calls the Government of the United Kingdom to rectify the imbalance caused by the Balfour Declaration, and its disastrous consequences, for the Palestinian people in particular and the Middle East in general for the affirmation and implementation of the dismantling of the two States, in accordance with the 2002 Arab Summit in Beirut and Israel's withdrawal from all territories occupied since 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1967, including the West Bank of the Jordan River and the occupied Syrian Golan. And to stop the construction of settlements in the occupied territories in order to achieve a comprehensive peace settlement based on the resolutions of international legitimacy.

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## ECFA paid tribute to AR-RAWDHA Mosque martyrs killed by Takfeerists

24<sup>th</sup> of Nov. 2017

ECFA has mourned homeland Martyrs, whose lives were taken by brutal terrorists on Friday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2017. They have fallen victims at the sinful hand of the Takfeerists, while performing Jumaa (Friday) Prayer at AR-RAWDHAH Mosque, near El-Arish City. ECFA offers its prayers and supplications to Allah Almighty so that He would bestow His patience and fortitude upon Martyrs' families and relatives, and hasten the healing of the injured.

ECFA condemns, in the strongest terms possible, those groups of misguided terrorists who have massacred innocent worshippers. ECFA also condemns all those who stand behind, back, support, or finance those terrorists to perpetrate such acts of terror, which are considered grave sins that have neither religious nor moral support. They have no justification what so ever to commit such horrendous sins and or to carry out those dreadful crimes against humanity and against the Egyptian people.

ECFA supports all the measures taken by the Egypt's Authorities to defeat and uproot terrorism, in order to restore security and safety to our cherished Egypt, so that Egypt's people could enjoy peace and stability that are much needed to continue efforts for economic and social development.



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## ECFA Denounces Trump's Decision to Recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel

7<sup>th</sup> of Dec. 2017

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs condemns the US President's decision announced on Wednesday evening, December 6<sup>th</sup> 2017 that the United States recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the transfer of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv. The recent US decision is a challenge to the resolutions of international legitimacy issued by the General Assembly of the United Nations and the Security Council since the General Assembly Resolution 181 of 1947 on the partition of Palestine under the British Mandate, voted for it by the United States of America, which was based on Ben Gurion on 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1948 in the declaration of creating the state of Israel. This gave Jerusalem, in the third part of the partition plan, a special status «Corpus Sepratum» under a special international regime.

The last American resolution is also a challenge to other resolutions of international legitimacy, especially Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which stipulates Israel's withdrawal from all the territories occupied since June 5<sup>th</sup> 1967, including Jerusalem, and Resolution 478 of 1980, which rejected the Israeli government's decision to annex Jerusalem and considering it as an eternal capital to the state of Israel. Moreover the Security Council resolution 2334 of 2016 not to recognize any changes that Israel makes to the 1967 lines, including Jerusalem, other than through negotiations, as well as other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

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The latest American decision is a provocation to the feelings of the Arab peoples, Muslims and Christians throughout the world. The American recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is a risk that adversely affects the chances and possibility of Washington acting as a neutral and impartial mediator to reach a comprehensive peace settlement of the conflict in the Middle East and settle the differences between Palestinians and Israelis based on the two-state solution.

In this sense, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs supports the announcement made by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that he will make every effort to resume negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis based on the two-state solution.