



**Annual Report
2016**

Egyptian Council for Foreign affairs

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ECFA Honorary Chairman Speech

I hereby congratulate our esteemed Council, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), its Board of Directors, of which I am honoured to be a Member, and its distinguished Executive Director, H.E. Ambassador Ezzat Saad, on the occasion of launching ECFA Annual Report, starting this year. This is an achievement that I have been personally aspiring for, in order to have an annual event and an opportunity to reflect on what has happened during the past year, in Egypt's Foreign Policy, the situation in the region and worldwide as well as other developments, and to evaluate ECFA's activities during that year and to have a forecast for the coming years. In general, the issuance of the Report comes in a point of time, which allows us to sit back, reflect, evaluate and think of what we, as a Civil Society Organization, can do to contribute to Egypt's Foreign Policy System, which is one of the main pillars of Egypt's National Security System.

ECFA was founded while the world was on the verge of closing the twentieth century and bracing for a new century and a new millennium. Establishing National Councils for Foreign Affairs was started with the emergence of Civil Society as an effective actor playing its role in the journey of National Policies in the domain of Foreign Affairs. Therefore, those Councils have emerged in the arena of thought and have become influential in making and managing Foreign Policy in many States. We have seen, for instance, the significant role played by the US Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), which was founded in the wake of World War I (WWI), as a Civil Society Organization, a think tank that brings together people of thought, experience and creativity in the domain of Foreign Policy.

Perhaps, it is noteworthy in this regard, to note the welcome that we received from Egypt's Foreign Ministry, as well as from its Civil Society, while we were about to establish ECFA. Egypt's Foreign Ministry has realized the importance of having an Or-

ganization that belongs to the Civil Society, is concerned with Foreign Policy, and brings together, as its Members, a group of people who are of diverse backgrounds, having versatile expertise, and including intellectuals, writers, academics, diplomats, businessmen, and media professionals, etc. Such an Organization would consider Egypt's concerns, and examine what is happening at the national, regional and international levels. In addition, those who are interested in Civil Society Issues found that ECFA is the right place to which they could belong, and the appropriate environment for them to share their ideas and experiences towards the Council's activities and progress.

I look back on the past 17 years to review the volume of symposiums and conferences that we have hosted in ECFA, with aim of exploring various issues of interest to Egypt, even though they were geographically far away from it in a world that has become a Global Village. I look further back on those meetings, which brought us together with our peers abroad, explaining to them Foreign Policy issues, and listening to what they had to say in their speeches or write in the work papers that they submitted, for the purpose of clarifying their visions.

Over the last seven years, ECFA has witnessed and lived in a new era of Egypt's most recent history, or what has been known as the "Arab Spring", which swept through the entire region, including Egypt. Then, a series of events began to unfold, rapidly changing the scene, making those days look like a womb, from which the major challenges that we are facing today, were born.

In the previous period, ECFA has held numerous symposia and meetings to discuss this major national challenge, however I would imagine that more needs to be done and further research will be required in order to contribute to the public debate and in-depth analysis of what Egypt is currently facing, be it the challenge of terrorism or other significant challenges. It will require that we follow-up with further study and analysis of new developments and fluctuations in the regional landscape, as well as

new changes happening to the world, and dangers threatening, and affecting each and every corner of it. Not to forget the fact that we are living in the world's most dangerous region.

Any scholar of Egypt's ancient or modern history will definitely realize the pivotal importance of Foreign Policy role in Egypt's successes and failures, as well as the role of Foreign Policy in the progress of Egypt's National Security, which remains our prime goal. ECFA, as one of Egypt's Civil Society Organizations, also has an important role to play in the future.

I seize this opportunity, of writing these lines, to congratulate my colleagues, ECFA's Board Members and Staff, and to wish all of them a Happy New Year, God willing. I am confident that Egypt, even with the magnitude of challenges it is facing, has the capabilities and resolve to overcome such challenges, and move forward along the path of achieving renaissance and advancement.

ECFA Honorary Chairman
Ambassador AbdelRaouf Al-Reedy

ECFA CHAIRMAN SPEECH

I am pleased to extend my congratulations to Members of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) on the occasion of publishing the Council's first Yearbook, since the establishment of our Council in 1999.

The Yearbook is a brief compilation of the most important and major Conferences, Symposiums, Seminars and Workshops that have been organized by the Council or in partnership with other Organizations, Universities and similar Councils, on subjects that are considered of priority in International Politics or topics that are of interest at the regional or national level in Egypt during 2016.

The Yearbook includes an outline of the meetings held and visits made by ECFA to other States, for the purpose of consulting with similar Councils on subjects and topics concerning issues of common interest both globally and regionally, and within the context of strengthening relations with other Countries and similar Councils, as well as representing ECFA, in international and regional meetings, in priority areas.

The Yearbook also contains a study that examines problems that are of concern to the public opinion in Egypt, the Arab world, and Africa, including terrorism, and issuing appropriate recommendations on each of them.

ECFA's activities during 2016 were marked by the Council's continued Chairmanship of the Arab Forum, for the second year in a row, as the Chair of that Forum was transferred, starting from the end of 2016, to the Institute of Security Studies in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for a period of two years.

The Yearbook is comprehensive and all-inclusive of ECFA's activities during the year, and is complementary to ECFA's periodical publications that are issued quarterly to cover the Council's activities, including according to my estimation, inter alia, these most important meetings:

1. The Joint Meeting with the League of Arab States, held in February 2016, in which ECFA participated, in its capacity as Chair of the Arab Nuclear Forum,. It was held under the slogan of “Iranian Nuclear Agreement with the 5+1 Group (2015) and Its Implications for the Arab Security”.

2. The Joint Conference, organized in April of the same year, in partnership with the University of Tennessee in the USA, on “The Culture of Nuclear Security”.

3. The Joint Symposium, organized, in December 2016, in partnership with the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University on “Egypt and the United Nations”.

4. The Round Table Meeting, on the “Implications of BREXIT (Britain's Withdrawal from the EU)” and on the “Strategy for Dealing with the Challenges facing Egypt’s Water Security in light of the Construction of Al ‘Nahda – Renaissance’ Dam in Ethiopia”.

I seize this opportunity to commend the efforts exerted by ECFA Director, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, who has oversaw the preparation of this Yearbook, which brings together ECFA’s most important activities and achievements. It is also considered as a scientific and academic reference sought after by researchers and those who are interested in the activity of ECFA, being one of civil society pillars in Egypt and the world.

Allah is the Arbiter of Success.

ECFA Chair
Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran



INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment in May 1999, this is the first time that the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) has issued an Annual Report or a “Yearbook”, covering its yearlong activities, which includes numerous events such as Symposiums, Seminars, Workshops, Roundtable Meetings, and Conferences. In organizing such events, ECFA relies primarily on its Board Members (Ladies & Gentlemen), by virtue of their experience and specialization, in addition to their diverse backgrounds that enrich the Council’s work.

ECFA’s activities also include inputs contributed by its Board Members who are called upon to take part in several events organized within the country and abroad, as well as lectures delivered, during meetings hosted by ECFA, by Egyptian and foreign intellectuals, experts and senior officials. They address specific issues that are put forward for discussion, adding an abundance of intellectual and cultural richness, and enabling the substantive and in-depth understanding of internal, foreign, regional and international issues.

ECFA has always been seeking to diversify the avenues of its progress in the planning and organizing of activities in such a way to realize its societal role as a Civil Society Organization, and its role as one of the Think Tanks concerned with Foreign Policy Issues and Crisscrossing Topics. Such diversity is revealed in the Report’s Topics, which took shape in the form of Intellectual Symposia that served as a “hodgepodge” in which all opinions were expressed on issues at hand, including, for example, the Symposium, organized by ECFA, on 10 January 2016, on the “Iranian-Saudi Crisis in light of Recent Developments in Rela-

tions between the Two Countries”.

Out of ECFA's belief in the importance of the role played by Think Tanks in the decision-making process in Egypt and the difficulties facing it, a Symposium on this subject was organized on the 28th of January 2016.

In view of Egypt's urgent need, at this point of time, to diversify its relations with, and be open to, all countries in the world, in order to realize its interests, on the 21st of September 2016, ECFA held a Seminar to discuss Professor Wassim Kalaajieh's book “Eurasian Russia: The Time of President Vladimir Putin”, the preface to which was written by Russia's Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov. The Seminar was attended by an elite group of Russian and Egyptian experts.

On the 27th of December 2016, ECFA also organized a joint Symposium on the developments in Cuba and Cuba's relations with Egypt and the world.

On the 23rd of October 2016, as a follow-up to developments and turbulences dominating the Arab landscape, ECFA has organized a Roundtable Meeting of the Arab Group to discuss the Arab Regime Crisis.

In light of the great significance of the European Circle to Egyptian interests, as EU represents the largest trading partner for Egypt, and with the changes that are taking place in EU and have far-reaching repercussions on Egypt, on the 3rd of July 2016, ECFA organized a Roundtable Meeting on the topic “Repercussion of BREXIT (Britain's Withdrawal from the European Union) on Egypt”.

In addition, ECFA delegations visited a number of States, in-

cluding Sudan (from the 2nd to the 4th of February 2016), where he discussed with the Sudanese counterparts on all issues and problems raised in the relations between the two countries.

An ECFA delegation has also visited China (on the 18th and 19th of October 2016), where it held five rounds of consultations with five Chinese Research Centers, on all areas of Bilateral Co-operation, the Regional Issues in the Middle East and East Asia, together with International Issues of Common Concern.

As part of its desire to open channels and build bridges of communication with various Think Tanks worldwide, on the 28th of March 2016, ECFA received a delegation from the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR). On the 31st of July 2016, it received another delegation from the Institute of African Studies at Zhejiang Normal University (IASZNU), an affiliate of CICIR.

Through another avenue that witnessed a high level of activity, ECFA has received numerous Official Delegations from various States.

For example, on the 8th of March 2016, it received, two Delegations from the US Air War College and Naval War College, in the context of the US side's keenness to take note of ECFA's view on the reality of how the Egyptian scene is developing and is actually happening.

Additionally, on the 17th of March 2016, ECFA received a delegation from the European Commission, the Executive of EU, which came to follow up on the implementation of the Egypt-EU Partnership Agreement, and to discuss ways of enhancing bilateral cooperation and bringing the relations to a strategic level.

On the 6th of November 2016, ECFA received a delegation from the Centre for Strategic Studies in Azerbaijan.

Moreover, from the 28th to the 30th of November 2016, ECFA received the delegation of the Sudanese Council for Foreign Affairs (SCFA).

It is noteworthy that the youth component was strongly present on ECFA's agenda, where it occupied a reasonable amount of the Council's interests, within a the framework of a parallel movement to complement the State's attention to the youth element, as it is the largest and most essential component of the foundation and pillar supporting development and progress which Egypt is aspiring to achieve.

This interest was manifested in the hosting, by ECFA, of a number of youth delegations, introducing them to the nature of Council's work and various activities, as well as to get know their perspectives on various political issues. For example, on the 18th of May 2016, ECFA received a number of Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS) Students who participated in the Simulation Exercise Module (plying Role-Models simulating Foreign Ministry work), with the aim of holding a session to introduce them to ECFA's activities and the vital role it plays in the Egyptian Foreign Policy.

On the 20th of July 2016, ECFA has also received a number of FEPS Students at some of Egypt's Universities (Cairo University, Alexandria University, Beni-Suef University, October 6 University), within the Training Programme delivered by the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies.

Above and beyond, in the summer of 2016, a series of lectures was delivered by a number of Board Members and by Director

of ECFA, to Senior Students in their final year at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University, in response to a desire expressed by the Faculty Dean.

These lectures have addressed regional and international political issues, such as the “Iran Nuclear Deal Framework & Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)”, the “Syrian Crisis”, and “Crisis of the Arab System”.

In light of the ECFA’s continued observation of internal and external events, taking place around it, the Council’s role does not stop at just follow-up and monitoring activities, but rather goes beyond to interact with them, through issuing press releases, in which it presents its views on issues and their subject matters.

For example, on the 23rd of March 2016, ECFA issued a statement in response to the letter sent by the so-called “American Working Group on Egypt” to former US President Obama, and on the 24th of April 2016, ECFA issued a statement, in response to Israeli Prime Minister's remarks on permanent stay in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

In addition, on the 18th of May 2016, the Council issued a statement welcoming the call to resume the stalled Middle East Peace Process, launched by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi during his visit to the Governorate of Assiut on the 17th of May 2016.

On the 25th of September 2016, the Council also issued a statement on the participation of President Sisi in the work of the Seventy-first Session of the United Nations General Assembly, as well as the activities and meetings he held on the sidelines of the session.

As for internal landscape developments, ECFA has had a

strong presence regarding the events witnessed by the Egyptian interior front recently.

In January 2016, ECFA has devoted its Annual Conference to the theme of “Egypt and the Challenges of Terrorism”, in which a number of selected specialists and experts spoke on the subject, and the Conference was opened by Foreign Minister, Mr. Sameh Shukri and Minister of Culture, Dr. Helmy El-Nemnem.

In view of the seriousness of the phenomenon and its social consequences, on the 23rd of October 2016, ECFA issued a statement on terrorist operations perpetrated in Sinai, and on the 11th of December 2016, issued a statement denouncing the terrorist act committed against El-Rasoolan Botros & Poles Church, El-Botroseya (Egyptian Church dedicated to Apostles Peter and Paul, located in St. Mark Cathedral) in Abbasiyah.

In addition to the previous activities carried out by ECFA, within its collective framework, its Board Members also have had their own share of individual activities that complemented and intersected with the Council’s activities in general.

Those activities varied from delivering lectures, to participating in numerous local and international symposiums and conferences, that include, for example, the delivery of a number of lectures, in February 2016, by Ambassador Dr. Hussein Abdul-Khaleq Hassounah, at the University of California, in addition to his participation in the “International Forum on the Question of Palestine and International Law”, organized by the United Nations in Amman, Jordan, in March 2016.

On the 27th and 28th of April 2016, Ambassador Muhammad Shaker and Ambassador Ezzat Saad participated in the Fifth Moscow Conference on International Security. Then, on the 26th and 27th of May 2016, ECFA’s Director, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat

Saad, participated in the Seventh Annual Meeting of Group Strategic Vision "Russia and the Islamic World".

ECFA's Board Members and Chairman, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, have also participated in the Roundtable Meeting together with the President of the UN-GA for its 70th Session, Mr. Mogens Lykettot, at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club, on the 28th of May 2016.

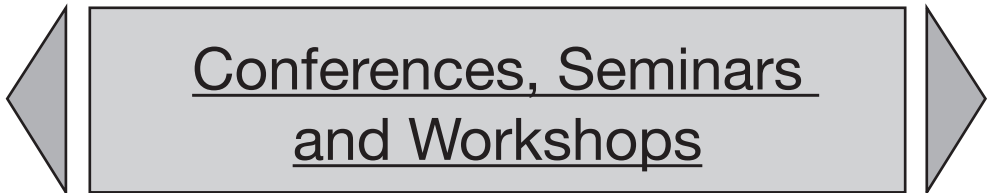
Moreover, ECFA Chairman has also participated in the work of the 39th Round Table on Current Issues of Humanitarian Law, organized by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, on "Weapons and the International Rule of Law", in San Remo, Italy (8th-10th of September 2016)

This report is brief, and avoids referring to certain viewpoints or information, either at the request of their authors, or due to the inappropriateness of so doing, particularly meetings with senior officials and foreign official guests who visit ECFA.

We hope that this report will provide useful information and analysis on Egypt's foreign policy and developments on many issues.

Director
Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad

Chapter I



Conferences, Seminars
and Workshops

Round Table Discussion about the Iran - Saudi Crisis

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held on Sunday, 10th January 2016, a general session of the members of the Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs at the council, as part of the Council's interest in developments in general, and in the Arab situation and the repercussions of the Iran - Saudi crisis against the backdrop of the execution of Shiite cleric "Nimr El-Nimr" along with 47 others executed by Saudi authorities, and sparking wide reactions regionally and internationally, as well as demonstrations in the east of Saudi Arabia. The round table was attended by Ambassadors: Mohamed Mounir Zahran, Abdel Raouf El Reedy, Mohamed Shaker, , Ezzat Saad, Ihab Wahba, Mohamed Nihad Asqalani, Fathy El-Shazly, and Sayed Abu Zeid , Farouq Mabrouk, Mohamed Sayed Obaid, Ahmed Rizk Mohammed Abdul Hamid Kassem, Professor Dr. Ahmed Yousef, and Professor Mrs. Gelan Gabr.

The session was moderated by coordinator of the Committee Ambassador Ihab Wahba who pointed out that the quick invitation for this meeting was dictated by the seriousness of the new crisis, which broke out in the region recently, as if there is not enough crises in the area.

Opening the meeting, Ambassador Ihab Wahba talked about a number of points that sparked the crisis between Saudi Arabia and Iran, that reviewed the determinants of the Egyptian situation, and raised a number of questions, hoping the participants would try to answer them.

- The first question he raised was whether there was a reason for Saudi Arabia to take this action; especially as all these persons were languishing in Saudi prisons for years.

- The second question is whether at this sensitive time when everyone is seeking to achieve peaceful solutions, in Syria or Yemen, why provoke Iran, especially as it is unconceivable to reach any solution in Iran's absence. Or does Saudi Arabia believe that Iran is actually draining it in Yemen and Syria, and its growing influence is a menace to the security of the region?

- There are several other questions: Is the new Saudi leadership under King Salman Ben Abdel Aziz and the Crown Prince and Minister of Defense Mohamed Ben Salman following a new foreign policy that is different from what Saudi Arabia had been following in recent years? Ambassador Wahba proposed that Dr Ahmed Youssef would be the first speaker. He said:

- Iran is a regional power that is trying to have influence especially as it has a regional project and a long history in the region. The Iranian influence extends to Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Bahrain, in addition to its occupation of UAE islands.

- Saudi policy in Yemen is designed to actually deter Iran as a serious threat to its security in the south.

Ambassador Abdel Rouf El-Reedy noted Egypt's role in the crisis management as chairman of the Islamic Conference Organization. He stressed that the stand must be on consultative basis. Saudi Arabia is involved in developments in Yemen. With its experience, Egypt can help find a way out.

ECFA Annual Conference "Egypt and the Challenges of Terrorism"⁽¹⁾

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held its annual Conference on 18th January 2016, at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club in Cairo. Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Shoukry, accompanied by Minister of Culture Helmy Al Namnam, opened the Congress held this year titled "Egypt and the challenges of terrorism", being one of the main challenges Egypt is facing as it proceeds to economic recovery, security and stability.

At the beginning of the meeting, ECFA Chairman Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran explained that the Conference three sessions included strategies against terrorism, the dimensions of the terrorism phenomenon and Egypt's national security and the challenges of terrorism.

The participating experts and specialists affirmed in the sessions their support for the Egyptian state and its cohesiveness and unity of components in order to eradicate terrorism and to enable the government to implement its economic, social and cultural development and achieve stability and security which are essential to realizing the goals of development.

The first session of the Conference was held under the title of "Terrorism: Concepts and Counter Strategy ". It was moderated by Ambassador Abdel Rouf El-Reedy, and was addressed by five speakers. The second session, entitled "Dimensions of the Terrorism Phenomenon", was chaired by Dr. Mustafa El-Fiki and addressed by four speakers. The third session entitled "Egypt's National Security and the Challenges of Terrorism", which was headed by Major General Murad Muwafi and hosted four speak-

(1) For more details, look at: Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.), Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) annual conference , entitled "Egypt and the Challenge of Terrorism", (January, 18th, 2016), (Cairo, 2016).

ers. The closing session was moderated by Dr. Ali Eddin Hilal.

The discussions at ECFA's Annual Conference focused on the phenomenon of terrorism- in all its domestic and international political, economic, and legal dimensions – and as one of the most important challenges facing Egypt. Meanwhile, the regional Middle East and Africa dimensions are adding to the magnitude of the challenges Egypt is facing, especially in terms of the region's security. On the western side there are the repercussions of the situations in Libya, the Sahel and the Sahara and of the security vacuum created by the situation in Mali. On Egypt's eastern side, Sinai in particular is posing a serious threat to Egypt's national security, not only in terms of terrorism itself but also in what is associated with it, such as arms smuggling and human trafficking.

The ECFA conference condemned all acts of terrorism targeting state institutions, individuals' property and the nation's historical and cultural sites. The conference affirmed its total rejection of all forms of support for terrorist organizations and processes, including financial support and the provision of safe havens to the instigators and perpetrators of terrorism. It further emphasized the local, regional and international dimensions of the terrorist phenomenon, which has become global, and is not linked to a specific region, culture or society. It has become a clear threat to world peace and security at the regional and international levels. Its eradication has become an international demand in light of the threat it is posing to the very concept of the modern state in a bid to serve extremist ideologies that take religion as a cover to carry out brutal acts that put people's destiny in jeopardy, hence the need for international and regional coordination within the framework of the international legitimacy resolutions.

The participants emphasized the Arab 1997 anti-terror terms of reference, as embodied in the 1977 Arab Strategy for Combating Terrorism, the 1998 Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism, and the resolutions of the Arab League Council and

the Arab Summit, especially of the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit on Preserving Arab National Security in the Face of Current Challenges. In this respect, special importance was attached to activating joint Arab action at the political, security, defense, judicial and media levels, and to the need for working to dry up the intellectual sources and funding of terrorism, and for addressing the causes and circumstances that led to the outbreak of these extremist terrorist phenomena. Emphasis was also placed on the importance of promoting understanding, tolerance and dialogue among civilizations, cultures, peoples and religions.

With regard to dealing with the phenomenon of terrorism, the ECFA's Conference underlined the need for a holistic non-selective approach that does not pick up certain organizations and turn a blind eye to others, especially as all of these organizations fall within the same ideological framework. In this connection, it was stressed that coining new designations for terrorism, such as "violent extremism" or the classification of terrorist organizations in a way that has allowed many of them to escape international prosecution, which would simply postpone the required overall confrontation without which terrorism is bound to hit all regions in the world, with no exception.

The Conference culminated in the following recommendations:

- The importance of promoting efforts for economic and social development, raising living standards and reducing the poverty.

- The importance of boosting education from early stages in order to inculcate in young people ideals, values and respect for law in order to save them from falling prey to terrorist organizations.

- Addressing the social problems resulting from the disintegration of the Egyptian family as a result of the migration of the family heads in search of work to improve the family income while leaving their families behind. Consequently, insufficient attention is being paid to the proper upbringing of the young ones

in the absence of their parents. Deviation from sound upbringing has facilitated the recruitment of some of them by terrorist organizations.

- Rationalization of religious discourse, to avoid extremist interpretations by terrorist groups to serve their organizations' purposes. Al-Azhar and the Ministry of Al-Awqaf (Endowments) need to double their efforts to that end.

- The establishment of a national observatory in Egypt for an early monitoring of the terrorist organizations' advocacy and movements, a detection of acts of sabotage and an early response as much as possible, as other countries have done. In this respect Egypt can benefit from the Egyptian Center for Social and Criminal Studies.

- Rationalization of the media, through outreach programs for vigilance to any media attempt to take advantage of the human rights and basic freedoms climate in a manner that would serve terrorist organizations. The media should not be driven by scoops before validation. Its motto should be: "Not everything that is known should be said; not everything said was witnessed; not everything witnessed is due to be released now; and not everything due for release should be said."

- With reference to the importance of Egypt's role from the beginning of 2016 with its assumption of the Security Council non-permanent membership for two years and its chairmanship of the Security Council Counter Terrorism Committee; ECFA Conference attaches great importance to it in promoting international efforts to combat terrorism.

Round Table Discussion about "The Importance of Think Tanks to Decision-making in Egypt, Difficulties faced"

The Council has joined think tanks around the world to launch an assessment report of these institutions (2014). As a part of the University of Pennsylvania, Civil Society Program, the University launched a report in 2015 with the participation of the United Nations and the World Bank, Think Tanks and NGOs around the world, including ECFA. In this context, the Council organized the round table on 28 January 2016, under the title "The Importance of Think Tanks to Decision-making in Egypt, and Difficulties faced", which is the theme chosen by the University of Pennsylvania this year. A group of ECFA members attended the discussion and took part in it which primarily tackled the following:

First: The main characteristics of think tanks are:

- Independent of government influence.
- Not influenced by any official or government restrictions.
- Through their members, experienced experts, and former decision-makers, think tanks can provide direct and honest advice away from any government restriction, especially as this is urgently needed in particular in countries with weak political parties.

Second: Challenges facing think tanks: In this regard the debate addressed the following issues:

1. Financial support: financial resources are very important to the work of think tanks, especially as most of them have funding problems. Some research centers in the world receive donations from organizations and individuals. In general, think tanks need

financial resources for research and training.

2. Training and Capacity Building: One of the challenges facing think tanks is the scarcity of private and experienced researchers who have adequate knowledge and experience. Most Egyptian research centers suffer from poor training for their members.

3. Poor communication both among the think tanks themselves or between them and the media and decision-makers, which does not allow an exchange of information or of success stories.

4. Relations with decision-makers are one of the most important challenges facing think tanks. For instance, ECFA members who exceed 300 member, include former ambassadors, academics, military personnel, a number of former decision makers and others.

5. Lack of cooperation between think tanks: For example, ECFA, has had an important role in the establishment of some kind of coordination between the Arab think tanks in the Arab region, especially in the field of nuclear non-proliferation. The Board established the "Arab Forum," which includes 35 think tanks in the region with the aim of making the Middle East Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone.

At the end of the seminar, ECFA members highlighted some ideas, chief among which are:

- Establishing an Africa forum to addresses the concerns and challenges facing the countries of the continent, as a priority for 2016.
- Think tanks need to pay particular attention to holding training courses and research and to resort to youth.
- Use all social media to propagate the activities of think tanks locally, regionally and internationally.

Second Joint Conference between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the League of Arab States about “The Regional Security Implications of the Iranian Nuclear Agreement with the Group of 5 + 1 Countries”⁽²⁾

In the context of the Council's keenness since its establishment to include in its work agenda topics related to non-proliferation issues and nuclear disarmament in general, the Council's annual activities on foreign policy issues are not limited to a symposium, workshop or other special events. The Arab Nuclear Forum under the chairmanship of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs under the theme "Regional Security Implications of the Iranian Nuclear Agreement with the Group of States (5 + 1)" at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League on 28 and 29 February 2016.

In light of the Council's interest in developing the intellectual outputs of most of its activities in the form of publications and publications containing the views and ideas on most issues and issues of interest at the local, regional and international levels, addressing the main issues were raised at the conference.

- Challenges of Arab national security, from the concept of Arab national security (regional view) and combating terrorism in the Arab region.

- Iran's nuclear agreement with a group of countries (5 + 1), where the conference discussed the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the follow-up to the implementation of

(2) For More Details, Look at: Amb.Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.), Joint Conference between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the League of Arab States, entitled” the Regional Security Implications of the Iranian Nuclear Agreement with the Group of 5 + 1 Countries”, Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, Cairo, 2016.

the agreement and an analytical vision.

- The security implications of the Iranian nuclear agreement with the group of 5 + 1, where the repercussions on Arab national security, the security of the Arab Gulf countries, and the chances of freeing the Middle East region from nuclear weapons were discussed.

- The effects of the Iranian nuclear agreement on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in terms of nuclear safety and security, and the presentation of Arab experiences of a peaceful nuclear program, as well as an analysis of the content of the rights and obligations of the States parties to the Iranian nuclear agreement, its legal nature and regional implications, and its implications for the non-proliferation regime in the Middle East, in particular, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

- The future of the Arab nuclear partnership and the Arab nuclear strategy until 2020, and preparations for the convening of the 2020 Review Conference in the absence of universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapon.

The Workshop on Palestinian Reconciliation

The Council held a workshop under the title of (Palestinian Reconciliation: Challenges and Opportunities for Success) on 9 March 2016, instant. Attending was a group of experts and specialists in this field. The issues identified for examination at the workshop revolved round three main themes: First, the implications of the Palestinian split, secondly, the reconciliation course and a reading into its most important documents, and third the Egyptian and Arab role in reconciliation and the nature of the actions required.

The workshop was organized by the ECFA Israeli and Palestinian Studies Unit (Gen. Mohammed Ibrahim El Dewairy- Dr. Jamal Yousef) and was attended by representatives of the Palestinian Embassy in Cairo, the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Mohammed Sobeih, Arab League Assistant Secretary-General and former Secretary of the Palestinian National Council, as well as professors of law, political science and economics from the Egyptian and Palestinian sides.

At the beginning of the workshop, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chair , and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, made two presentations underlining the importance of the Palestinian issue to Egypt as a matter of national security, as well as the importance of reconciliation for the future of the Palestinian people for the promotion of the peace process which cannot be attained as long as division remains.

The topics which the experts addressed at the workshop mainly dealt with the following:

A - The history of the Hamas movement shows that it had never been close to the Palestinian national project, but has constantly adopted a different program that suits its objectives

and is in line with its ideology.

B - The current economic situation in the Gaza Strip is catastrophic in every respect poverty - unemployment - water pollution - gas and electricity crunch - the lack of or shortage of basic goods - tunnels policy – non-implementation of the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip conferences' decisions, which all render reconciliation imperative to save the sector from slipping faster and further into deterioration.

C - The need for setting the Palestinian home in order, including the reconciliation file, considering that Egypt stands ready to provide every possible assistance in this respect as long as it serves national security.

Hamas is moving tactically, watching who would succeed President Abu Mazen if he leaves power for any reason. Its aims in the long term are to have control over the future of the Palestinian Authority and the PLO. It is necessary to scrutinize the proceeding points of Hamas ideology in order to understand the dimensions and implications of its policy and movements.

Hamas's mentality always prompts it to fan difference and to contradict the very points from which the Palestinian Authority proceeds, especially as the latter has recently gained popularity, both regionally and internationally, and its political project is gaining currency abroad and acceptance on a larger scale.

In light of the issues, discussions and presentations during the workshop, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs sees the following:

A – Achieving Palestinian reconciliation is necessary to promote the peace process, if we want to activate it again. It is also vital for the achievement of stability on the Egyptian border with the Gaza Strip, and consequently in the Sinai. This, in turn, requires that we do not leave the reconciliation process completely in the hands of other regional parties in conflict with Egypt's interests. Egypt must hold again the keys to reconciliation in a timely manner.

B - The importance of recalculations in our relationship with Hamas to press it into abstaining from any infringement on Egyptian national security, provided that Egypt would take hard hitting action against it in this case but must not completely cut off communication with it. The rate and level of communication with Hamas must be exclusively based on our calculations and our interests, and we must not lose sight, at any time, that Hamas is a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, with all its consequent obligations and abidance by its instructions however hard it may try to claim the contrary.

C - The importance of the continuation of Egyptian coordination with the Palestinian Authority and the Fatah movement on an ongoing basis in order to keep up common positions and maintain maximum bilateral understanding, both on the issue of reconciliation or any other topic of mutual interest.

D - The importance of holding other workshops on issues related to the Palestinian cause at the domestic and foreign levels on the basis of considering it an Egyptian national security issue that cannot be relinquished, for whatever reasons.

Joint Conference on “Nuclear Security Culture and Non-Prolifera- tion in the Middle East”

On the 26th to the 27th of April 2016, The Egyptian Council For Foreign Affairs (ECFA) held a joint conference on "Nuclear Security Culture and Non-Proliferation in the Middle East" in its headquarters in collaboration with the Egyptian Pugwash for Science and International Affairs and the Institute for Nuclear Security in the University of Tennessee.

The conference is a product of the joint work between ECFA and the University of Tennessee in order to put forward the different views surrounding nuclear security and non-proliferation in the Middle East.

The conference was commenced by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, the chairman of ECFA; Ambassador Dr. Abdel Rahman Moussa, vice president of the Egyptian Pugwash for Science and International Affairs, Ambassador Omar Amer, deputy assistant of the Cabinet of the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Howard Hall governor's Chair for Global Nuclear Security, director of the University of Tennessee Institute of Nuclear Security and director of the Baker's Center Global Security Program.

One of the topics that were discussed in the conference, highlighted by, Joseph Steinback, was the concept of relying on man and its connection to internal threats.

The conference discussed issues surrounding Nuclear Security and Non-Proliferation in the Middle East through several sessions and a round table. The joint conference put into consideration the conclusions drawn from the four Nuclear Summits that took place in Washington, 2010; Seoul, 2012; The Hague,

2014; and the last summit, which took place from March 31st to April 1st, 2016 in Washington.

Closing Session for Foreign Ministry Simulation Model of Economics and Political Science in collaboration with the Council

The board of ECFA agreed to hold a series of lectures in the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University for the students of the Foreign Ministry Simulation Model of Economics and Political Science, at the request of Dr. Hala El Saeed Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science.

A series of lectures were held on 18th May 2016, over three consecutive weeks. Through these lectures Ambassadors Ezzat Saad, Mostafa Abdel Aziz, and Sayed AbouZeid talked to the students about ongoing regional issues in the world and particularly in the Middle East. The first lecture was about the Iran Nuclear Deal and its repercussions in the regions, the second lecture was about the Syrian Crisis, its developments, and the positions of the different parties, and the third lecture was about development of the political situation in the region. Each speaker touched on the various aspects of their topic in a comprehensive analytical presentation.

On the other hand, On the 18th of May, the council welcomed 30 student delegates from the MFA in the council's headquarter. The students were welcomed by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad who introduced Mrs. Anissa Essam El Din Hassouna as the vice chairman. The meeting proceeded in the following manner:

At the beginning, Mrs. Anissa Hassouna emphasized that the council is the only NGO in Egypt involved with Egyptian foreign affairs with the goal of opening the door to discussion and a platform to enrich the substantive debate about the issues concerning Egyptian foreign policy. This can be seen in the internal

structure of the council, which includes 12 permanent committees that manage and discuss Egyptian foreign policy in a particular region and the bilateral relations within this framework. Additionally, the council includes working groups specialized in particular issues such as international law and others specialized in Egyptian bilateral relations with states such as Sudan and Ethiopia. The council does not only discuss political issues; however, it works on a regular basis to build partnerships that will promote activities in areas regarding economics, culture, and others.

Concerning some of the student's inquiries about Egyptian foreign policy-making, Ambassador Ezzat Saad noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not the only institution concerned with making foreign policy, but rather it is done in collaboration with other institutions such as the Intelligence and National Security Agency and the Ministry of Defense. The foreign policy created must reflect the public interest, protect Egypt's national security and build foreign relations based on mutual interests not dependency.

ECFA Board Members Meeting with foreign relations' committee at the House of Representatives

The meeting between the board of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Parliament's Foreign Relations Committee took place in the Parliament building, on 29th May 2016, Under the title of what Ambassador Mohamed El Oraby, former foreign minister, expressed that the committee is in charge of four main duties, most importantly dealing and coordinating with the other committees of the parliament, which deal with foreign affairs directly or implicitly namely the Arab, African, national security, human rights and tourism committees.

Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran emphasized the importance of this meeting, Ambassador Abdel Rouf El Reedy suggested to create a forum in Aswan, which would be called the "Aswan Forum" This forum would follow other internationally recognized forums such as Munich, Davos, Bratislava, and Helsinki. Regarding the participants of this forum, which would be held annually during winter, the representative of Aswan MP Mohamed Selim offered his help in the preparations of this forum. In addition, both he and the president of the committee expressed their enthusiasm to take part in this forum.

Ambassador Mohamed El Oraby, responding to the questions of the council, emphasized that the committee does not disagree with the current foreign policies of the state except for the issues concerning the Egyptians living in Saudi Arabia who have violated the local laws, the Egyptians living there for Hajj without prior permission, as well as the issue of some of the foreign non-governmental organizations, particularly the German NGOs.

Besides, Ambassador Hisham El-Zimaity stressed the fact that the international delegations that visit Egypt prioritize topics concerning human rights, and it is important for the parliament to coordinate with the different specialized committees particularly the committee of foreign affairs and human rights in order to articulate its position towards these topics.

Furthermore, Dr. Hazem Atiat Allah suggested that there would be a joint collaboration between the Foreign Relations Committee and the Committees on Culture and Media, in the light of the importance of the Egyptian cultural dimension to enhance Egypt's relations with other countries, especially that the Egyptian cultural and civilization heritage have a positive influence on all areas of the Egyptian foreign policy.

A Joint Seminar on the Paper entitled “Towards an Egyptian Initiative for Regional Security and Cooperation”⁽³⁾

On the 31st of May 2016, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), in cooperation with the Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies (ACPSS), held a Joint Seminar to discuss a Paper prepared by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Muhammad Hijazi, ECFA Board Member, and entitled “Towards an Egyptian Initiative for Regional Security and Cooperation”.

The Seminar was attended by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, H.E. Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, as well as Counselor Dr. Muhammad El-Saeed Idris, who attended on behalf of the ACPSS, and a number of ACPSS researchers.

The discussion covered different dimensions of the topic being deliberated, namely: Middle Eastern Dimension of Egypt’s Foreign Policy, African Dimension, Gulf Dimension, Iranian Dimension, Turkish Dimension, and themes of Energy and Economy.

- H.E. Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, started by welcoming the cooperation between ECFA and ACPSS, expressing his contentment with the Seminar agenda, noting, in particular, the following:

- The need to make a clear distinction between what’s possible and what’s impossible in Arab-Regional Relations, since what’s possible is trying to study the issue in a serious manner so as to arrive at specific recommendations that would help

(3) For more details, look at: Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.), A joint Symposium by the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) and Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, entitled “An Egyptian Initiative for Regional Security and Cooperation”, ECFA’s paper, (Cairo, 2016).

identify the challenges facing the region.

- Searching for a lucid vision of the relations among the States of the region. A vision that allows for drawing-up new relations among different States. He referred particularly to the (Egyptian–Turkish) relations.

- At the opening of the Seminar, H.E. Ambassador Muhammad Hijazy presented the elements of the Paper he submitted, and explained that it basically suggests the urgent need for Egypt to adopt a regional initiative, in light of what the region is witnessing of unprecedented grave events, conflicts and violence. The essence of such initiative is to lay down new foundations for security and cooperation relations between the surrounding Arab World, consisting of States Members of the Arab League on one hand, and the geographically neighboring States, especially Iran and Turkey, whose harmful interventions in the region’s capabilities and internal affairs has resulted in many conflicts, on the other hand.

- He pointed out that no geographical area or territory exists without having a set of principles and values, which governs the relations amongst its Member States, as is the case in Europe. Hence, he calls in his Paper to recognize the importance of adopting a “Regional Declaration of Principles”, that upholds the values of good-neighborliness and peaceful coexistence, and non-interference in internal affairs of other States.

At the end of his speech, he wondered whether there is a State, other than Egypt, with its leaders, rulers and historical leadership of the region, that could assume the role of leading the security system in the Arab region.

• On the first theme of discussions, the one regarding “The Middle Eastern Dimension in Egyptian Foreign Policy”, Dr. Muhammad El-Saeed Idris and H.E. Ambassador Ezzat Saad made the following statement:

- When discussing Middle Eastern Regional Dimension and Egypt's role in activating cooperation with States neighbours of

the Arab region, Dr. Muhammad El-Saeed Idris stressed the following two main points.

- The first point relates to Egypt's role in activating such cooperation and the inevitability of this role, contrary to the opinions of those who deny it, in an attempt to take Egypt back in time to the era of shrinkage, seclusion, and neglect of interests. Any talk of Egypt's regional role remains empty, without being decisive on the inevitable return of Egypt to its role as Leader and Pioneer, starting with its role in the Arab World.

- The second point relates to the regional projects competing with our absent Arab project, and the repercussions of such projects on shapes of regional alliances and conflicts, including the need to be aware and well-informed of the opportunities of whether or not to launch an initiative for regional cooperation and security, and Egypt's possible role in such an initiative.

- He noted that the paper, he put forward for discussion on this theme, stems from the basic premise that the current Arab situation is very bad, especially with regard to the serious developments that are related to the Question of Palestine, as well as the other hot Arab crises that threaten the mere existence and survival of many Arab States. The paper concluded that these developments compel Egypt to lead the process of launching an initiative that aims at "Achieving Regional Security and Cooperation on a backbone of Four Arab States, led by Egypt, together with Two Regional Powers, namely, Iran and Turkey", definitely excluding the Zionist entity until it fully implement the UN Resolutions on the Legitimate Non-alienated Rights of the Palestinian people.

He noted that discussing this hypothesis has prompted dialogue to consider Egypt's Arab and Regional Role, in terms of its

inevitability, urgency and dimensions. Egypt's role which is now the target of what could be described as the "second wave", aiming at abolishing it and ultimately eliminating it as a necessity and as Egypt's legitimate national aspiration.

- H.E. Ambassador Ezzat Saad pointed out that despite his agreeing with H.E. Ambassador Hijazy's vision on the need for some sort of a framework for security cooperation in the region, he is of the opinion that the following elements should not be ignored:

- Egypt has led the Arab States ever since League of Arab States existed, and has launched countless initiatives and ideas for developing and enhancing joint Arab action. However, there are some State Members of the League that have always endeavoured to maintain the Arab cooperation ceiling at a low level that should never be exceeded, which has greatly harmed Egypt's efforts and frozen numerous reforms Egypt tried to introduce. He also noted that some Arab parties tended to call upon Non-Arab neighboring States and International Powers for help and/or assistance, which has considerably weakened the joint Arab action. Additionally, he noted that the future of the Arab League would be at risk in case of adopting ideas like Dr. Hijazy's Initiative, especially in the face of current Arab weakness and fragmentation, and the decline of Egypt's role in the Arab World.

- Egypt's Foreign Policy towards the Middle East region is going in the right direction within its broader Foreign Policy that is geared towards independence, balance and diversification of choices. No one can deny the fact that Egypt's relations with the main States in the region, in particular Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey, are vital and necessary for restoring security and stability in the entire region. Additionally, the four States have enormous interests and would gain mutual benefits as a result of maintaining closer ties amongst themselves. However, we

must not ignore the restrictions and limitations preventing Egypt from developing its relations with Turkey and Iran, as the Political Regime in the two States is governed by certain ideologies that are not incompatible with Egypt's own interests.

- We must also recognize the fact that throughout its modern history, the Middle East region has always been a 'security importer', in the sense that it has not been able, depending only on its own capabilities, to guarantee its security, as after security risks in this region were the result of tensions and conflicts among its States, major threats to security in the region now come from within its States, and thus the region will remain dependent on International Powers outside the region.

- Social Movements and Extremist Ideological Organizations have become the main factor of instability, as they rely on support of States from within and outside the region. In fact, the Arab Region, has become home of many foreign military bases, the latest of which is Turkey base, hosted by Qatar.

- We should not ignore the other fact that Egypt's ability to play the desired regional role, is limited due to its economic crisis and associated social difficulties. Therefore, all Presidential Institution's external moves are aimed, primarily, at accelerating the process of economic recovery, with its decisive impact on both Political Stability and Internal Security.

H.E. Ambassador Saad concluded, by stating that the aforementioned factors are considered elements which restrict or limit the launching of Regional Initiatives for Security and Cooperation at the current stage, including the initiative suggested by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Muhammad Higazy.

- On the second theme related to the "Gulf dimension", Dr. Muhammad Azab Al-Arab, Dr. Eman Ragab, and H.E. Amba-

sador Muhammad Qassem, made their statements as follows:

- In his speech, Dr. Muhammad Azab Al-Arab, stressed a number of points, including:

- H.E. Ambassador Hijazy's Initiative included parties that represent sources of internal instability, and States that support certain terrorist groups or armed militias. This could not contribute to the stability of the region.

- Divergence of views on the conceptual definition of terrorism and its sources represent a hindering factor to the success of this initiative, and this certainly applies to the major powers.

- Lack of any specific motivations for major regional Powers, Egypt for example, to create a system for Regional Cooperation, makes them more interested in flexible arrangements, rather than cooperation and dialogue in institutional frameworks with neighboring States.

- What the Initiative suggests regarding the existence, among these States, of geographical, cultural and historical similarities that would facilitate implementing the initiative, is inappropriate.

- Egypt's launch of this initiative currently may give an impression to some regional States, particularly Saudi Arabia, that Egypt is in a weak position and is aiming with its initiative at establishing a dialogue with Iran.

- While presenting her own Paper, Dr. Eman Rajab, commented on the main Paper, stating that opportunities for Gulf States to support this Proposal, in light of their foreign policy shifts during the current phase, depend on three main determinants:

- The first determinant relates to previous experience in connection with the existence of frameworks that bind Gulf States with Egypt, which are mostly outside the framework of Arab League.

- The second determinant is expressed by the group

(6 + 2 + 1), which included six Gulf States, Jordan, Egypt and USA, launched by Washington on the 16th of January 2007, and then joined by Iraq in 2008.

- The third determinant relates to the extent of difference or the compatibility between Egypt on one hand, and Gulf states on the other.

In light of these determinants, Dr. Eman was of the view that the chances for the Gulf States to support the Initiative, in particular Saudi Arabia and UAE, being the most actively supportive of this proposal, might be limited.

- H.E. Ambassador Muhammad Qassim noted that success of the Initiative is linked to necessary conditions that are not currently available:

- Existence of a strong national state in the Arab region.

- Existence of Arab consensus among active Arab States on the Egyptian initiative.

- International welcoming of the initiative (not available in Israel's absence from the initiative).

- On the theme of "Iran's Dimension", Mr. Muhammad Abbass Najy, and H.E. Ambassador Khairud-Deen Abdul-Lateef, stressed a number of points, including:

- Iran is considered a major regional Power in the area, whether its interests and policies have differed or agreed with Arab States, and this is due to various historical, strategic and civilizational considerations. Therefore, opening channels of communication with Iran remains an urgent necessity for Egypt's national interests, together with a need to work out specific conditions for those relations between the two States.

- Iran's Policy in the region is not conducive for its integration into any regional arrangements for cooperation, especially in the Arab Gulf region at security, politi-

cal, military and economic levels. The predominance of sectarianism over existing conflicts and Iran's proxy wars lessen Iran's chances of controlling the whole region due to the difficulty of establishing Iran's legitimacy in a Sunni world.

- Egypt is not yet ready to launch a regional cooperation and security initiative, in light of serious challenges and threats that are facing it and affecting both the core statehood and institutions of the State.

- It is possible to work through experts, research centres and civil society organizations to: (i) build a perception of the common entity (based on the comprehensive handling of security and cooperation issues); (ii) initiate confidence-building measures; and (iii) build perceptions for dealing with the region's issues and problems.

- On the theme of "Turkish Dimension", Mr. Muhammad Abdul-Qader and H.E. Ambassador Mahdi Fathallah stressed the following points:

- Turkey has become a source of threats and unrest in the Arab world. Its interventions in Egypt's internal affairs have become a threat to the country's national security and an incitement of terrorism. The same goes with its roles in Libya and Syria as well.

- The importance of Egypt's interaction with Turkey in an informal setting, together with the consideration of files related to cooperation, as well as regional dialogue, among a group of strategic experts from both sides, on political, economic and development issues.

- Turkey's territorial ambitions in the region stand as an obstacle in the way of forming any alliances among States on the region, especially if led by Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and any move made by Egypt will be seen as a threat by Turkey.

- By virtue of geography, history and fait accompli, Turkey is an important State in the Middle East, and we cannot ignore including it within the proposed Initiative.

- Turkey under Erdogan sees itself as a major regional Power, and cannot enter under any regional mechanism in the region at an initiative of another State, in particular Egypt. Therefore currently and in practical terms, this means that, Egypt cannot establish relations of cooperation or rapprochement, neither bilaterally nor multilaterally.

- On the theme of “African Dimension”, H.E. Ambassador Marwan Badr and Dr. Ayman El-Sayed Abdul-Wahab emphasized several points, including:

- Egypt-Ethiopia interactions, regarding the Renaissance (Al-Nahdha) Dam, represent an indicator of and a model for the level of either cooperation or conflict. Egypt's launch of a three-faceted proposal for security triplet, namely food security, human security and water security, could represent a solution for several urgent dossiers and conflicts issues witnessed by the Nile Basin region and the continent as a whole.

- The terrorism dossier could be an important thematic focus for regional cooperation frameworks and a trigger to activate Egypt's role within the African Union Institutions, as well as the role of Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development (EAPD) as instrument and framework for Egypt's Foreign Policy, to the extent that it can provide added value to Egypt's role amidst a state of ferocious struggle and international competition for the continent's resources.

- We must take into account the following: (i) risks of international competition and the struggle of global companies to invest in the Nile Basin Region; (ii) the reper-

cussions of that on the conflict over water; (iii) the need to highlight Egypt's position on the Red Sea, being a scene for conflict and competition as well as the importance of effective Egyptian presence in the Red Sea as an Arab sea.

- On the theme of “Energy and Economy”, Dr. Ahmad Qandeel and H.E. Ambassador Sumayah Saad noted a number of points as follows:

- It is possible to talk of development and peace as an umbrella to discuss security conditions and regional cooperation, with the aim of improving the living conditions of the region's peoples, satisfying their needs of energy, water and food, and supporting intra-trade.

- Focus must be on the common gains that would benefit the region as a result of implementing the approach of development and peace in the region.

- Proposed initiative is not of ethnic nature, like the Arab League, nor is it of geographical nature, like the European Union (EU) or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), but it is rather geographically, denominationally and ethnically selective, and hence complex and represents a political challenge.

In conclusion, the following question was raised: “Is it in Egypt's own interest to launch a regional cooperation initiative, in light of the economic challenges that Egypt is facing, especially that the other regional Powers, invited to join Egypt's initiative, are already applying the comprehensive standards enjoyed by any Economic Powers.

A Joint Symposium on Economic and Investment Cooperation between Egypt and the States Members in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)⁽⁴⁾

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), in cooperation with the Ambassadors Committee of States Members in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Cairo, has organized a Symposium on raising awareness of ASEAN and discussing economic and investment cooperation prospects between Egypt and these States. The Symposium was held on the 4th of June 2016, at the Diplomatic Club in Cairo.

It was attended by H.E. Ambassador Abdel-Raouf Ar-Reedy, ECFA Honorary Chairman, H.E. Ambassador Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, Dr. Ahmad Al-Darsh, Chairman of the Egyptian Council for Economic Affairs (ECEA), H.E. Leslie J. Baja, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to Egypt in Cairo and Chairman of the Ambassadors Committee of the States Members in ASEAN in Cairo, and H.E. Do Hoang Long, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Cairo, alongside with several ECFA Board Members, specialist researchers, and Ambassadors of some ASEAN Member States in Cairo.

Focus of discussions revolved around four main themes, namely: (i) ways of strengthening economic relations between Egypt and ASEAN; (ii) opportunities and challenges facing trade and investment between Egypt and ASEAN; (iii) investment frameworks and areas of futuristic cooperation between Egypt

(4) For more details, look at: Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.), A joint Symposium by the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) and the Ambassadors Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), entitled "Economic and Investment Cooperation between Egypt and ASEAN Member States", (Cairo, 2016).

and ASEAN; and (iv) the Cultural Dimension in Egypt's relations with ASEAN Member States.

I. Opening Session

- ECFA Chairman, H.E. Ambassador Mounir Zahran, opened the Symposium by a speech, in which he reviewed the Articles of the TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, signed in 1976, and the principles emphasized in ARTICLE 2 thereof, namely: the need for “a. Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations; b. The right of every State to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion or coercion; c. Non-interference in the internal affairs of one another; d. Settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means; e. Renunciation of the threat or use of force; f. Effective cooperation among themselves,” inspired by the principles inherited from the founding fathers of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) States to strengthen cooperation, especially after gaining observer status in the ASEAN in 2013.

H.E. Ambassador Zahran also stressed the need to benefit from ASEAN's three pillars (Political, Economic & Socio-Cultural), especially the Economic one, and expressed the hope to come up with recommendations that will help benefiting from advantages available to the parties, i.e. Civil Society Organizations, Businessmen and Governments of both sides.

- ECEA Chairman, Dr. Ahmad Al-Darsh, expressed his contentment for choosing the topic of the Symposium, especially as it comes within the context of “Egypt 2030”, a strategic vision launched by Egypt, following scientific methodology and accuracy in defining its advantages and objectives, adopting long-term strategic planning based on community participation, and depending on the approach of effective engagement with all international development partners and civil society, and ensuring that national development goals are consistent with those that

are internationally recognized.

He also stressed that this vision is in line with the ASEAN Economic Group's "Vision 2025", launched in Kuala Lumpur, in which it stressed the importance of expanding ties amongst ASEAN Member States themselves, and with ASEAN Member States and their partners in the Middle East and Africa.

- H.E. Leslie J. Baja, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines in Cairo and Chairman of Ambassadors Committee of States Members in ASEAN in Cairo, emphasized that the importance of the Symposium stems from its emphasis on economic aspects and areas of cooperation between ASEAN and the region of Africa and Middle East, especially with the resources that Egypt owns and the strategic geographic location it occupies, pointing out that the aim of the Symposium is to strengthen economic ties by reviewing available opportunities and exploring means of overcoming challenges facing investment sectors of both sides, stressing that ASEAN Member States are working to provide societal protection and to apply international standards in this regard.

- H.E. Do Hoang Long, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Cairo, explained that the sustainable development pursued by the ASEAN Member States, announced in its ASEAN "Vision 2020" and its "Economic Vision 2025", requires the strengthening of strategic partnerships with partners in the world and in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in particular, noting that Vietnam is of the opinion that this should be achieved relying on the basic pillars of the ASEAN Member States, and work should be done to achieve those objectives more effectively.

II. First Session: "Ways to Strengthen Economic Relations between Egypt and ASEAN"

Speakers during this session included, H.E. Ambassador Mamdouh Mustafa, Minister Plenipotentiary and First Under-

Secretary of the Ministry of Trade & Industry, H.E. Ambassador Yasir Al-Najjar, First Assistant to the Minister of Planning, H.E. Peerasak Chantavarin, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to Cairo, and Advisor Osama Tharwat, Director of ASEAN Affairs at Foreign Ministry and Ex-Director of Egyptian Commercial Representation Service.

In their speeches, the speakers put an emphasis on several points including:

- Trade volume between the two sides does not exceed US\$2.6 billion (2014), which is an extremely low figure, as it has a potential to grow, especially since Egyptian exports, to all ASEAN Member States, do not exceed US\$600 million.

- The relationship between Egypt and ASEAN Member States is lacking a plan for future dealings, and in view of Egypt and ASEAN Member States launching of future visions for development, work should be done to enhance opportunities for exchanging experiences between Egypt and these States, and establishing a framework for that.

- 90 % of the ASEAN Member States' relations are directed to Asian States, hence, Egypt is obliged to strengthen its relations with these States, especially the Asian States, by working to increase Egyptian exports to those States, with a view to, at least, strike a balance in the commercial trade volume.

- Both Egypt and ASEAN Member States enjoy strategic locations and capabilities. Moreover, Egypt is a member in several significant economic blocs such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and plays a key role in bringing security and stability to the region, in a way that qualifies it to establish a partnership with ASEAN, and enables it to pave the way towards getting the status of a 'dialogue partner'.

- Work on establishing a Business Council that brings together Egypt and the ten ASEAN Member States, including a group of Egyptian experts specialized in Asian relations.

III. Second Session: “Opportunities and Challenges Facing Trade and Investment between Egypt and ASEAN”

Speakers during this Session included: Mr. Ashraf Naguib, ASIA-EGYPT Business Association Secretary-General and Board Member, H.E. Ambassador Ali El-Hefni, ECFA Permanent Committee for Asian Affairs Rapporteur, Dr. Adel Khalil, ECEA Vice-Chairman, and H.E. Dato’ Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, Ambassador of Malaysia to Egypt in Cairo. During the Session, several points were emphasized, including:

- The need for concerned Egyptian authorities to take into account the index issued by the World Economic Forum (WEF) related to the ranking of on Egypt in the Worldwide Governance Index (WGI), which will have an impact on investment rates.

- The need to work on developing the exporting sector, so that investors from both sides could benefit from the preferential treatment and advantages granted, which will lead to developing the business sector substantially, and enhancing the tourism sector by boosting air traffic movement between the two sides.

- The importance for both of Egypt and ASEAN Member States to benefit from their membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), and consequently to abide by same policies and regulations related to trade and investment sectors, as well as the importance of working to provide information and be transparent with regard to investors and attracting investments.

- With its major development projects along the Suez Canal Region, and the discoveries in the domain of energy and gas, Egypt could, be a gateway for investors from ASEAN Member States, and a hub for financial cooperation with those States.

- The need for Egypt to benefit from the experiences of Asian partners in its developmental renaissance.

IV. Third Session: “Investment Frameworks and Areas of Futuristic Cooperation between Egypt and the ASEAN”

Speakers during this Session included: H.E. Ambassador Dr. Magda Shahin, Director of Prince Al-Waleed Bin Talal Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR), School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (SGAPP), the American University in Cairo (AUC), H.E. Ambassador Jamal Bayoumi, Secretary- General of the Arab Investors Union (AIU), H.E. Premjith Sadasivan, Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore in Cairo, and H.E. Ambassador Mounir Zahran. The speakers noted the following points:

- The need for a comprehensive framework that integrates cooperation, transparency and laws to encourage and protect investments, thereby attracting investors. That was the critical success factor in the ASEAN experience, which has clearly defined the relationship between investors and Governments of ASEAN Member States.

- The strategic vision of the ASEAN Member States, is characterized by four essential elements: emancipation, non-discrimination, productivity, and mechanics of distribution, and those are the backbone of the Egyptian investment law.

- The need for Egypt to move forward in the logistics industry (sector) associated with the significant resources owned by the State, coupled with the importance of accelerating the establishment of a free trade zone that enjoys good governance and transparency, thus promoting exports and imports.

- The need to review the bilateral agreements that have been concluded since the 19950s, particularly those relating to the avoidance of double taxation, as well as those encouraging and protecting investments. Work should also be done to build on the experience of ASEAN Member States in establishing a nuclear-free zone, with a view to apply it in the Middle East Region.

V. Fourth Session: “The Cultural Dimension in Egypt's Relations with the ASEAN Countries”

During this Session, H.E. Ambassador Abdel-Raouf El-Reedy, ECFA Honorary Chairman, delivered a speech, in which he clari-

fied that the cultural dimension is of great significance in international relations. He also asserted the realization of Samuel Huntington's prophecy that the coming war will be among civilizations and cultures, which is already the case with the advent of the current century. On the cultural component in Egypt's relations with ASEAN Member States, he noted that.

His convergence with regard to the system of values, customs and traditions. He added that Egypt has also been culturally interacting with ASEAN Member States for a very long time, especially those States with a Muslims component in their social fabric, noting in this regard, the role of Al-Azhar Ash-Shareef in the propagation of Islamic Culture in Asia for hundreds of years, through receiving academic missions and delegations of Asian scholars and students at Al-Azhar Institutes.

He concluded his speech by emphasizing that Clash of Civilizations and War of Cultures requires cooperation and coordination between Egypt and ASEAN Member States, in order to achieve the desired understanding and so that social justice and equality could prevail, especially that ASEAN Member States have experiences in coexistence among different cultures, a coexistence model that has contributed to the building of the State, its Economy and Culture.

Round Table Meeting Concerning the International Conference on Peace in the Middle East

On the 27th of June 2016, the council held a round table meeting to discuss the French initiative and regional and international stances which was a result of the meeting that was held in Paris on the 3rd of June 2016 hosting 28 states including Egypt. Among the participants were the ECFA council members and a number of former Palestinian officials in the revolutionary council for the Fatah Movement and the Palestinian National Authority.

The meeting adjourned with the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. Results

- French initiative was suggest in the light of the regional difficult state but it represents a glimmer of hope that must be invested in.

- The importance of the initiative to restore momentum to the Palestinian issue which was raised by Egypt's President Sisi's remarks when he called on the parties to work towards reviving the peace process.

- Arab states deal with an extreme and radical Israeli government and therefore Israel will not waiver unless it is confronted with a threat.

- The current situation of the region affect the current situation of the peace process.

-Israel moves in binary form, rather than collectively in the peace process and the US's role is critical to the peace process and we must coordinate our position with our allies, especially Russia and China.

2. Recommendations

- The role of Egypt in regards to the Palestinian issue must remain active and thus it is imperative to act on the Palestinian issue parallel to the reconciliation process as well, however we have succeeded in reaching advanced levels of reconciliation and this is a role that solely Egypt can play.

- Egypt's representation in the Security Council for 2016-2017 continues to promote advancing the peace process.

- In his initiative, President Sisi called for Egypt's vision of the Palestinian issue to be comprehensive and integrated, including the mechanisms and principles of implementation.

- We must not, in the current period, discuss any change to the Arab peace initiative, we must first activate it and lay down mechanisms for its marketing and implementation as is.

- It is imperative to activate and to mobilize the Israeli public opinion and not leave it to the extreme right.

- Continuing support of the French initiative in order to complete all stages regardless of an Israeli refusal to support any other tracks with this initiative.

- The need to move towards Palestinian reconciliation and end the partition as soon as possible.

- Develop all alternatives in a practical and concise manner, develop mechanisms to implement said alternatives, and to rely on references for the resumption of negotiations. In addition, continuing the resistance and peaceful demonstrations until Israel is pressurized.

- The importance of the Palestinian Arab support, especially Egyptian support.

- The Palestinian issue should be the leading priority of the upcoming Arab summit in Mauritania. The summit should generate mechanisms to activate the Arab stance on the Palestinian issue.

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- The importance of unifying the Arab position toward Israel and activating the Egyptian role in the face of some regional powers.
 - Appoint a special envoy for the President to promote the initiative of President Sisi following the completion of its elements.

The Effects of the BREXIT on Egypt

The Council has held a round-table conference ECFA head-quarter on 3rd July 2016; in order to discuss “The Consequences of the British withdrawal from the EU on Egypt”, which ended with a number of recommendations.

The board chairman started off the round table with a speech that showed the result’s background of the referendum; on remaining Britain with the EU bloc or not; which took place in the UK on June 23rd 2016. Ambassador Raouf Saad referred that the concentration in what concerns the referendum’s results may end up by the withdrawal of Britain from the EU might be discussed from two sides which are the effect of this withdrawal on the EU generally on one side, and its effect on the bilateral relations between Egypt and Britain on the other side.

The MP Mrs. Anisa Hassouna pointed out that the time of this round table conference coincided with a meeting of the Egyptian Parliament to a number of ministers from the Egyptian Government; and the question addressed to them were as follows: Did the Egyptian government make up any expected scenarios regarding the Brexit?.

Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem called for the importance of coming up with a group of recommendations that we can offer to the decision maker, pointing out to that the exit of Britain has some political, economical and social effects and consequences on many other fields, and that Egypt can hold an essential role in the migration issue with the concerned parties.

Ambassador Gamal Bayoumy ensured that Britain was hesitating about joining the EU since the emergence of the European market in 1967 especially because the British community, for reasons regarding Britain’s geography as a radical country, has

the feelings of independence and arrogance. He also suggested preparing a bilateral mutual speech between the Egyptian Minister of Trade and his British counterpart about the continuation of using the same terms of the partnership agreement with the EU.

Round Table Discussion about “National Strategy to deal with the Egyptian Water Security Challenges”

On 26th of July 2016, the Council held a round table discussion with experts and professionals, at its premises, to discuss setting on a national strategy to deal with the Egyptian water security challenges. Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad and Dr. Farouk Makhoulouf have worked on preparing for the round table meeting, organizing the participants and in editing the final report.

The Council has put forward a working paper on the need for a comprehensive and urgent Egyptian strategy to face the current challenges and the future threats to Egypt's water security, dealing with the “Entebbe” Convention, the tripartite “Declaration of Principles”, and the implementation of the Ethiopian Renaissance dam. Participants of the meeting expressed their appreciation for the worksheet, and its contribution in facilitating the success of the meeting, and shortening the time of the discussions.

The discussions stressed that water security for Egypt is the backbone of our national security in its wide definition.

The concept paper included the following aspects:

1. On the national level:

(A) We should give the Nile water issue and the Egyptian relations with basin countries a vital importance to secure Egypt's water resources from the Nile. It should be regarded not only as a national security issue, but a matter of life or death for the Egyptian citizen.

(B) Increasing the awareness of the Egyptian citizen with the

importance of the Nile for Egypt and the necessities of rationalizing the use of the water. We can get benefit from the advantage role of civil society organizations in promoting these efforts.

(C) Rationalizing the use of the Nile resources and maintaining quality in all sectors (drinking water, industry, agriculture ...) through setting up the plans and legal measures to ensure the rationalization of the Nile. We should take into account the environmental standards and the preservation of human life.

2. On the Egyptian/ Sudanese level (Khartoum - Juba):

(A) We should strengthen the Egyptian-balanced relations with Sudan and South Sudan in all fields and ensure coordination with each of them ensure a unified position on Nile water issues.

3. At the level of Egypt's relations with other basin countries:

(A) There is no doubt that Egypt adopts an effective foreign policy toward Africa in general and the Nile Basin countries in particular. Therefore, the water dimension should not be the only sole focus of Egypt's relations with these countries. Such a strategy should be directed as the highest priority in Egypt's foreign policy strategy.

(B) In the case of failure of the current negotiations to reach a consensus with Ethiopia regarding solving the problem of the Renaissance dam, Egypt should resort to the international and regional communities by submitting the technical studies and scenarios.

(D) We should work with Ethiopia to reach a comprehensive convention (in the light of previous agreements) defines water cooperation mechanism in the future between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia on prior notification and not to cause harm, to prevent the non-recurrence of the problem in the coming Ethiopian projects.

Seminar about Book " Eurasian Russia: The Time of President Vladimir Putin

On 21st of September 2016, The Council hosted at its headquarter in collaboration with Centre for Partnership of Civilization at The Moscow University for International Relation which is affiliated The Russian Foreign Ministry , Seminar about" Eurasian Russia: The Time of President Vladimir Putin". The seminar headed by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran the Chairman and Ambassador V. Popov the director of the Centre for Partnership of Civilization and the Coordinator of Strategic partnership Group between "Russia and Islamic world". In addition, Some of Russian Diplomats and members from the Russian Embassy headed by the Russian Ambassador in Cairo Mr. Sergei Krepettchenka, besides a number of specialists and experts from the Council members.

In this regard, the Seminar focused on the main items in the book which is, the Russian Federation in the world after the Soviet Union, the political challenges and dilemmas that faced it during determining its identification, including openness to the West which caused many disappointments for it.

The book also discussed the return of Russia to the square of the international conflict and the stages of transition to confirm the Russian International standing, orientation toward Central Asia and Eurasia generally , President Putin's thought to create Eurasian structures including the Eurasian Economic Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) beside the regional coalitions and new international alliances. According to the Russia military doctrine, it was working to develop the defense policies which promote its abilities against NATO's ex-

pansions toward the east and the directed western intervention at Russia's neighbors, such as Ukraine.

Finally, the seminar had discussed the present and the future of the Egyptian-Russian relation. In this regard, the partners expressed their interest in identifying the case of Russian Tourism to Egypt and if the wheat fungus will impact on the Commercial Exchange between two countries or not. According these issues, the Russian Ambassador confirmed on the deep relations between two countries and ongoing contacts between two leaders in both of them, particularly the last meeting between president Sisi and president Putin in China during the 20th G-Summit. All of these movements ensure to reach for acceptable solutions in Tourism and agriculture exports issues ...etc, referring to the Egyptian delegation travel to Moscow before the end of September 2016 to settle all these issues in the framework of common interests and mutual benefits between the two countries.

The Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs at the council discusses the Crisis of the Arab Order

On the 23rd October 2016, the Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs at the Council held a meeting at the Council Headquarters headed by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran and attended by Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Ambassador Ihab Wahba, Coordinator of the Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs, as well as some members of the Committee.

Several important topics that could be treated in the coming period by the Committee were surveyed. In this regard, it was decided that the Committee would hold at least one meeting on a monthly basis. Additionally, the possibility of holding workshops was examined. These workshops would include both members and several specialists relevant to the topics of discussion. Furthermore, the possibility of forming sub-groups of action affiliated to the Arab Committee on a geographical or substantive basis was also discussed.

The Coordinator of the Committee presented a quick survey of both the actual crisis of the Arab Order (system) and of the situation in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya, as well as the role Egypt can play to deal with these crises and find convenient solutions.

Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, pointed out that the present Board of the Council has accorded great attention to the issue of reinvigorating the permanent committees of the Council. He added that every Rapporteur of a Group can encourage its members to prepare and present relevant papers, research and studies to be published, as long as they are of appropriate standards, among the other Council papers or on the Council website.

The Chair of the Council praised the activities of the Arab Committee and its constant response to all assignments given by the Council. He expressed his wish for a further increase of activities in the coming period, with more attendance of its members especially in the light of problems and challenges that confront the Arab World and their reflection on Egyptian policies and initiatives.

Workshop on the Egyptian-Israeli Relations: The Present and the Future

On the 23rd of October 2016, the Council organized a workshop titled “The Egyptian Israeli Relations: The present and the future” in which the President and the Director of the Council participated as well as specialized expert members of the Council and several academics.

Discussions included the following topics:

- A reading in the Egyptian Israeli Treaty...
Speaker: General Mohamed Ibrahim Al Douery, member of the Council.

- Challenges that confronted the Treaty and how they were dealt with...Mr. Sobhi Assila, chief Editor of “Mokhtarar Israeleya” Magazine.

- The dilemma of normalization of the Egyptian Israeli relations... Dr. Gamal Yousef, member of the Council.

- The present situation of the bilateral relations... Dr. Heba Gamal Al Din, Professor of Political Science at Cairo University.

- The Future of relations of the two countries...
Ambassador Ihab Wahba, Coordinator of the Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs at the council.

The Workshop concluded several recommendations among which the following:

- The necessity of amending some of the articles of the Treaty, especially those regarding the security arrangements Annex, from a legal perspective.

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- The necessity of maintaining the Egyptian Israeli Treaty especially that it is in the interest of both countries.
 - The importance of adopting a common comprehensive Arab vision regarding dealing with Israel, especially in view of present developments.
 - The importance of following the activities of Israeli Think Tanks, their publications , recommendations and the extent of their relevancy to Egyptian interest.
 - The revision of the Quiz Agreement -in the light of the efforts to enlarge its scope- and increasing the Egyptian component while downsizing the present Israeli component which amounts to 10%.
 - The Arab approach towards Israel should put into consideration Palestinian rights and interests, and invest these relations for the service of Palestinians through the establishment of the independent state of Palestine with full sovereignty with East Jerusalem as its Capital.

A Joint Seminar on the Developments in Cuba and their Effects on Relations with Egypt and the World

On the 27th November 2016, the Council hosted a joint seminar in collaboration with the Cuban Egyptian Friendship Association titled “Developments in Cuba and their Effects on relations with Egypt and the World.” Several Central and South American Ambassadors participated including: the Ambassador of Cuba Laureano Rodriguez Castro, as well as the Ambassadors of Mexico, Panama, Ecuador, Chile, Venezuela, Argentina, Guatemala, and Bolivia. In addition to the Chairman of Egyptian Cuban Friendship Association and member of the Council Kamal Gab-Allah and Ambassadors: Nehad Askalani, Abdel Fattah Ezz El Din and Ibrahim Khairat.

Director of the Council Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad inaugurated the Seminar, and Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna, coordinator of the Permanent Committee of the Council for American Affairs, moderated the works of the Seminar.

At the outset, a minute of silence took place to honor the late leader Fidel Castro who died just one day before the inauguration of the Seminar. Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad welcomed the participants of the Seminar, emphasizing the importance of the Seminar and pointing at the great interest everyone is showing to get oriented with developments taking place in Cuba in general and in the domain of Cuba relations with the world and with Egypt which particularly goes back to 1958.

Ambassador Askalani talked about his memories in Cuba as the first Egyptian Ambassador in Havana. In his speech , the Cuban Ambassador elaborated on the political and economic re-

forms Cuba is undertaking as well as the principles upon which Cuban Foreign policy is based, namely the respect of International Law, rights of people for self-determination, rejection to all forms of terrorism and extremism, reinforcement of bilateral and multilateral cooperation on the basis of reciprocity and mutual interest, emphasizing that altogether constitute the master framework for the strong relations that bind Cuba with the Caribbean and Latin American countries.

On Cuban Foreign relations, Mrs. Udith Camps Director of the section of relations with Africa and the Middle East at the Cuban Institute of "Friendship with the People" asserted that Cuba has strong relations based on friendship, cooperation and solidarity with the people struggling for freedom and independence. She added that Cuban American relations could witness positive changes providing that the United States lifts the economic and commercial embargo imposed on the Cuban people, and withdraws from the Eastern territories—in reference to the naval base in Guantanamo.

On his part, expert Ahmad Sayed Ahmad outlined that Cuba has entered a new phase with the assumption of Raoul Castro to the Presidency in 2008 crowned by the international overture on Cuba after the visit of the American President Obama to Havana during the end of March in 2015. This was followed by various reciprocal bilateral visits on the level of high officials with foreign powers; a new setting that Arab states should seize to reinforce cooperation and coordination with Cuba in the International arena, with the United Nations being at the top, in different issues most importantly, the Palestinian conflict.

In the Last of Seminar the Ambassador Hussein Hassouna Moderator of the session, ensured the American – Cuban Relations very complex, and it may be become more complicity after Trump's and republic party win and in its relation with Cubans who resident in Florida , In addition the uncertainty the Trump's doctrine , stressed on the Economic interest with Cuba made

the American Businessmen represent stress on the American administration.

He concluded to the importance of develop the American – Arab relations especially with Egypt, in particular the economic interest and common principles of freedom, independence and respect the will of the peoples.

Participation of the Council in the Joint Seminar titled “Egypt and the United Nations...a Year of Contribution”

Part of the agenda of celebration of the “United Nations Day,” the Egyptian Council of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Faculty of Economics & Political Sciences in Cairo University organized a joint Seminar on the 4th and 5th of December 2016 titled “Egypt and the United Nations...a Year of Contribution”.

Several members of the Council participated in the seminar:

-Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Shaker was the moderator of the first session titled “Egypt’s Contribution in the United Nations activities in the field of International Peace and Security -Disarmament & Peacekeeping. Along with Professor Dr. Mohamed Salman Tayea as the commentator.

-Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran was the moderator of the third session titled “Egypt’s contribution in United Nations activities in the field of Development, specialized Agencies activities, Economic groupings, and the UN program budget.

-Ambassador Dr. Anis Salem was the moderator of the sixth session titled “Egypt contribution in UN activities in Cultural, Social and Humanitarian fields as well as Human Rights and Anti-Human Trafficking.

-Ambassador Dr. Moustafa Al Feki was the moderator as well as the Commentator of the seventh session titled “The Role of the Institute of Diplomatic Studies and Faculty of Economics & Political Sciences in building the expertise of Egyptian Diplomats regarding multilateral issues.

It is to be noted that, Chair of the Council Ambassador Dr.

Mounir Zahran gave at the opening of the Seminar a speech included: -

-In fact it comes right to my mind the imprints Egypt has had as a founding member of this International Organization through the participation of the late Abdel Hamid Badawi Pacha in drafting the Charter of the United Nations in the city of San Francisco in the United States. The first proposed name for the Organization was “the Organization of the United States,” as it is an Organization assembling Governments of member states not Nations, however to avoid any confusion with the name of the United States of America it was conclusively given its actual name as the” Organization of the United Nations” even though it doesn’t assemble Nations.

-Although the core principles constituting the pillars of the United Nation cannot go unnoticed by any scholar, especially those configured in the goals and principles of the Organization in the first article of the Charter, and in particular the seven goals stipulated in the second article, it is noted with regret that after 70 years of the creation of the Organization, the principles of the Charter still have not throughout years been respected even in the provisions of the fifth and seventh chapter neither in the practices of some member states nor in the Security Council.

He pointed to some distinguished Egyptian names who made significant contributions in the service of humanity and prosperity of mankind and the fulfillment of his rights and commitments. I point out here in particular to the late Dr. Mahmoud Azmi Pacha who participated in drafting the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” in 1948, and the late Dr. Botrous Ghali the 6th Secretary General of the United Nations who left humanity the “Peace Agenda” of 1992, and many other initiatives, and in particular world conferences throughout the 1990s starting the ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio in 1992.

Considering the fact that the United Nations is one of the consequences and results of the Second World War and the victory

of the Allied Powers, what could have happened to the world had the Axis Powers achieved victory; with the probability of the creation of a different Organization other than the United Nations with a probable name of the non-United Nations.

If Chapter 5 of the Charter of Membership and Decision Making at the Security Council reflects the balance of power right after the Second World War, that balance throughout and after 70 years of the creation of the Organization, has changed. Isn't it time now to adjust this imbalance resulting from the application of the Charter provision with all the defects it contains?

Since the 2005 world summit which was held at the 60th session of the General Assembly adopted resolution 60/1 which produced the transformation of Human Right committee into Human Rights Council reporting directly to the General Assembly (not to the ECOSOC) which alone can elect its members who were sized down to 47 instead of 53, and the creation of the Peace Building Committee (one of Dr. Botrous Ghali proposals in the "Agenda For Peace" in 1992); why then were the other recommendations of Resolution 60/1 neglected? I point here at amendment or annulation of chapters 11, 12, and 13 on "Non self-governing territories", "International Trusteeship System" and "the Trusteeship Council" which all have no meaning after the elimination of colonialism.

What about the Assistance for development and the commitment of donor countries with a 0.7% of their GNP for the financing of this assistance (ODA)?

Where are regarding the report of the Secretary General Kofi Anan at the 59th session of the General Assembly (included in the World Summit Agenda at the 60th session) about the amendment of provisions of the Charter regarding measures to be taken by the Security Council against any enemy state as stipulated in Article 53 paragraph 1 and 2 and Article 107 of the Charter, noting that enemy states are now members of the European Union and NATO like Germany and Italy not to mention Japan.

What about the impossibility of amending the charter in the considering the actual drafting of both articles 108 and 109, which require a two third majority vote in favor, including all Security Council permanent members?

Round Table Discussion about US Congressional Law on “Justice against Sponsors of Terrorism Act” (JASTA)

As part of its interest in the implications of the US Congress's adoption of the Justice Act against the Sponsors of Terrorism (JASTA), on 3 October 2016, the Council organized a round table on the concept of State responsibility for the actions of its citizens before foreign judiciary. on Wednesday December 14th2016, the Council received member of the Council Professor Dr. Yassin Al Ayouti, Law Professor and Counselor of International Law, in a meeting to shed a light on the legal dimensions of the provisions of “Justice against sponsors of Terrorism Act” (briefly known as JASTA), and observation on both Arab and American positions after passing the act. The meeting was attended by Chair of the Council Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Honorary Chair of the Council Abdel Raouf Al Reedy, member of the Council Ambassador Mohamed Shaker, and Director of the Council Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, and several other members of the Council.

Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran began the lecture by welcoming Dr. Yassin Al Ayouty making note of his achievements in the field of International Law, his large network of relations with American civil society associations, his contribution- through his legal expertise in legal affairs- in establishing the foundations of the UN Institute for training & research, in addition to the principal role he played in the defense of families of Egyptians victims of the doomed Egyptian plane in 1999.

He noted that the lecture comes in the agenda of the Council's legal expert's recent examination of the issue, and the flagrant violation of the Law for the principle of state sovereignty, as well

as the future consequences of the Law under the new American Administration.

Dr. Yassin emphasized the importance of the issue especially that the Law represents another revolution inside the United States, as it revolves around the United States first and last, and that sovereignty obstructs American Justice. He then addressed the issue through six main elements: Summary of the Law, the Preamble, annulations of sovereignty principle, elements of the Law, American and Arab position towards JASTA, and finally his perception and judgment on the Law as a legal adviser.

At the end of the lecture the floor was open for comments and questions, to which Dr. Yassin gave his answers.

ECFA Annual Conference on “Egyptian Foreign Policy and regional & international transformations in the Middle East”⁽⁵⁾

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) held its Annual Conference over the course of two days; 21 and 22 December 2016, at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club in Cairo, on "Egyptian Foreign Policy Regional & International Transformations in the Middle East".

The Conference was opened with a speech by ECFA Chair, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, in which he talked about the considerations behind choosing the theme of this year's conference, noting the delicate and difficult challenges facing the Arab Regional System in light of continued terrorist acts, the destruction of States' national institutions, the wasting of their resources and the impoverishment of their peoples, let alone disregarding the implementation of Resolutions issued by the UN General Assembly and Security Council, in particular UN Resolutions on the Question of Palestine and the continued Israeli occupation of the Palestinian and other Arab territories, all of which require the setting an integrated Arab-Egyptian Strategy that deals with these challenges, preserving the pillars of Pan-Arab National Security, in an ever-changing regional environment, that is witnessing blatant intervening in core Arab Affairs by parties from within and outside of the region.

League of Arab States Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmad Aboul-Gheit, addressed the audience in the opening session, where

(5) For more details, look at: Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.), Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) annual conference, entitled “Egyptian Foreign Policy and regional & international transformations in the Middle East”,(December,21st/22nd ,2016), (Cairo, 2016).

he delivered a speech on the dangers and challenges currently facing the Arab system, calling for the activation of joint Arab action, and the rejection of subtle differences, together with narrow short-sighted interests, in a way that makes the Regional Organization capable of leading such action.

The Arab League Secretary-General has stressed the importance of placing the Question of Palestine back to its natural position as the top-priority item on the Arab agenda, especially in light of the racist policies implemented on the Palestinian People, and the blatant daily aggression perpetrated against their right to an Independent State, with East AL-QUDS 'Jerusalem', as its Eternal Capital.

He added that the global scenery is living in a state of anxiety and uncertainty, a feature that is normally dominant during times of crises, noting that the post-globalization transformations have imposed, on States, a new pattern of interactions in order to address unprecedented challenges, the most notable of which are extremism and discrimination based on religious, racial or sectarian grounds.

In this context, he referred to what is being circulated by some on the need to have a new system of cooperation and security in the Middle East, similar to that of the Helsinki process, emphasizing that it would be impossible while Israel continues its occupation of Arab territories and in light of the obvious imbalances in the region.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs, Ambassador Tareq El-Qouni, delivered a speech on behalf of Egypt's Foreign Minister, Mr. Sameh Shukry, who could not participate in the opening session due to sudden engagements, noting the importance of preserving the modern national State and combating terrorism that strikes the region; as well as the need to stop intervening in other States' internal affairs and to respect the principle of national sovereignty, and to refrain from utilizing double standards in dealing with all the issues of the region, foremost of which the

Palestinian issue.

The Conference held in five extended sessions. The first session, which was moderated by Dr. Ahmad Youssuf Ahmad, Professor of Political Science, dealt with the transformations of the Arab Regional System, and the discussions revolved around two papers: the first was presented by Dr. Moataz Salamah, the Expert at the Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, and dealt with the current Arab situation and patterns of new Powers; and the second was presented by Dr. Majdy Hammad, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Lebanese International University, and dealt with the Arab League and the current challenges. The commentary remarks on the session were made by Dr. Muhammad Al-Saeed Idris, the Expert at the Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies.

During the second session, which was moderated by ECFA Board Member, Major General Mohssen El-Nomani, three research papers were reviewed: the first was presented by Dr. Niveen Mossad, Professor of Political Science, on the Iranian Strategy towards the Arab Region; the second was presented by Mr. Muhammad Abdul-Qader Khaleel, the Expert at the Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, on the Turkish Strategy; and the third was presented by ECFA Member, Major General Muhammad Ibraheem, on the Israeli Situation. The three papers were keen to deal with all these Strategies in terms of their impacts on Egyptian interests, and how to develop Egyptian perceptions for dealing with such Strategies and mitigating their increasing negative influences in the region. The commentary remarks on this session were made by Dr. Amr El-Shoubaki, the Expert at the Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies.

The third session, which was moderated by ECFA Board member, Ambassador Muhammad Tawfeeq, addressed the main international roles, and discussed three research papers: the first

was presented by Dr. Muhammad Kamal, Professor of Political Science, and focused on US Strategy and its Transformations in the Region, with an emphasis on Policies and Probable Trends after Trump's winning of US Presidential Election, and the implications thereof for the Region in general, and for Egypt in particular. The second paper, was presented by ECFA Director, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, and dealt with the Russian Strategy in light of the Russian Intervention in Syria, and inferences and repercussions thereof for the future of Russian Foreign Policy in the Region, in addition to the Developments of Moscow's Relations with the Arab States and with Iran, as well as the Determinants of Russian Role in the Region in general, and the possible impacts of Russia's Relations with the United States -under the new US Administration- on Russian Role in the Region. The third paper, was presented by Dr. Hisham Mourad, Professor of Political Science, and focused on the European Strategy in the Region in light of the new variables, most important of which is the withdrawal of Britain from the European Union membership (BREXIT), the prospects of extremist hard-right ascent in the west, and the impacts of all that on Egyptian interests. Dr. Aley-el-Deen Helal, Professor of Political Science, made the commentary remarks on this session.

The fourth session, on the other hand, was chaired by Dr. Ali- elDeen Helal, Professor of Political Science, and addressed the Challenges facing Egyptian Foreign Policy, through discussing two research papers: one analytical paper, presented by Dr. Eman Rajab, the Expert at the Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, on Change and Continuity in the wake of the two revolutions (January 25th and June 30th); and the other, presented by Dr. Hassan Abou-Taleb, the Expert at the Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, dealing with an Analysis of the Motives and Directions of Egyptian Policy toward Major Arab Crises. ECFA Board Member, Ambassador Muhammad Hijazi, made commentary remarks on that session.

The fifth session, which was moderated by ECFA Member, Dr. Mostafa Al-Feqqi, discussed a paper presented by ECFA Board Member, Ambassador Muhammad Badr-el Deen Zayed, on the Alternatives of the Movement before the Egyptian Foreign Policy, and Approaches to address Challenges stemming from Regional and International Transformations, as well as Structural Challenges, including Prospects for Developing the Performance of Egyptian foreign Policy and ways of moving forward with Arab and Regional neighbouring States. Dr. Ali-elDeen Helal, Professor of Political Science, made the commentary remarks on that session.

ECFA Chair, Ambassador, Dr. Mounir Zahran, concluded the Conference, assuring the audience that ECFA will hold subsequent conferences to talk on the African Dimension in Egypt's Foreign Policy in light of the strong competition amongst International Powers, in the foremost of which are China, Japan and India, to exploit the Continent's potential, emphasizing that Egyptian Foreign Policy revolves around constant principles and variable positions, the most important of which are preserving Egypt's independence and territorial integrity, defending its interests at home and abroad, taking into account the rights and interests of Egyptian individuals and companies abroad, as well as encouraging and attracting foreign investment at home, and Egypt's commitments towards implementing its pledges and obligations stemming from the provisions of International and Regional Conventions, according to the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, and as stated in Article II of the Charter, in particular the sovereign equality of States, the renunciation of the use or threat of the use of force in international relations and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, with emphasize put on the respect and promotion of human rights.

Chapter II



Visits to the Council

Delegations: Visit of the Delegation of the US Air War College

On the 8th of March 2016, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs welcomed a delegation from the US Air War College. The delegation included 18 students and was led by Colonel James Drape, the American Air attaché in Cairo. The meeting was attended by Ambassadors/ Mounir Zahran, Mohamed Shaker, Ihab Wahba, EzzatSaad, Wafaa Baseem and Azmi Khalifa, and Generals/ Mohamed Ibrahim El-Deweiry, Ahmed Abd El Halim and Hesham El Halaby.

Ambassador Mounir Zahran chaired the meeting in which the American delegation asked to discuss several issues, in particular the following:

- 1) Egypt's role in the international effort against ISIS;
- 2) Egypt's Vision as a Regional Power and its role in the Arab world;
- 3) Egypt's concerns over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam;
- 4) Future steps after the completion of the Political roadmap;
- 5) Egypt's relationship with the U.S., how it was affected by the revolution and the suspension of military funding in 2014 and where it will go in the future?
- 6) Current relationship with Israel and Egypt's role in resolving the Palestinian question.

Ambassador Zahran emphasized that the council's members

are willing to explain and analyze the American delegation's proposed topics for discussion. He talked about the bilateral relations between the two countries, especially the economic ties that contribute to the increase in foreign investment in Egypt. He stressed that Egypt is facing a huge challenge in the fight against terrorism through its temporary seat in the UN Security Council.

Ambassador Ezzat Saad explained the internal challenges that Egypt is facing recently which the American delegation asked about. He stated that the Egyptian counterpart is willing to know the American vision about the region and the future of the US Presidential election.

At the end of the discussion meeting, Colonel James Drape awarded ECFA the shield of the US Air War College for the year 2016. In return, Ambassador Zahran handed the US Air attaché a book on the history of Egypt since 1800.

Visit of the European Commission's Delegation

A seminar was held at the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on 17th March 2016 with the delegation of the EU Commission, headed by Christian Berger, the European Commission Director for North Africa and the Middle East. Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Shaker welcomed the EU delegation, and expressed appreciation of the European Commission's communication with ECFA for more than ten years. He further stressed that the Council's relations with the European Union and its institutions are dynamic and evolving and that over the past year more than 16 bilateral and multilateral events took place between the two sides.

Ambassador Ihab Wahba and Ambassador El-Sayed Amin Shalaby reaffirmed what Ambassador Dr. Shaker had said and reviewed concerning the mutual visits between the Council and the European side. They also highlighted the good relations between ECFA and the European Commission delegation and European ambassadors in Cairo.

As part of the discussions and exchange of views, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad welcomed the European delegation; expressing his appreciation for their interest to visit the Council on a regular basis, and to consult with its members. He noted the following in particular:

- The European side needs to understand the major challenges facing Egypt, particularly with regard to the threat of terrorism and the economic challenge. The government is making intensive efforts to accelerate the process of economic recovery amid unfavourable domestic and regional conditions due to the security situation and conflicts in the region, which are directly affecting Egyptian national security.

- If violations of human rights happen in Egypt, as in many other countries, including European states, there should be no underestimation of the positive results achieved in Egypt, at this level, including freedom of opinion and expression. The government is no longer immune to criticism by the media, including state owned organs. Such criticism has become a regular practice in the Egyptian media and members of the government and the state's head accepts and responds to it.

- In the context of its relations with Egypt, the European Union may consider a kind of cooperation and exchanges between parliamentarians from both sides in a bid to create an area of mutual understanding between them, and to provide an opportunity for European parliamentarians to understand the difficulties and complexities facing Egypt in this period of transition.

The European official agreed with what Ambassador Dr. Saad said about the challenges currently facing Egypt; pointing to the fact that the economic challenge is the most serious one on the longer-term from their point of view, especially in light of the increasing birth rates in Egypt and the modest resources available. Mr. Berger pointed out that they have raised all these issues with their Egyptian partners, stressing at the same time they are noticing some positive trends that should be strengthened, such as the reform of the Interior Ministry and police, and the criticism that is sometimes directed to the government performance in some of the Egyptian media, which was not the case before.

The European official then moved to regional issues; namely, the Palestinian issue, the Syrian file and the situation in Yemen. He inquired whether, from our point of view, there were prospects of forming a transitional national coalition government in Libya and whether—if formed— would it be able to keep conditions under control on the ground.

Ambassador Ihab Wahba refuted a number of positions on the part of the European Union, stressing that the list of accusations

made in the European Parliament's recent resolution of Egypt of violating human rights is a long list and undocumented, especially with regard to the numbers of detainees and cases of forced disappearances. He also noted a contradiction between the confirmation of the parliament of the vital importance of relations with Egypt, and at the same time leveling undocumented accusations at it. However, he added that there were some positive developments, including the conclusion of the Iranian nuclear deal and the improvement of Tehran's relations with the West which might lead to checking the Iranian expansion in the region. He also pointed out that there was talk of the withdrawal of Iranian forces and Hezbollah units from the conflict in Syria, and perhaps extending it to include Yemen. Ambassador Wahba further explained the situation in Syria and the Palestinian cause.

The European official commented on Ambassador Wahba's statement on the European Parliament resolution by saying that what matters to them is the stability of Egypt, which can only happen through the application of the new constitution, respecting human rights, and ensuring the Egyptian parliament's performance and role. He added that the data contained in the European Parliament resolution are from open Egyptian sources of information, and that it should not be ignored that the European Parliament resolution was passed unanimously by all parties represented therein. He pointed out that the reaction by the Egyptian media to the resolution was interesting to them as they were positive. Mr. Berger said that they understood that resolution and expressed hope that there would be more space for the defenders of the Egyptian constitution.

Visit of the Delegation of the Chinese Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)

On 28th March 2016, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs welcomed a delegation from the Chinese Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR). The delegation was led by Dr. NiuXinchun, the Director of the Middle East Studies department in the CICIR, Miss Sun Ran and Miss Li Yanan, researchers in the Middle East Studies department of the institute. The meeting took place in accordance with the CICIR wishes to know the council's vision concerning the evaluation of the following issues; the impact of President Xi's visit to three nations in the Middle East, prospects for Egyptian-Chinese cooperation, the current situation in the Middle East and the role of the Chinese diplomacy.

Ambassador Ezzat Saad pointed out the surge in the relations between the two countries after the 30th of June revolution of 2013 and how the economic ties are not up to the level reached by the political ties. He stated that this could be improved by encouraging Chinese tourism in Egypt. He also stressed on the importance of cultural, scientific, and educational cooperation.

Ambassador Ali El Hefni emphasized that the world faces today terrorism that is very different than what we're used to, terrorism nowadays consists of military militias and terrorist groups seeking to undermine the role of the state and acquiring vast tracts of the States' territories. He stressed on the great role played by the Egyptian army in fighting terrorism and maintaining Egypt's stability.

Ambassador Hesham El-Zamaity asked how the aspirations of the two presidents with regard to the bilateral relations

could be achieved, especially with the fact that this year is the year of "China in Egypt and Egypt in China".

Visit of the Delegation of the US Naval War College

On the 5th of April 2016, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs welcomed a delegation from the US Naval War College. The delegation included 13 students and was led by Colonel Ron Dennis, the American attaché in Cairo. This was the second meeting, as part of the college's keenness to communicate with the Council on a regular basis, after the visit of the US Air Force Academy's delegation in March 2016. The meeting was attended by Ambassadors/ Dr. Mounir Zahran, Dr. Ezzat Saad, Wafaa Baseem and General/ Mohamed Ibrahim El-Deweiry.

Ambassador Mounir Zahran chaired the meeting in which the American delegation asked to discuss several issues. These issues included the challenges that face Egypt internally and externally, security and stability in the region, economic challenges, combatting terrorism, and women's role in society. The American delegation also highlighted the fact that Egypt is the only country they have visited so far.

Ambassador Zahran emphasized that the council's members are willing to explain and analyze the American delegation's proposed topics for discussion. He talked about the bilateral relations between the two countries, especially the economic ties that contribute to the increase in foreign investment in Egypt. He stressed that Egypt has an independent character and it seeks to expand its foreign relations circle by heading towards the east (Asia and the Pacific), which is considered to be the US's current adopted foreign policy vision.

Ambassador Ezzat Saad explained the internal challenges the American delegation had asked about. He stated that these

internal challenges are mainly due to the economic situation which is considered to be a long-term challenge for the Egyptian government. Additionally, Egypt lost about 11 to 12 billion dollars due to the deterioration in the tourism sector which is considered to be one of the main sources of national income.

Ambassador Saad also referred to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and described it as one of the causes of terrorism in the region and in the world. He explained that the anti-American foreign policy sentiment in the region is mainly caused by the United States' blind bias and absolute support of Israel and its settlement policy.

Ambassador Wafaa Baseem said that the US Navy College's nomination of some of its students to visit Egypt is due to Egypt's strategic importance in the fields of their different studies. She pointed out that how Egypt accepts criticism but only if it's a constructive one.

General Mohamed Ibrahim El-Deweiry primarily focused on two topics; the situation in Sinai and the Palestinian issue. For the situation in Sinai, he confirmed the destruction of many terrorist strongholds in Sinai. As for the Palestinian issue, he stated that the peace process didn't make any progress until now, the American efforts were stopped for three years and Israel is rejecting all solutions.

Visit of the Delegation of the Swedish Embassy in Cairo

On 6th April 2016, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received a delegation from The Embassy of Sweden in Cairo. The delegation was led by Ambassador Charlotta Sparre, the Ambassador of Sweden in Cairo and included Swedish Ambassador Birgitta Holst-Alani, the ex-president of the Swedish Institute in Alexandria and currently a team member of Mr. De Mistura, the United Nations special envoy for the Syrian crisis, Dr. Robert Egnell, Assistant Professor of Security, Strategy and Leadership at the Swedish Defense University and Susann Nilsson, Counselor/Deputy Ambassador of the Swedish Embassy. Ambassador Mounir Zaharan, Mrs. Anisa Hassouna, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Ambassador Mohamed Hagazy, Mr. Kamal Abo Okeeland Dr. Nehal Fahmy were present on behalf of the council.

Ambassador Birgitta addressed the council and recalled the period she worked at the Swedish Institute in Alexandria in 2014 while expressing her content to be working once again in the Middle Eastern Region through Ms. De Mistura's delegation in Syria. She also made reference to her role in peace talks in Geneva in which she solely handled public service continuity in the reconstruction and development of Syria, i.e. the humanitarian approach. She added that the political role itself was played by the parties to the crisis. Amb. Birgitta also stated that the process of peace talks is quite slow and expressed her discontent with the method by which the suspended issues are handled while confirming that most of discussions are focusing only on the procedural and organizational debates rather than substantive matters. She added that the UN envoy would handle such

matters in the coming round of negotiation expected to be held on 11 April 2016.

She added that Mr. De Mistura announced at the beginning of his appointment to the Syrian case that tasks will be divided into four main groups, each of them were specialized in certain tasks. There were subsequent discussions concerning various regional affairs initiated by council members including Mrs. Anissa Hassouna, Dr. Kamal Abu Okeel, Ambassador Mohammed Hegazy, and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad.

Visit of the Researcher Students from Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies

On 20th July 2016, ECFA hosted some students from Faculties of Economics and Political Science from different Egyptian Universities (Cairo, Alexandria, BeniSueif and 6th of October). The meeting was within the framework of arrangements carried out by Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, which was attended by both Prof. Mohamed El-Saeed Idris, the Center's advisor and Mr. Mohamed Abdel kader, expert of Turkish studies, besides ECFA's members, including Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, the Chairman of the Board, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Director of the Council, along with Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Shaker and Ambassador Dr. Hesham El-Zamaity.

Ambassador Zahran started the meeting by welcoming the guests and defining the role of ECFA as a civil society organization specialized in foreign affairs. He also pointed out to some members of the council who are professors at faculties of Economics and Political Science, such as Dr. Botrous Botrous Ghali, the previous Secretary-General of the United Nations, adding that the Council brings together previous ministers of Foreign Affairs like Mr. Amr Moussa, Mr. Nabil Fahmy, Mr. Mohamed KamelAmr and Mr. Ahmed Abo El-ghait.

Ambassador Saad spoke about the working mechanism at the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs which is mainly represented in geographically divided permanent committees, in addition to temporary working groups entrusted with discussing specific issues such as terrorism. This division imposes itself on those who wish to join the membership of the Council and find themselves able to contribute to the activities and subjects of

these permanent committees using their experiences, such as the international security, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons committee and nuclear disarmament, the united nations and other international organization committees, where new members choose to join a permanent committee fundamentally or alternatively. He also added that the members of the Council are from different backgrounds including previous ambassadors, researchers, members of the Egyptian military and intelligence, in addition to the academic scientists like engineers, doctors and others. Members also include corporates which have a valuable contribution to carrying out economic and technical research.

Meeting with the Institute of African Studies of CICIR's Delegation

On 31st July 2016, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held a meeting with a delegation from the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR). On behalf of the CICIR, Mr. Xu Weizhong, the Director of the Chinese Institute of African Studies, Mr. Yang Zhiguang, assistant professor, and Mr. Yin Yue, assistant professor, were present. The meeting was attended by Ambassadors/ Mounir Zahran, Ezzat Saad, Hisham El-Zimaity, Mona Omar, Ali El-Hifny, and Mahmoud Allam.

The Chinese delegation looked for discussing the following topics to know the council's vision related to them:

1. How to understand and promote trilateral cooperation between China, Africa and the European Union?

2. What kind of role could Egypt play in China-Africa-Europe Cooperation?

3. Current circumstances in Egypt and China-Egypt relations.

- Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad inaugurated the meeting by welcoming the Chinese delegation and emphasizing on the importance of the Egyptian-Chinese relations, particularly after inviting the Egyptian President to attend the G20 meeting in September.

- Mr. Xu Weizhong started his intervention by asserting that Egypt became more important in the MENA region. He pointed out that Egypt is regarded highly significant to China; as it has played an important role in Africa-China relations. He stressed that China is looking forward to hear the Egyptian opinion regarding the trilateral

relations that consist of the Europe, Africa and China.

Mr. Weizonhong concluded his remarks by asserting on the importance of enhancing the security and peace keeping issues in Africa. He mentioned that two conferences were held in Africa addressing the security cooperation and they are planning to hold a third conference about protecting the Chinese projects in Africa.

Ambassador Saad affirmed that there are several fields considered prosperous for cooperation not only on the bilateral level but also on the trilateral level (Egypt- China – Africa), through supporting the activities of the Egyptian Agency for Partnership for Development (EAPD). Also, he suggested that cooperation can take place in the fields of agricultural, health care and scientific research in Africa.

Ambassador Saad asserted that China needs to be cautious when dealing with trilateral relations as it might find difficulty setting up general rules upon which the trilateral relations can be launched. Furthermore, by taking this initiative, China will be putting itself in parallel with ex-colonial powers. As a consequence, African countries can perceive China's stance as similar to the traditional European powers; reviving a history that was not the brightest in the African memory. In this context, China's proposed trilateral relations can be mistakenly regarded as a form of exploitation of the raw materials of the continent.

To conclude, Ambassador Saad pointed out that there are areas in Africa within which China could cooperate with donor countries and Egypt can play an important role in this kind of cooperation. He also confirmed that trilateral relations should not be an alternative for bilateral relations between the two countries.

Visit of a Delegation from the Center for Strategic Studies in Azerbaijan

Following a request from the Center for Strategic Studies in the Republic of Azerbaijan to establish channels of cooperation with the Egyptian Council, including arranging joint activities, the Council received a delegation from the Center on 6th November 2016, consisting of Mrs. Gulshan Pashyeva, the Deputy Director of the Center, Dr. Kamal Kasimov, researcher at the Center, in addition to Mr. Emil Rahim, Counselor of the Azerbaijani Embassy in Cairo.

Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad welcomed the Azeri delegation stressing on the profound relations that both countries and people share, pointing at the visit effectuated by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi to Azerbaijan to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between Egypt and Azerbaijan. He equally confirmed the great importance of the South Caucasus region to Egypt and Azerbaijan in particular, with whom Egypt has strong economic relations in both the commerce and energy domains.

Dr. Gulshan expressed her gratitude to Ambassador Saad and the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs for arranging this meeting stressing that she was keen to visit the Council to learn from the experience it gained. She added that she visited several countries in the region, namely Saudi Arabia, Emirates, Jordan and Morocco. She emphasized the special importance of Egypt as a key player in the regional and global issues so that they seek a close cooperation with the Egyptian Council. The two sides agreed that the Egyptian Council would submit to the Azerbaijani side a draft of Memorandum of Understanding on

cooperation between the two sides for study and possible signing in the future.

Meeting With the Delegation of Heavenly Culture, World Peace Restoration of Light (HWPL)

On 22nd November 2016, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Director of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, received a delegation from the HWPL Organization branch located in Gwangju. The discussion focused on the legal position of the Organization and the scope of possible cooperation between the two sides, especially in the area of Peace-making in light of the existing regional conflicts which require intensification of efforts on both regional and international levels. Particularly, the mobilization of efforts of civil society organizations considering the increase in level of tensions and terrorist attacks as well as immigrants and refugee problems in a total absence of concerted international efforts.

On the field of activities, Dr. Yoonsug Jo, the Director of the branch, outlined that the Organization holds four Conferences on a yearly basis. A Conference takes place during the period of 16-20 December 2016 in South Korea addressing political, religious and media fields as well as youth empowerment, and everything that can have an effect on peace-making. Another Conference takes place on 14 March 2017 on Law and the Universal Declaration on Peace and Development.

On the regional level, preparations are ongoing to hold a Forum in Armenia –that convenes on a yearly basis- discussing four axis: the empowerment of women & youth and religious ideology and its influence on political changes, underlining that such conferences seek a common formula on peace-making in the framework of the International Law in light of the existing variations in its forms and concepts, asserting that people of the

world who believe in Peace should encourage their leaders to achieve peace and avoid violence and conflicts.

Ambassador Saad explained that efforts should focus on setting a Universal vision that doesn't interfere with the internal affairs of countries and protect their national security, stressing that there are countries, companies and organizations that depend on arms trafficking, and hence have interest in the continuation of armed conflicts. Ambassador Saad added that, despite being in the 21st century, we still witness an Israeli colonization of the Palestinian land, and international coalitions with different goals; a situation that makes the purpose of creating a world without wars or destruction a difficult matter, especially in light of the existing arms race and the possession of the five permanent members of the Security Council of weapons of mass destruction employed to reinforce each one's power and supremacy over the other.

The Egyptian and Sudanese Councils for Foreign Affairs Discuss Economic, Agricultural, and Industrial Integration between their Two Countries

Responding to the visit of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs to Khartoum in February 2016, the Sudanese Council for Foreign Affairs paid a visit to Cairo during the period (28th – 30) November 2016. The program of the visit included sessions of discussion with The Egyptian Council for Foreign affairs, The African Studies Unit at Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, and The Institute for Research and African Studies at Cairo University. The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the Sudanese Council for Foreign Affairs were received by His Excellency Sameh Shokry, Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Helmi Al Namnam, Minister of Culture, and Ahmad Abou Al-Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; all in the presence of the Sudanese Ambassador in Cairo.

The visit was carried out in an atmosphere of friendship, cordiality, frankness and transparency in dealing with the issues raised for the discussion. On top of these issues were the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of the Egyptian-Sudanese bilateral relations. Additionally, the various aspects of cooperation which would enable both countries to effectively confront all present and future challenges.

Participants in the discussions included expert members of the Council specialized in Arab and African affairs, among whom: Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, the Chairman of the Council, Ambassador Abdel Raouf Al-Reedy, the Honorary Chairman of the Council, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Director of the Council, as well as Ambassadors Mohamed Assem Ibrahim,

Ihab Wahba, Hussein Al Kamel, Salah Halima, Marawan Badr, Mohamed Hegazi and others.

The two Councils emphasized the importance of the role played by Civil Society Associations in finding solutions and common grounds in a way that reinforces the bounds of bilateral cooperation from one side, and cooperation with all Arab and African countries on the other side. This way also encourages establishing common projects and conferences related to the domain of integration between the two countries in fields of agriculture, industry, small and medium projects and technology.

The two sides agreed to establish a Joint Working Group composed of the two Councils whose mission is to present and search for a comprehensive vision for the purpose of selecting the best course for developing bilateral relations in all fields, as well as finding solutions and alternatives to obstacles or barriers to the growth of those relations- in a strategic framework- to the level they deserve.

- The Working Group assignment is divided into two main tasks:

- Firstly: Reviewing the relevant circumstances of the obstacles that impede strengthening relations between the two countries, and presenting practical solutions capable of overcoming these obstacles.

- Secondly: Discussing ideas and visions in various fields of cooperation, as well as building up a strong partnership between the two countries and bringing up ideas to push this partnership forward and ahead.

His Excellency Minister Sameh Shokry agreed to put this Working Group as well as its recommendations under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two sides expressed their wish that the Sudanese Minister of Foreign Affairs would also welcome the conclusions of this proposed Working Group.

Figures:

Lecture by Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, the Former Sudanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, on “the Present and the Future of the Egyptian – Sudanese Relations”

During a visit to the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on 23rd February 2016, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, Sudan's former Foreign Minister and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the International University of Africa, delivered an elaborate speech on “the Present and the Future of the Egyptian – Sudanese Relations”.

Dr. Ismail spelled out his vision from three perspectives, namely international, regional and bilateral relations with Egypt. From every perspective, he presented a vast array of information and perceptions along with a historical dimension to all aspects of topics considered. He wrapped up with proposals and recommendations for developing relations between Sudan and Egypt.

Dialogue with the Russian Ambassador in Cairo Concerning Bilateral Relations and Regional Issues

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs was keen on becoming familiar with the various sides of Egypt's relations with leading states that have influenced the region's affairs. The Ambassador of Russia in Cairo, Mr. Serge Karbacinko, was invited to deliver a lecture on the 10th of April 2016 under the title "The Present and Future of Russian-Egyptian Relations, and Moscow's view on the state of the Middle East region".

Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, the Chairman of the Council, and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, the director of the council, commenced the symposium by welcoming all attendees and continued to speak about the development in cooperation between the two states since the Era of the Soviet Union in terms of its approach to bilateral relations with Russia.

The Russian Ambassador touched on military cooperation between the two states, noting that it is running exceptionally. Mr. Ambassador also mentioned the state of economic cooperation between the two states in terms of a project to establish a Russian industrial zone, which is likely to be planned to be in the Suez Canal's industrial area. The location of the project is still to be determined as well as the other projects under research.

Ambassador Abdel Raouf El-Reedy prefaced the list of commentators and mentioned that the Russian Ambassador's presentation was clear cut stating "I wish to present my own point of view concerning the previous era which witnessed strong relations on a global level leading to the end of colonialism and the Soviet Union's cooperation with Egypt in the UNGA resolu-

tion No. 1514 article 10. Currently, an important issue links us , which is combating terrorism. Both states must cooperate to bring about its end. This intellectual chaos may lead to the possibility of utilizing weapons of mass destruction. We are not going to search for the reasons behind this extremism that does not belong to any religion. I simply want to stress that the two countries have succeeded in the past in defeating colonialism and therefore they must cooperate to resolve extremism.”

Ambassador Saad presented the role of Russia in the region’s crises especially the Syrian crisis and the Libyan issue as well as the coordination and consultation between Cairo and Moscow that occur with regards to these crises especially given their mutual framework concerning combating terrorism.

Focusing on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Ambassador Saad expressed regression in this regard while noting that it remains the primary issue on a national scale and that the two states exchange their common views in this regard continuously. In his speech before the council members, Ambassador Karbacinko spoke about Russian-Egyptian relations and the momentum it has gained after the 30th of June 2016 revolution and the election of president El Sisi. He pointed to the economic and commercial cooperation as well as the exchange of services represented through the movement of Russian tourists in Egypt. Mr. Ambassador also noted a contract to establish a nuclear power plant to generate electricity in Egypt while noting that Egypt has received unprecedented financial aid from the Russian government to establish this plant.

The Russian ambassador concluded the issue noting that the cooperation between the two states is strong, continuous, and concise that visits are constant and effective. Council members presented their contributions and Mr. Ambassador responded accordingly. There were contributions from Ambassador Nabil El-Oraby and Dr. Amira Al-Shanawany and Ambassador Rakha

Hassan; all of them generated different aspects concerning the bilateral relations between Egypt and Russia and Moscow's stance on the region's affairs and global issues. All attendees acknowledged the need to promote and develop the relations between the two states on the basis of mutual interest.

Meeting with Her Excellency Ms. Helen Clark, the Former Prime Minister of New Zealand and the Former Executive Director of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

On Sunday, 22nd May 2016, The Council held a meeting with Ms. Helen Clark at the Diplomatic Club (El-Tahrir Club), within the efforts of Ms. Clark to promote her candidacy for the position of the next UN Secretary General. On the New Zealand side, the meeting was attended by Ambassador Barney Riley, New Zealand's Ambassador to Cairo, and Ms. Rosemary Banks. On ECFA side, the meeting was attended by Mr. Amr Moussa, the former Secretary-General of the Arab League, Mr. Nabil Fahmy, the former Egyptian Foreign Minister, and Mr. Dr. Mostafa El-Feky, the former First Assistant of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The meeting was directed by Amb. Abdel Raouf El-Reedy, the Honorary Chairman of ECFA, and was held over lunch. The council members in attendance in addition to Amb. Reedy were Amb. Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Shaker, Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad, Amb. Mohammed Anees Salem, Dr. Mona Makram Ebeid.

1) Honorary Chairman, Amb. Abdel Raouf El-Reedy commenced the meeting by expressing the council's high praise and consideration for Ms. Clark's presence in Cairo and its keenness on observing how she will make improvements to the international community, should she be elected Secretary General following the upcoming election in October 2016. Amb. El-Reedy also stressed on the importance of this position in light of the critical condition of the contemporary international community with regards to the increase of terrorist activities and extremism as well as the instability in the region.

2) Mr. Amr Moussa began with a formal welcome and introduction of H.E. Helen Clark, noting her 9 year premiership in New Zealand and highlighting that New Zealand's UN record in regards to the situation of Palestine is quite favorable indeed. Mr. Moussa made the following points:

- The United Nations has not totally failed in its duties as the specialized agencies have proven quite effective.

- The UN Security Council is in need of reform, especially in terms of the Veto, in order to accommodate contemporary challenges.

- There is an emerging consensus among member states of the Security Council in particular that H.E. Helen Clark should be in the short list for the position of Secretary General.

3) Ms. Helen Clark began expressing her ties with Egypt and the Arab World during her premiership of her country for 9 years;

- Given her nine years in office as the Prime Minister of New Zealand, she is an exceptional candidate for the position with reference to her pragmatic and effective approach to pressing issues.

- Reform is necessary given the three pillars of the UN; human rights, development, and international peace and security.

- There is an evident need of increasing engagement and activating the role of the Secretary-General according to article 99 of the charter.

All the attendees participated in the discussion through presenting notes and ideas and exchanging opinions with Mrs. Clark. Additionally, Ambassador Nabil Fahmy inquired about her plans regarding the international system and her prime priorities in imposing change. Dr. Mona Makram Ebeid pointed out that by virtue of the years of Mrs. Clark's work in the United Nations Development program, it is important to use the help of the civil society organizations and especially parliament's representatives that work in civil society. Ambassador Mohamed Shaker

expressed his hope that the Middle East would become a Nuclear Free Zone, incentivizing Mrs. Clark to promote stability in the region.

Mutual Dialogue with Minister Nabila Makram Regarding Immigration and Egyptian Expatriates

The Council organized a meeting with Mrs. Nabila Makram, the Minister of state for immigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs, on 2nd June 2016, as a rich forum to exchange ideas. The Minister began the meeting by presenting the priorities of the Ministry's work and the challenges ahead. The attendees then made contributions including comments and suggestions based on their experience in working abroad and therefore their direct contact with issues that relate to the work of the Ministry.

The Minister presented several important points; She declared the return of the Ministry of Immigration and the Affairs of Egyptians abroad separately from the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration (formerly), which proves how the Egyptian state supports the Egyptian citizen living in Egypt or abroad. She pointed to the most important challenges the Ministry faces, which many relate to the divisions and chronic differences between the Egyptian communities abroad and the desire of their children to work solo rather than work in groups. She also talked about the launch of the dollar certificates, which are national investment certificates with the objective of achieving Egyptian interests abroad and supporting the national economy.

She added that one of the most important challenges is the lack of an institute to count the number of Egyptians living abroad. Therefore, the minister requested the Ministry of Manpower to create a database to keep track of the Egyptians living abroad in order to help in counting their number. She also underlined the exceptional opportunities to benefit from the expertise of Egyptians abroad in order to develop Egypt's economy and

technology. Additionally, she spoke about Egyptian communities in Africa and the keenness of the ministry to resume communication with them and its people by all means.

After Minister Nabila Makram's detailed presentation, council members began presenting their contributions, which consisted of a number of ideas and proposals including: the necessity of organizing a public diplomacy file. There was also a contribution concerning linking Egyptian scholars overseas to the Egyptian institutions and the importance of initiating mechanisms to maintain constant communication with them. Hence, Egyptian scholars abroad can offer contributions based on full knowledge of Egypt's needs and its potential capabilities in this regard.

The issue of illegal immigration was also raised as it is widespread in most parts of the republic, especially in Upper Egypt. An important contribution was a reference to the contradiction of counting the Egyptians abroad; while their number reached 2.7 million immigrants according to the International Organization Of Migration, some alledges that their actual number is 630 thousands, who voted in the 2015 House of Representatives elections. It was critical to record data about the Egyptians abroad with the Department of Immigration. The issues raised and dialogues initiated in the meeting were varied and rendered this particular meeting one of the most important meetings the council has organized that year.

Visit of the Hungarian National Security Advisor

The Hungarian National Security Advisor Mr. Joseph Czukor, along with the Hungarian Ambassador to Cairo Peter Kveck and Mr. GyorgyGalicza, an advisor at the cabinet office of the prime minister had visited the Council on 19th September 2016. The attendees included Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, the Chairman of ECFA, Ambassador Mr. Abd el Raouf El-Reedy, the Honorary Chairman, Amb Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Shaker, Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Director of ECFA, Amb. Marwan Badr, Dr. Hazem Attia Allah and Dr. Norhan El-Sheikh.

The Hungarian guest expressed his thanks to the members of the board for giving him the opportunity to talk about the developments in his country, it's current foreign policy as well as it's bilateral relations with Egypt. In this regard, he referred to many issues that include his previous visits to Cairo, meetings with high officials, his country's foreign policy as well as its experience in reforming its economy. Besides, he explained the negative aspects that infected the EU performance lately. In spite of all these issues, the guest said that his country is optimistic about the future of the Union and its usefulness in maintaining peace and security in Europe.

The Hungarian guest answered the members' questions and presented the cooperation between Hungary and Egypt in fighting terrorism. He also praised the role of Al- Azhar in spreading the true values of Islam.

Visit the Political Counselor of the American Embassy in Cairo: “A Consensus between the Republicans and the Democrats on the Particularity of Relations with Egypt”

On 26th October 2016, the Chairman of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, and the Director of the Council Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad received Mr. Eric V.Gaudiosi, the Counselor of the American Embassy in Cairo, in a closed meeting.

Several issues were discussed during the meeting, most importantly: the developments in the Egyptian - American relations, and Cairo relations with Moscow in light of the Egyptian - Russian military maneuvers which recently took place.

Ambassador Saad outlined that recent visits by multiple Congressmen to Cairo reflect the positive developments in Egypt's relations with the United States. The Counselor commented by noting that the importance of relations with Egypt is an issue of a bipartisan consensus of both the Republican and Democratic parties.

Ambassador Zahran inquired about the reasons behind the warning call issued by the American, British and Canadian Embassies for their citizens in Egypt not to go to public places on 9 October 2016 , and if there were credible information justifying that step, especially that nothing happened that day.

The Counselor clarified his country's position stressing it has to abide by caution in such circumstances. He moved to bring up the issue of the draft Law for Civil Society Organizations, signaling that the draft contains many articles that contradict with American Laws, and prevents the United States -as a foreign

donor- from recruiting or mobilizing national labor for projects it finances, a matter that will negatively affect relations between the two countries in case the present draft Law is adopted. Ambassador Zahran responded by saying that the Egyptian Government refuses any foreign interference in the Egyptian internal affairs. Accordingly, it has all the right in imposing criteria and conditions to ensure the prevention of such interference in case it contradicts with Egyptian Laws. He added that the Embassy should convey its vision to the relevant Ministries, at the top of them the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Board Member's Meeting with His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Shoukry

On 12 November 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Shoukry received the Board members of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs presided by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran. The delegation of the Council included : Ambassador Abdel Raouf Al-Reedy, the Honorary Chairman of the Council, Ambassador Dr. Mohamad Shaker, Ambassador Hisham Al-Zimaity, the Secretary-General of the Council, Ambassador Mona Omar, Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem and the Director of the Council Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad.

In the beginning, the Chairman of the Council expressed his gratitude to His Excellency the Minister for receiving the Council Board members. He then surveyed the activities of the Council in the stated year, underlining that the Council highly depends on the Ministry's moral and financial support to carry its mission of serving the Egyptian Foreign Policy, confirming at the same time the Council's insistence on maintaining total independence and refusal of any sort of foreign support.

His Excellency the Minister welcomed the Board members confirming the distinguished status and reputation the Council has earned in Egypt and abroad due to the high expertise of its members in the field of Diplomacy and also in other various international domains, stressing that all Departments of the Ministry as well as its leadership are ready to present full support for the Council's mission.

H.E. suggested engaging the youth in the Council's different activities in a way that benefits national interest. In this regard, Ambassador Zahran outlined that interaction with the youth al-

ready exists, and that the Council participated in training programs for students of the Faculty of Economics & Political Science in Cairo University, and participates with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Institute for Diplomatic Studies in a Conference titled “Egypt and the United Nations.. A Year of Contribution” scheduled for the 4th and 5th of December 2016. The Honorary Chairman Abdel Raouf Al-Reedy noted that the Council concluded a Cooperation Accord with the Public Library of Egypt, and that a conference on the strategic importance of the Red Sea as well as opportunities for economic investments in the area is to be held next January 2017. The meeting with the Minister included discussions of several Foreign Policy issues, as well as Egyptian relations with several countries in the region, and the future of the Egyptian - American relations after Donald Trump’s win of the Presidential elections.

Visit of the Mexican ambassador to ECFA

Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Director of the Council, received on 16th November 2016, Mr. Jose Octavio Tripp, the Mexican Ambassador to Egypt, along with Ricard Ballestaos, the embassy consultant, who expressed that the main goal of this visit is to open communication channels with the Council and discuss the possibility of the mutual cooperation between the council and other counter Mexican think tanks and research centers referring to his intention to attend the Council's conference with the Egyptian – Cuban friendship association which will be held on 27th November 2016.

The Chairman of the Council presented the activities of the Council, its organizational structure, its membership conditions, along with its internal and external partnerships, welcoming the communication with the embassy and the mutual cooperation with the Mexican think tanks and research centers.

In reference to the mentioned above, it is important to mention that the Mexican ambassador along with other ambassadors of Peru, Panama, Chile, Venezuela and Ecuador has attended the conference held with the Egyptian- Cuban friendship association on "the developments of Cuba and its relations with Egypt and the world".

Visit of the Indian Ambassador to ECFA

On 18th December 2016, upon the request of the Indian Ambassador Mr. Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Amb. Dr. Mounir Zahran, the Chairman of the Board, along with Amb. Ezzat Saad, the Director of the Council, received the Indian Ambassador to Egypt and the vice head of the mission to organize the visit of the Council's members to India, that will be held from 4 to 7 January 2017, in order to make several discussions with its counter Indian Council.

- **The meeting focused on the following:**

- The Indian Ambassador pointed out to the two visits of President Abd El-Fattah El-Sisi to India; the 1st one was in the context of participation in the Indian/African summit in August 2016, while the 2nd one was on the sidelines of the G20 summit in China. He focused on the bilateral relations between India and Egypt, referring that beside the security cooperation, there are five main aspects dominating the relations between the two countries, namely: economic and trade cooperation, the cooperation between the governments of Egypt and India, cooperation on education, technology and on the small and medium enterprises as well as the cooperation in the field of local governance.

- The Indian Ambassador Mr. Sanjay Bhattacharyya assured the willingness of India to fund the Egyptian projects within the context in which the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Moody an-

nounced submitting soft loans worth 10 billion dollars to Africa, along with the current loan program during the Indian / African Summit.

- On his part, Amb. Saad said that the Council intends to meet the ORF officials and the members of ICWA Center. On the other hand, Amb. Mounir Zahran also indicated that the Council intends to propose signing MOU between the Egyptian Pugwash and its Indian counter in order to enhance cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to benefit from the Indian experience.

Chapter III



Council's Visits Abroad

Visit of the Council Delegation to the Republic of Sudan

At the invitation of its Sudanese Council for Foreign Affairs, the ECFA delegation headed by Ambassador Abdel Raouf El-Reedy, the Honorary Chairman of the Council, and comprising Ambassador Ihab Wahba, Ambassador Hisham El-zamaity and Ambassador Ezzat Saad, visited Khartoum on 2nd – 4th February 2016. The delegation was received by Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Ibrahim Ghandour on 3 February 2016 and held a seminar with its Sudanese counterpart at the Diplomatic Club on "the Future and Prospects of the Egyptian -Sudanese relations". At the conclusion of the visit, the two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between them.

• **The Following are the main points that were emphasized during the visit:**

First: the Meeting with the Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Ibrahim Ghandour:

1. The minister expressed a great interest in visiting the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, noting that its experience was an important source of inspiration for them to establish their own counterpart Council in 2008, as a think tank for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this context, the minister said that they were counting on cooperation between the two Councils as a means to develop and activate relations between the two countries.

2. The Sudanese minister welcomed the visit by the delegation and praised the deep historical ties between Egypt and Sudan, pointing in particular to:

- The meetings between the two presidents, specifically their meeting on the sidelines of the last summit held in Addis Ababa, as providing a good opportunity to discuss the overall bilateral relations and upgrade them in all areas.

- Confirmation of the historical rights to the Nile water, which were confirmed by President Al-Bashir to his Egyptian counterpart, and the keenness of the Sudanese side that the water level in the Blue Nile would not be affected, and that the same would apply to Egypt. He concluded that President El-Sisi's recent comments in this regard have put things on the right way. Minister Ghandour reaffirmed that Sudan has never been biased nor a mediator or neutral party on the issue of the Renaissance Dam, as the media propagates.

Ambassador Al Reedy underlined cultural cooperation between the two countries as a good means of communication between the peoples of both of them.

Second: The Seminar on "The Future and Prospects of the Egyptian-Sudanese Relations":

Speaker of the Sudanese Council Dr. Hussein Suleiman Abu Saleh referred to the following in his speech:

- The sad situation which the Arab world is experiencing with wars and further fragmentation, similar to what Sudan witnessed in recent years and the lethal impact of the separation of the south on the Sudanese economy, indicate that conspiracies are still being hatched against Sudan to further fragment and divide it and spread chaos in a bid to perpetuates the conflict situation experienced by the country, thereby obstruct the economic and social development process.

- The President of the Council also cited the case

of the Renaissance Dam, which he described as quite an important dam which still requires deep and careful studies carried out by specialized experts, in the interests of the three countries, away from the media campaigns in which many specialists and non-specialists participate. The President of the Council further said that the ultimate goal is to reach a peaceful solution to preserve the interests of all concerned parties.

- The dam with its announced specifications, must not leave the process of controlling the waters in the hands of a single country, especially as it is only 20 km away from the border of Sudan. It has to be a collective work of the three countries in this regard, especially as the issue of controlling the dam waters stresses the need for keeping into account that 85% of Egypt's water comes from the Ethiopian plateau.

- In light of the above context, the President of the Council pointed out that a special committee from some European countries has recently concluded that the studies on the dam were inadequate, and there is still need for deep studies, both with regard to storage capacity and the effects of the dam, including the silt deposition behind it and its implications on the long term to both Sudan and Egypt.

- The President of the Council concluded his speech by stressing the need for what he called "scientific joint action that shows all the facts about the Ethiopian dam."

- On his part, Dr. Mustafa Osman reviewed developments on the international and regional scene since the end of the Cold War, and spoke about the importance of

democratization, human rights and the role of civil society organizations in the process of development.

- He pointed out that the world is moving towards multi-polarity and building economic blocs, noting that there are issues that affect relations between the two countries such as terrorism and the protection of minorities. Adding that there are interventions and breaches by regional powers, he cited in particular Israel, Iran and Turkey. As for the powers from outside the region, he said they include Russia, the United States of America and Europe.

Visit of the Council Delegation to China

A delegation from the Council visited China on 18th – 19th October 2016, in response to the visit of the delegation of the China Institutes for Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) to the Council in 2015 and another visit in March 2016. The Egyptian delegation included Ambassador Hisham Al-Zamaity, Dr. Hazem Attiyah Allah, Ambassadors/ Ezzat Saad, Ali Al-Hefni and Ahmed Rizk.

During the visit, The Chinese side pointed out that they notice the negative image about the Chinese media and they referred this to the effects of the western media on the Chinese one and they advised the Egyptian delegation by the importance of combating/ changing this image, which has a great impact on both the Chinese investment corporates and the Chinese Citizens who are willing to visit the Egyptian monuments.

In this context, the Egyptian delegation gave a great attention to the impact of the negative advertising campaign that the western media trigger on Egypt, explaining that since the 30th of June 2016, the western media hasn't published any positive line about Egypt and there is an emphasis on distortion on what's been going on in Egypt. This negative image is reflected on the business community that holds a cautious attitude towards the investment in Egypt and on the touristic companies which always marked Egypt as an unsafe place to visit.

The Egyptian side continued that Qatar hosts 2 branches of the associations of Brookings and Carnegie, which contribute to the promotion of the hostile ideas about Egypt through their different activities that they organize in Doha.

Chapter IV



Council's Members activities

Lectures Given by Ambassador Dr. Hussein Abdel Khaleq Hassouna at the University of California

At the invitation of the University of California, USA, Ambassador Dr. Hussein Abdel Khaliq Hassouna, Member of the Council, delivered a number of lectures on February 2016, on the Egyptian vision towards international and regional issues and the most important challenges facing the Arab world, at the attendance of a number of research center experts interested in the Middle East.

The first lecture dealt with the history of the Egyptian diplomacy and its achievements in supporting the liberation and independence movements in Africa and efforts to support a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as the leading role of this diplomacy in the United Nations through Egypt's membership in the Security Council, the International Court of Justice, International law, the Human Rights Council and other specialized organizations and committees.

The second lecture dealt with Egypt's position on the Arab Spring revolutions and its internal democratic process, its efforts to settle the Palestinian issue, the Syrian and Libyan crisis, and the Egyptian position on Iran in the light of the recent nuclear agreement and its demands to establish a zone-free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

The third lecture dealt with Egypt's stance on terrorism, the Syrian refugee crisis, the issue of dialogue between religions and civilizations, the intervention of major powers in the region, the battle of the American presidential elections and the role of the Arab League in promoting Arab solidarity and protecting Arab national security.

The participants discussed various issues and expressed their appreciation for the Egyptian view concerning them and their appreciation of the Egyptian role in reaching a peaceful solution.

The Participation of Ambassador Dr. Hussein Abdel Khaleq Hassouna at the International Forum on “the Palestinian Issue and the International Law” organized by the United Nations in Amman

Ambassador Dr. Hussein Abdel Khaleq Hassouna participated in the International Forum on “The Palestinian Issue and the International Law” organized by the United Nations in Amman", on March 2016, in the presence of the legal advisors of the various ministries in the State of Palestine, the Palestinian Ambassador to the United Nations and the Director of the Department of Palestine.

In his first speech before the forum on the Palestinian issue under international law, the ambassador affirmed that the UN recognition of Palestine as a state in 2012 is a preparation for international legitimacy and a victory for the Palestinians' struggle for sovereignty, independence and freedom. He added that this development gave them the right to adhere to international treaties and conventions, as a modern democratic state. He then analyzed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people derived from the Charter of the United Nations and other international conventions, recognized in the resolutions of the international Organization over the years, the most important of which concerned the right to self-determination, the right to independence and sovereignty and the right to return or compensation.

He also discussed the historical development of the struggle of the Palestinian people for their legitimate rights since they sought independence under the British mandate until they were recognized by the United Nations as a state. He affirmed that this recognition confirms the applicability of the norms of the

international law on the recognition of states and governments, which enables it to regulate its legal relations with international organizations and bodies, as well as to develop its domestic legislation in accordance with its international obligations.

In his second lecture to the Forum, he stressed that in the context of Palestine's desire to accede to international treaties and agreements, the Palestinian Government must abide by the reference to international treaty law, in particular the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969, which contained the provisions on the conclusion, reservation, entry into force, modification, interpretation and termination of treaties on matters relating to the relationship of treaties to international law and the settlement of disputes.

He then referred to the provisions of the international conventions and conventions which the State of Palestine attaches special importance at this stage, such as human rights instruments, conventions on the law of the sea, environmental protection, women's rights, the International Criminal Court, etc.

He concluded that the international law is the strongest support for the Palestinian people in their struggle to obtain their legitimate rights. He called on the legal advisers of the State of Palestine to come to Egypt to meet with legal officials and benefit from their experience in the international law.

The organizers of the Forum expressed their thanks to His Excellency for his participation in this training course for the staff of the State of Palestine and their appreciation for the content of his lectures and scientific interventions which influenced the debate on the international law issues of interest to the emerging State of Palestine.

The Participation of Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Shaker and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in the Fifth Moscow International Security Conference

At the invitation of the Russian Ministry of Defense, Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Shaker, and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad attended the fifth Moscow International Security Conference, organized by the Ministry annually since 2011 on 27th -28th April 2016.

Around 700 participants, including 20 defense ministers from various countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America, with close ties to Russia, as well as a large delegation from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) headed by its Secretary-General, Hamid Karzai, the Former Afghani President, and two deputies of Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The conference was opened by Russian Defense and Foreign Ministers Sergey Shoyjo and Sergei Lavrov. The opening session began with a welcome speech by President Putin delivered by Nikko Lay Petrushev, Secretary of the Russian National Security Council, and the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, who delivered a welcome speech on behalf of Ban Ki-moon. The following is a review of the most important topics of the Conference.

- **The Conference focused on the following:**

- Terrorism as a major threat to the global security:

In this session, various forms of contemporary terrorism, military-defensive cooperation in the face of terrorism, and the

exploitation of terrorist organizations in achieving foreign policy objectives were addressed. At this meeting, the defense ministers of China, Pakistan, the Russian First Deputy Defense Minister, the Former Afghani President Hamid Karzai and Peter Drennan, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, spoke.

- Security Challenges and opportunities of the international military-military cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region:

The meeting discussed opportunities for building a security and cooperation structure in the Asia-Pacific region, the political-military climate in North-East Asia, the situation on the Korean Peninsula, threats of regional security, military-bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the countries of the region and ASEAN Group in strengthening security in the Asia-Pacific region. The defense ministers of Vietnam, Singapore, Laos and India's State Secretary of Defense spoke at that the meeting.

- Global security and military cooperation:

In The meeting, which was attended by the Ministers of Defense of Iran, Mongolia, South Africa, Lebanon, Cameroon, and the Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the challenges and threats to security and the role of the armed forces in modern conflicts were discussed.

- Problems of war and peace in Europe: "Towards a New Security System in Europe":

This session dealt with the effectiveness of current security mechanisms in Europe, the need to modernize them, and military cooperation to maintain stability in Europe - as well as the role of the international organizations in ensuring European security, the situation in the Middle East and its implications for European security.

Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, Secretary-General of the Or-

ganization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Ministers of Defense of Belarus and Serbia, Stefan Misk, former President of Croatia, Sergei Makarov, member of the Staff of the Russian Military Academy , And Alexander Zer, member of the German Council on Foreign Policy, spoke at that meeting.

- **In addition to the plenary meetings referred to above, parallel panel discussions were held on the following issues:**

- The Middle East: “Interlocking Contradictions”:

The Syrian Deputy Defense Minister Mahmoud Shawwa, Brigadier Sergey Ruddskoy, at the Operations Department of the Russian Armed Forces Staff, Schindler Hans-Jacob, Coordinator of Taliban and Al-Qaeda monitoring team at the United Nations Security Council, Jean-Paul Labored, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council, Assistant Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Pascal Boniface, the Director of the Institute for International and Strategic Relations of France, and Yve Daccord, the Director of (ICRC), attended the meeting.

- Traditional and Modern International Security Challenges:

The Deputy Ministers of Defense of the Philippines, Chile and Argentina addressed the meeting and addressed the following issues in particular:

- The evolving nature and forms of security challenges and threats;
- The ability to address recent challenges and threats through existing international security mechanisms;
- The role of the international cooperation in confronting traditional and modern security challenges;

- Use of modern technologies to identify and address security threats;

- Finding solutions to international security threats.

- Color Revolutions and Regional Security: "The Role of the Armed Forces in Ensuring the National Stability":

This session dealt with the expansion of the phenomenon of color revolutions, the special factor of the armed forces in these revolutions, and its implications for global security and regional stability. The session also addressed those revolutions as “a key factor in the outburst of global terrorist activity”.

The meeting was attended by Major General Mohamed Abdel Fattah Al-Kashki, Assistant of the Egyptian Minister of Defense, Sergey Afanasyev, the Deputy Director of the Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces Staff, German Klimenko, Advisor to President Putin, Yevgeny Sata Novski, the Chairman of the Middle East Institute in Moscow and the Deputy Minister of Defense of Uruguay, and Raffaello Pantucci, the Director of the Royal Institute for International Security Studies in the United Kingdom.

The Assistant of Minister of Defense presented the close and interactive relationship between the Egyptian people and its armed forces and the considerations behind it, especially the compulsory recruitment system under which the various categories of the Egyptian people have the opportunity to serve and work in the armed forces equally. He also presented a short film reflecting the interconnection and interaction between the Egyptian people and its armed forces during the June 30, 2013 revolution and July 3, 2013.

- Security in Central Asia:

This session addressed an assessment of the current situation and forecasting the political-military changes in Central Asia, the factors affecting security within it, defense cooperation

in maintaining security in Afghanistan and Central Asia in general, the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for security in neighboring countries and the role of the international organizations in strengthening regional security. This meeting received great attention and attendance.

The meeting was attended by the Tajik Deputy Defense Minister Abdulkhoshim Gulomzoda, Acting Minister of Defense of Afghanistan Masoom Stanekazi, Ambassador Phunchok Stobdan, Member of the Institute of Defense Studies of India, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Kyrgyzstan Zhanybek Kaparov and the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Russian Federal Council the Konstantin Kosachyoy.

- Comments:

In their opening remarks and interventions, senior Russian officials, including Nikolai Patrushev, the secretary of the Russian National Security Council, and the Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs pointed out in particular:

- Putting the crash of the Russian plane over Sinai in October 2015 in the forefront of other incidents that occurred during the past months to demonstrate that terrorism is a serious challenge the entire international community has to face.

- Putin's initiative to form a broad international coalition against terrorism. He had presented it during his participation in the work of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly in August 2015.

- Satisfaction with the successes achieved by the Russian armed forces and the Syrian armed forces in combating terrorist organizations in Syria. In this context, Lavrov stressed that the Russian military intervention stopped the victories and progress of terrorists on several fronts, which was praised by the former French Prime Minister.

- Russia is interested in building a peaceful and prosperous Middle East, and is interested in finding a settlement for the Pal-

estinian state on a two-state basis, ensuring security for the Gulf and stabilizing the situation in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

- It is a grave mistake, even a crime, to classify extremists to moderates and terrorists, and to provide the first group with weapons.

- Russia is keen to coordinate with the United States of America to look into incidents when launching counter-terrorism operations in Syria, and the signing of a protocol by the two sides in this regard.

- Russia - like the United States of America - is a permanent member of the Security Council. Therefore, it has the responsibility to maintain international peace and security, and it is incorrect to accuse Russia of destroying Syria and playing a negative role there. In this context, some Russian officials referred to what they called the series of failures of military interventions in Iraq and Libya, and the resulting spread of extremism and terrorism.

- Russian officials complained of what they called a wide media war against Russia and the pitting of Europe on it, especially the former Central and Eastern European communist countries "NATO members", which created an atmosphere of arms race. Some Russian officials have referred to the incident of the overthrow of a Russian fighter jet by Turkey as a model for the adventures of the attack on Russia.

- It is difficult to build a strong European military alliance without Russian participation (as stated by the President of the Council of Europe before the Conference), and actions must precede words; Russia should not be seen as an enemy, but as a partner acting responsibly.

- It was emphasized that the fight against terrorism and the principles governing it are a key part of the Russian military doctrine. It was also pointed out that the overthrow of the legitimate governments in Libya, Iraq and Syria led to the instability of the situation and the spread of terrorism in those countries.

The Participation of Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna in a Memorial Service for Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali by the United Nations Commission on International Law held in Geneva

On the proposal of the Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna, the United Nations Commission on International Law, in its meeting on May 2016, devoted a full session to the commemoration of the former member of the Committee, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and the former Secretary-General of the United Nations.

At the beginning of the meeting, he expressed his thanks to the members of the committee for organizing this special session to commemorate a distinguished Egyptian personality Dr. Boutros Ghali who worked as a university professor, a famous journalist, a distinguished diplomat, an active member of the International Law Commission and the first Arab and African Secretary-General of the United Nations. He added that Dr. Ghali played an important role in the field of the Egyptian diplomacy as a Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; where he contributed to the peace efforts in the Middle East and Africa, and to the support of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Secretary-General of the United Nations also held the principles of the Charter of the United Nations without distinction, respect for the independence of the Secretary-General and his impartial positions. He also presented important initiatives such as his reports on the "Peace Agenda" and the "Development Agenda", and establishing the first international criminal tribunal to judge war criminals of the former Yugoslavia.

Ambassador Hassouna also noted that despite Ghali's achievements, the Security Council has not renewed its mandate because the United States has vetoed this renewal while

it has been supported by all other members of the Council. In recognition of his outstanding performance, Ghali was later elected to be the Secretary-General of the Francophone Organization; where he promoted and expanded its membership. Later, he headed the Egyptian National Council for Human Rights; where he was always supportive to all human rights instruments, whether Arab, African or international. In recent years, he has been lecturing, writing and presiding over many cultural and legal organizations and bodies such as the Hague Academy of International Law in his belief in the importance of teaching and disseminating the provisions of international law between different circles and ages.

The Chinese member of the Committee said that his country had lost a close friend, as Dr. Boutros Ghali had visited China more than twenty times and was awarded by the Chinese President during his visit to Egypt in January 2016, in recognition of his contribution to promoting the Arab-Chinese friendship, protecting the rights and interests of developing countries and creating a more just and fair world. The French member said Dr. Ghali believed in the importance of multiculturalism and languages, including French culture and language, which he sought to publish when he became the first Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie from 1997 to 2002. The Indonesian member praised the special qualities of Dr. Boutros-Ghali in terms of his independence, courage and determination in the face of the crises facing the United Nations in the 1990s.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali has contributed greatly to the work of the International Law Commission through his research, analysis, concepts and the importance of its teaching and dissemination among students all over the world. The members of the Group of Eastern European States in the Committee praised the role played by Dr. Boutros-Ghali in the settlement of disputes between the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement and the es-

establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Crimes of Yugoslavia, which paved the way for the establishment of the International Criminal Court in The Hague. The members of the Latin American Group expressed their appreciation for the efforts exerted by Dr. Boutros Ghali during his tenure as the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for the establishment of an African-Latin dialogue for enhancing relations between Arab and African countries on one hand and for Latinism on the other, as well as the settlement of many crises in Latin America.

The members of the African Group expressed their pride in relative to the appointment of Dr. Boutros-Ghali as Secretary-General of the United Nations as the representative of the African continent. They commended his contributions to the African issues, his role in the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, his efforts to bring together religions and civilizations, as well as his defense within the framework of the International Law Commission on the interests and aspirations of the African States.

In conclusion, Ambassador Hassouna expressed his thanks and appreciation to all members of the International Law Commission for their great feelings towards the late Dr. Boutros Ghali and his achievements

The Participation of the Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Group of "Russia and the Islamic World - A Strategic Vision"

On 26th -27th May 2016, the sixth meeting of the "Russia and the Islamic World –A Strategic Vision" group was held in Kazan, capital of the Republic of Tatarstan. The meeting was held with the participation of experts and senior officials from some 30 Islamic countries, including Arab countries (Egypt / Saudi Arabia / UAE / Qatar / Iraq / Morocco / Libya / Jordan).

Firstly:

The organizers of the meeting organized a day-long visit to the ruins of the historic city of Bulgar (about 300 km south of Kazan) which was the capital of the Bulgar kingdom located on the Volga River, and to which the Abbasid Caliph in Baghdad sent Ahmed Bin Fadlane in 922 AD to acknowledge its the king of Islam. The area includes some archaeological sites registered by UNESCO as a common heritage of humanity including a new mosque, meeting rooms below, and a church erected on the ruins of a number of mosques existed before the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.

The Russian side informed the participants that President Rustam Minnikhanov laid the foundation stone for an Islamic Academy in the historic city on 21 May 2016. The former President of Tatarstan M.Shaimiev and the group's honorary president supported the Academy, which would serve all of Russia and the countries of Central Asia with which Tatarstan maintains a regular contact, to graduate preachers and imams by adopting a moderate approach based on tolerance and rejection of militancy and violence. Shaimayev stressed that all types of support

should be provided for preparing the building which will be the largest in the Euro-Asian region. He explained that "the number of mosques in Tatarstan has increased from 25 mosques in the Soviet Union to about 1500 mosques now.

Secondly:

1. The meeting was opened on the morning of 27 May 2016 with a welcoming speech by President Vladimir Putin, delivered by Ambassador Mikhail Bagdanov, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister for Middle East and Africa, and Putin's Special Envoy to the region.

- With the support of Russia, the forces of terrorism and extremism in Syria were dealt a heavy blow. Nevertheless, these forces and their supporters continue to seek to destabilize the situation in the region and to do their best to undermine international efforts to resolve this conflict.

- In connection with the foregoing, these terrorist and extremist forces seek to exploit the differences and tensions among ethnic and religious groups and use the legitimate dissatisfaction of the Muslim peoples with regard to external interference in their internal affairs to achieve their own interests.

- Russia will always be a sincere friend and ally on which the Islamic world can depend reliably. It will always be ready to provide its support against the global challenges and threats. In this context, Russia expects the Islamic countries to take an active position to integrate the principles of justice and the rule of law, and to reject economic dictations and media pressures in the international relations.

- Putin expressed confidence that the meeting, as in previous meetings, will contribute to strengthening mutual trust, understanding and cooperation between Russia and the Islamic countries, governments and peoples.

2. Rustam Minnikhanov, President of the Republic of Tatarstan and the Chairman of that year's meeting stated that the

ethnic and cultural diversity of the Russian society, especially the Republic of Tatarstan whose half of its population is Muslim, pointing out that the number of Russian Muslims exceeds 20 million, and that Islam entered the country through Tatarstan more than a thousand years ago. Mr. Minikhanov expressed Tatarstan's welcome to Islamic investments, pointing to the attractive climate and its economic and developmental boom in recent years.

- He pointed to some of the activities undertaken by the group (Russia - the Islamic world), most notably the establishment of a website for the group and the preparation of documentaries, most notably about the Emir of Kuwait, and hosting youth and media activities held in Russia.

3. Opening speeches were also given by:

- Sergei Nareshkin, speaker of the Russian Duma:

- He emphasized the depth of the ties between Russia and Islam, which are recognizable by the Russian culture and literature and the traditions of the Russian people themselves.

- The representative of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC):

-The speaker delivered a speech on behalf of the organization's Secretary-General, Iyad Madani, and stressed on the priority of combating terrorism, the hate speech to Islam and Muslims and the humanitarian situation in the Islamic world. He also indicated to the new plan of the organization (2015 – 2025) and illustrated that it aims to enhance its role regionally and internationally and adopt a strategic vision that includes specific priorities in the areas of peace and security, combating terrorism and extremism, supporting development and alleviating poverty, pointing out that Russia has an important role that can contribute to facing these challenges through joint cooperation with the countries of the organization.

- Mr. Ahmed Mohamed Ali, the Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank:

- He delivered a speech at the opening session and focused on the following:

- There is a successful experience of cooperation between the Bank and the Russian Federation, which began in the days of the Soviet Union on a limited scale then it began to include cooperation in the sectors of mining and vocational training, health and education (with the Council of the Mufti of Russia) and cooperation between Russian and Malaysian universities through 25 educational projects worthing \$ 8 million. In addition, the Bank has organized conferences to encourage investment in Russia.

- There many opportunities for cooperation and partnership between Russia and the OIC countries such as joint cooperation in the fields of agriculture, industry, information and communication technology, and promotion of trade and direct investment.

- The chairman stressed that there are many objectives which can be achieved between the two sides in the field of Islamic banking, and that Kazan can be qualified to be the center of the Eurasian business.

4. At the conclusion of that session, the Chairman of IDB signed three memoranda of understanding for cooperation between the Bank and three Russian banks, including the Central Bank.

Thirdly:

The group's coordinator, Ambassador V. Popov, the Director of the Center for the Partnership of Civilizations at the Moscow University of International Relations of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented the activities of the group between the sixth meeting of the group (11-12 June 2015) and the Kazan meeting, as steps to enhance long-term communication and cooperation between Russia and the Muslim world:

1. Launching a Website for the group in July 2015 – called rusisworld.com - and chaired by Ekaterina Podkolzina.

2. Translating a number of The launch of the Forum of “the Media of Islamic Countries against extremism and terrorism” in August 2015, which held its second meeting in Moscow with the participation of about 70 media and thinkers from different countries. The said meeting stressed the need to adopt a strategy to abort the use of the media and the Internet to manipulate public opinion and instill radical thought among young people. Ambassador Popov called upon Russia's friendly countries to call on international organizations, especially the United Nations, to take effective steps to correct the concepts through the global information space by closing channels that broadcast and disseminate terrorist ideology. This ideology and its related acts are subject to the criminal prosecution of national and international courts.

3. Organizing camps for Muslim youth in a number of Russian cities.

4. Producing documentary films on senior politicians from the Islamic world in Russian and English.

5. The Launch of a Russian center for the rehabilitation of wounded children during military operations in the Middle East. (The Russian side requested the Islamic Development Bank's support for this center).

6. The Russian leadership decided that the meetings of the group will be held annually, and that the President of the Republic of Chechnya, Ramadan Kadyrov, will host the meeting of the group next year.

Fourthly:

The participants' interventions focused on the problem of international terrorism from different angles and the ways to confront it, including protecting Muslim youth from radical and extremist ideas, political use of terrorism and cooperation between Russia and the Islamic world in various fields.

-The intervention of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Director

of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, came as the following:

- The current circumstances in the world and in the Middle East in particular require addressing the phenomenon of terrorism and the reasons behind it through a comprehensive approach that takes into account the various environments that harbor terrorism, especially the international environment, resulting mainly from the mismanagement of the international peace and security file by the United States since the end of the Cold War.

- He also stressed that it is wrong to adopt the Western vision that explains the phenomenon of terrorism as linked to Islamic fundamentalism, Arabs and Muslims and to the culture of these peoples. The attacks in Brussels - and before them Paris - occurred from people born in the Western Europe.

- The reports of the UN Special Committee on Combating Terrorism, established on 18 December 1972, indicate that there are 390 terrorist organizations in 60 countries around the world, including European countries. The networks supporting terrorism are spread across different countries and are linked to the trade in arms, drugs and organized crime groups.

- Any progress in the fight against terrorism requires sincere international cooperation and good faith because terrorism has become a tool in the hands of some States to achieve political objectives.

- He emphasized the role of Al-Azhar and its Imam in spreading the culture of Islam and promoting the values of tolerance and co-existence. He responded to the youth's inquiries about the ambiguous concepts promoted by some extremist groups to attract young people to carry out acts of violence, killing and burning against their countries. In this context, he referred to Dr. Al-Tayeb's tours in some African countries, including Nigeria in April 2016, the stronghold of the terrorist organization "Boko Haram", and other countries in Asia and America, either as president of the Muslim Council of Elders or as Imam of Al-

Azhar or in cooperation between the two sides.

Fifthly:

The work of the meeting culminated in a statement included a summary of the main issues addressed. Some terms have been proposed to be amended such as replacing Radicalism with Extremism, and International Scale "Global" with Global Threat to International Peace and Security and the platform agreed to introduce amendments to the final version of the statement.

Russian books into Arabic, Persian, Turkish and other languages, and vice versa.

The Participation of ECFA's Chairman in a Round table of "The United Nations at a Crossroads"

At the invitation of the Dispute Resolution Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran participated in a round table discussion on 28th May 2016, on the occasion of the visit of the President of the General Assembly to Cairo. The participants included Mr. Amr Moussa, Dr. Mustafa Al-Feki and Ambassador Hisham Badr, as well as a number of ambassadors accredited to Egypt and a number of intellectuals.

At the outset, Ambassador Hisham Badr talked about Egypt's role in the United Nations, especially after its membership in the Security Council. Then, Mr. Mogens Lykettot, President of the General Assembly, spoke of the "70th session of the General Assembly" and the most important United Nations' priorities, especially after the adoption of the sustainable development agenda, which will continue until 2030, and the organization of hearings for candidates for the post of Secretary-General.

In the intervention of Ambassador Dr. Mustafa Al-Feki, he said that the current composition of the Security Council, with the presence of permanent members of each of them with veto power, cannot reform the United Nations.

Ambassador Mounir Zahran's intervention referred to the Joint Inspection Unit report prepared by JIU in 2009 (JIU / REP / 2008-2009) calling for activating the role of the General Assembly in the selection of the Secretary-General and which was adopted by the General Assembly only after 6 years in September 2015. He explained that after the end of the hearings in the General Assembly with the candidates for the post, it was important to the President of the General Assembly to prepare a

report to the President of the Security Council on the results and recommendations of Member States for the candidates, taking into account the provisions of Article 27 of the Charter (the role of the Security Council) and Article 97 (on the Secretary-General). However, the President of the General Assembly apologized for doing so under the pretext that General Assembly resolution 69/1007 did not provide for the preparation of such a report.

Ambassador Zahran also pointed out that members of the Secretariat and some Member States had violated the provisions of Article 100 of the Charter, which prohibits the Secretary-General and members of the Secretariat from receiving instructions from Member States.

In the comments, Mr. Amr Moussa said that the first priority is for the United Nations to focus on poverty and problems of underdevelopment, terrorism, etc. Commenting on the apology of the President of the General Assembly for issuing a report on the deliberations of the General Assembly on the results of the hearings for candidates for the post of Secretary-General, Mr. Amr Moussa stated that the report should be prepared by the President of the General Assembly after consultation with the coordinators of the geographical groups even if the resolution of the General Assembly doesn't require this, unless stating other procedures.

The Participation of the Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law's Round Table on “Weapons and the Rule of the International Law”

The Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, the Chairman of ECFA, participated on 8th – 10th September 2016 in the 39th Annual Session of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Imperia, Italy. The list of participants included Ambassador Suad Shalabi (the National Council for Women), and a number of ambassadors accredited to Geneva, diplomats and military personnel from different countries. The United Nations' Legal Counsel (Miguel Sampa Soares), his deputy, the Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross and a judge from the International Criminal Court from Nigeria also participated.

The symposium was organized under the theme "Weapons and the rule of the International Law" and was opened by the President of the Institute, Mr. Fausto Pocar, Professor of International Law at the University of Milan, former Judge of the ICTY and the Mayor of San Remo. The word of the Secretary-General of the United Nations delivered by Soares focused on the relevant international treaties on the round table, in particular weapons of mass destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of Conventional Weapons (CCW). Also, Ms. Christine Burley, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) gave a presentation on the role of the ICRC in the application of international humanitarian law referring to the relevant resolutions.

- **The Themes of Discussion Focused on:**

- Reviewing the legal status of new weapons and their lethal and destructive effects in populated areas.

- Current and future challenges, especially for the application of the unnecessary damages clause of the CCW "Unnecessary suffering" for the population and property.

- The position of the applications of international humanitarian law from the point of view of the military, with particular reference to the situation in Peru between the Peruvian army and the FARC, was developed its operations by changing the clothes of its fighters to civilian clothes and their mixing with the population.

- Reviewing the development of contemporary conflicts and the use of these weapons by non-governmental organizations, especially in the former Yugoslavia and Syria.

- Putting the use of crackers in populated areas in the context of armed conflict as a reference to the practices of "Dae'sh" in Syria and Iraq.

- The challenges posed by the use of chemical weapons and incendiary bombs, with reference to the prohibition of the use of high-speed guns by police.

- The use of submarines in disputes and electronic warfare.

- The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2015 and preparation for the next Conference in 2019.

- The implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the role of OPCW whose representative called upon countries that have not yet acceded to the treaty, especially the DPRK, Egypt, Israel and the Sudan to do that, especially after 192 countries joined the treaty.

Concerning the destruction of chemical weapons, Ambassador Zahran said that the survival of these weapons in the arsenal of the possessing countries is a violation of the provisions of the

treaty which requires the elimination of stocks of those weapons 10 years after treaty's entry into force in 1997, i.e. before the end of 2007.

Ambassador Zahran criticized one of the questions raised about encouraging NGOs to apply international humanitarian law. He explained that such responsibility lay with States parties, not non-governmental organizations which were supposed to be subject to the responsibility of the Governments of States parties. He also pointed out the destructive danger of continued possession of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons and stated that it violates the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular (article 2).

For its part, the representative of the Chemical Weapons Organization expressed her regret because only 70 of the States that had acceded to the Treaty issued national legislations to criminalize the use of chemical weapons and that there was a lack of concern on the part of the majority of Member States to send notifications on the application of the Treaty.

In the same context, Ambassador Mounir asked the Nigerian judge about how to review the consciences of the judges of the Tribunal from the impunity of war criminals who use weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, the most lethal and destructive weapon (supposedly a "Not") of the jurisdiction of the Court, since the Rome Statute does not include such weapons in the jurisdiction of the Court. There were as if they were not genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, while the treaty regime states that those crimes do not fall into statute, including the 1945 bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Nuclear weapons. For his part, the Nigerian judge explained that he agrees with Ambassador Mounir from the conscience and that he was happy because the African Union considered them crimes against humanity, but this did not be-

come a treaty text at the international level. The judge pointed out that the Kampala Protocol did not also criminalize such weapons.

Following the failure of the NPT Review Conference in 2015 and the failure of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on nuclear disarmament to be in accordance with the General Assembly session 70, there is pessimism about the chances of starting negotiations on this issue, whether in the Conference on Disarmament or beyond, as long as there is no political will on the part of the nuclear powers. Increasing the efficiency of stockpiles in those countries is threatening the future of mankind as nuclear weapons are the most lethal weapons of mass destruction. Angela Kane, former Undersecretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, emphasized the importance of the growing number of States warning of the disastrous effects of nuclear weapons as a point of hope that a convention on the prevention of the use of nuclear weapons could be negotiated.

In this regard, the round table also addressed the issue of electronic warfare which has been raised in theory only and has not yet taken place. This type of war uses the Internet to paralyze the military capabilities of States. This possibility, if it happens, is not envisioned by States, but can happen through non-governmental organizations or intelligence agencies.

In conclusion, the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the International Organizations in Geneva, Ambassador Valentin Zellweger, referred to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference held in Geneva in December 2015 and stated that there were those who alledged the failure of that conference. He believed that the Conference had adopted only 10 resolutions and that there were informal consultations initiated with the delegations of the Member States in Geneva to try to remove the obstacles and that further meetings will be held in

October and November 2016 to chart a road map for the good preparation of the next Conference in 2019.

The Participation of Ambassador Hussein Al-Kamel as a Representative of the Council at the Third Summit of the World Think Tanks

On 28th – 30 September 2016, Ambassador Hussein Al-Kamel participated in the Third Summit of the World Think Tanks held in Montreal. The summit witnessed attending of about 100 heads of international think tanks from Canada, America, China, Japan, South Korea, Germany, Belgium, United Kingdom, Spain, Israel, India, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, France, Italy, Singapore, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Australia, Tunisia, Ukraine, Morocco, Kenya, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Zambia, Poland, Libya, Netherlands, Malaysia, Denmark, South Africa, Russia, Peru, Hong Kong, Guatemala and Egypt.

The discussions were under the theme "Globalization and the Role of the International Think Tanks". The effects of globalization and the reaction to the emergence of national strife, protectionist politics, the need to expand the use of technology and strategic means of communication to facilitate communication between decision-makers and the public were generally covered. The topics of migration and international economic relations were also discussed, as well as how think tanks maintain their role and the quality of their intellectual production.

On think tanks, Professor James McGann, the spiritual leader of the Global Think Tanks program, said that he and his program are working on a research initiative to build a foundation to bridge the gap between knowledge and politics, such as the quality of think tanks participating in the conference. Pointing out that this cooperation aims to establish regional and international networks to develop and support the process of decision-

making in the world.

In this context, Andrew Selee, Vice President of Wilson Center and Thomas Gomart and Vice President of the French (IFRI), spoke at the session that discussed the effects of globalization and the building of the gap between think tanks, policy makers and the public.

- Most think tanks did not anticipate or understand the issues that led the UK to vote and get the majority of secession from the EU.

- Think tanks, media and politicians have failed to predict that Donald Trump and Berni Sanders will emerge strongly in the US presidential election. Therefore, this poses a challenge to the systematic thinking and presents a threat to international institutions and citizenship. What is not clear is the reaction of think tanks towards this. There have been discussions about the clarity of visions of think tanks and their future expectations of the emergence of national and right-wing movements.

- For the use of information and communication technology, the discussions focused on the importance of think tanks to benefit from this development because, by taking advantage of the electronic climate, any think tank can have an opinion on any issue and produce useful research and studies.

- The issue of inequality in incomes in developed economies has been discussed more than in previous generations. Discussions on this issue were based on differences in views between the concept of income inequality - which is more pronounced in developing economies - when the differences between rich and poor are directed, and what determines the situation is the proportion of poverty in the country.

- In connection with the above, Ambassador Hussein Al-Kamel's intervention focused on the following:

- He stressed that the emergence of these past phenomena was the result of several developments in the international situation, the main cause of which was coups, chaos and a strong

overlapped foreign interests in Syria, Libya, Yemen and Iraq, which in turn produced the problem of refugees, followed by nationalistic tendencies against immigrants and the policy of protectionism in many countries where refugees have been displaced. The most important problems resulting from this, along with migration, are terrorism, poverty and economic crisis.

- He pointed out that the phenomenon has also emerged in Europe, as the countries like Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Switzerland witnessed rising voices of fanatic wings in the face of the existing regimes, and success of these right-wing parties and special fronts in France, Germany and England to attract popular sentiments even when not to rule until the present moment. He stressed that the emergence of these closed national trends is due to two main reasons: migration challenges, and European crisis.

- With regard to the Republican candidate "Trump", Ambassador explained that the reason for his unexpected appearance in the US elections not only the role played by think tanks and members of his campaign, but also because of the nature of his speeches and his rash character, which were seen as threats to his rival Hillary Clinton.

- As a basic rule, it is vital for any think tank to be linked to both the people and the decision-makers because they are the main elements of power for think tanks. Without this direction, think tanks will not be able to successfully influence both decision maker and public opinion.

- He pointed out that the topics and studies chosen by a think tank should be focused on the people and the decision-maker, and that they focus on two main areas: solutions to the existing problems or conflicts and performance improvement. Also, noting that if think tanks focused on the study of these aspects, they will be able to will push the public opinion to press on the decision maker to adopt these policies.

- In this context, he touched on the experience of the Eryp-

tian Council for Foreign Affairs in selecting its members from ambassadors, former ministers, media personalities, distinguished writers, university professors and thinkers, which made the decision makers and the public opinion good recipient for its activities and research production.

- He also stated that after the recent years of great leap in the field of information and communications technology, it is imperative that think tanks adopt this field to attract decision makers and the public. This is evidenced by the fact that, with the impact of this technological shift, many decision-makers do not prefer academic research and studies, but rather the direct essence of the subject using information technology, which is easily accessible to the reader.

- He also talked about the great transformation in this field in many countries in Africa, as reflected in the recommendations in both the 2014 Summit "Pertoria", the 2015 Summit "Addis Ababa" and 2016 "Zimbabwe," the establishment of an electronic information network of African Think Tanks, an information network for the media, as well as the training programs of the Egyptian Agency for Development in Africa, as well as the African Capacity Building Foundation in Zimbabwe.

- He stressed that the solution of refugees crisis lies in addressing the main cause of terrorism and of interests of the countries involved in the crisis, especially in Syria and Iraq. He stated that the region became a playground for the great powers. On the other hand, he said that one solution to the problem of refugees is to hold a conference under the auspices of the United Nations or the European Union, attended by different think tanks from the receiving countries of refugees and their motherlands.

- He pointed out that Egypt stands alone in the face of terrorism in Sinai and on its borders. He also referred to the Egyptian model of absorbing refugees to integrate them into society and enjoy the same services presented to its citizens.

- He also stressed the inadequacy of the military solution in the face of terrorism, but also the need to resort to economic, educational, religious and media solutions in countries suffering from terrorism.

- He criticized what is happening in Syria from the application of each state to its own agenda without the intention to achieve the peaceful solution to the crisis and, in this context, highlighted the stance of Egypt aiming to maintain the unity of the state of Syria and Libya.

- In conclusion, Ambassador Al-Kamel stressed the importance of promoting innovation and initiatives of think tanks through providing financial support, competition, capabilities of consulting and power of media.

Chapter V



Council's Statements

Date: 18th Febraury2016

ECFA's Homage to Mr. Mohamed Hassanein Heikal

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs pays its sincere condolences to the Egyptian and the Arab Nation for the departure of Mr. Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, the famous journalist, political thinker and the prominent decision maker in Egypt and the Arab world throughout more than 7 decades. Mr. Heikal's contributions are marked as a cornerstone in the history of political thought all over those decades. His intellectual heritage will be a reference for the coming generations and a key point of the history of this era.

Date: 18th Febraury 2016

ECFA's Homage to Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs presents its sincere condolences to the Egyptian people, the Arab nation, the peoples of Africa and the entire world for the loss of the great statesman, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, as a thinker, academician and statesman who crowned his political and intellectual career as the Secretary-General of the United Nations as the first Egyptian and Arab to assume this position. We are glorifying his contributions and prominent role in consolidating the values of freedom, justice, human rights and peace.

May God have mercy on the deceased and sanctify his spirit.

Date / 9th March 2016

ECFA's Homage, Paying Tribute to late Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali during the Ceremonial Service at the Diplomatic Club

It is the sad duty, on behalf of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) as well as my own behalf, to participate in paying tribute to late Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to express our deepest heartfelt condolences to his respectful widow, Mrs. Leah Boutros-Ghali, and to his respectable family and to his loved ones and students.

With the departure of Dr. Boutros-Ghali, Egypt has lost its one of its honest, well-known scholars, who had taught generations as a guru of professors. He had been an outstanding figure in many domains, be it culture, information, or diplomacy, at various levels: nationally and regionally, Pan-Arab and Pan-African, as well as internationally.

The deceased has been a Member at ECFA since 2002, whereby ECFA has benefited a great deal from his experience; in its lectures and meetings as well as its annual conferences, the most recent of which was the opening speech at ECFA Annual International Conference, held in January 2015, to celebrate ECFA's Fifteenth Anniversary, under the slogan "Egypt and the World .. a New Era".

I came to know Dr. Boutros-Ghali after graduating from Faculty of Law at Cairo University in 1956. I learned a lot from him in the School of Life, and our relationship was strengthened over the years until I moved to France to study for my Ph.D. Degree at

the Paris Institute of Political Science (INSTITUT SAINT GUILLAUME) in the beginnings of the 1960s, and later at the Hague Academy of International Law.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali was an old hand connoisseur diplomat, and was the only Arab to reach the top executive position (Secretary-General) of the UN for a five-year term. His steady supportive stance for the Question of Palestine and the rights of Palestinian refugees, together with his decision to publish the "Report on the Massacre at Qana", were the reasons behind US objection to him being mandatd for a second term in office as Secretary-General. Dr. Boutros-Ghali was, per se, an honest man and Secretary-General.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali was well-respected and highly regarded by all of those whom I communicated with, and who knew and dealt with him. He was also admired for his valuable contributions in the domains of International Law and Political Science. He enjoyed the same level of respect and degree of appreciation, as I sensed, from Professors, Scholars and Students at the Institute of High International Studies (L'Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales), in Geneva, as well as from the Members of the International Law Commission, the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Boutros-Ghali's personality was characterized by moral and ethical principles, supreme politeness, simplicity, and humbleness. He was sensitive to others' feelings, in particular the poor. It is very well known that he used to drive his small Volkswagen himself when he went to teach at Cairo University, although he owned a luxury car. He used to park his modest small car on a side street, away from the University's main gate, out of his extreme considerateness and sensitivity towards the feelings of students who are not so well-off.

I recall that after his appointment as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and acting Foreign Minister in late 1977, I received

him in the Ministry with the late Ambassador Osama Al-Baz, and I noticed that he was dedicated to carrying out his duty, working day and night, He bravely accompanied President Sadat in his visit to AL-QUDS 'Jerusalem', and our relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued over the years. Each and every time I was summoned to his office for attending interviews or participating in talks in the Ministry's premises at Tahrir Square, he used to accompany me to the door of his office at the end of every meeting.

Out of his keenness to maintain the institutional history and memory of Egyptian diplomacy, he was interested in recording all events, talks and meetings. He took the initiative and proactively supervised the writing and publication of white books that were issued by Foreign Ministry, starting with the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty. When my mission in Brussels was ended in 1982, he asked me to write a white book on "Egypt's Relations with the European Economic Community (EEC)", which Boutros-Ghali himself reviewed.

I participated in the delegation of Egypt, headed by Dr. Boutros-Ghali at the Summit of France and Africa in Casablanca in 1988, Chaired by late King Hassan II, and I was impressed by his personal relations with the Conference Chairman, His Majesty King Hassan II, President "Mitterrand" and many African Presidents, which has always been a constant support for Egyptian diplomacy and initiatives.

Under Egypt's Chairmanship of the Organization of African Unity in 1989, and before returning from Rabat, Dr. Boutros-Ghali asked me to be a roving ambassador to Africa in order to assist in settling African disputes through dialogue, mediation and conciliation. This way, I helped him in the peaceful resolution of African disputes, particularly those between Mauritania and Senegal, and between Libya and Chad, and in the Horn of Africa, in addition to the mediation between Zaire (Democrat-

ic Republic of the Congo) and Angola. During that period, his close ties with African leaders, had the greatest impact on the success of Egyptian diplomacy to settling those disputes by peaceful means, and strengthening Egypt's bilateral relations with various African States. It was his initiative to establish the Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation in Africa, which was later merged into the Egyptian Agency for Development in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali's mandate as the UN Secretary-General, was full of hard work, tireless activism and initiatives that had global impact. He began that mandate by setting the Peace Plan in June 1992, then the 1995 Development Plan, following the Resolution that decided to indefinitely extend the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). That Resolution was issued at the Review Conference of that Treaty in New York in the same year (1995). Among his contributions to the issues of Security and Disarmament, was his Statement to the Conference on Disarmament in 1995, in which he demanded called for the negotiation of a Nuclear Disarmament Treaty to save mankind from eradication, before the International Court of Justice issued its advisory opinion on the subject in July 1996. That statement angered the States possessing nuclear weapons, especially the United States and Britain.

In his capacity as the UN Secretary-General, Dr. Boutros was the dynamo behind convening global conferences of the 1990s, starting with the major UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the "Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit", the "Rio Summit", the "Rio Conference", and the "Earth Summit", held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (3-14 June 1992); the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, Austria (14-25 June 1993); the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)", held in Cairo, Egypt (5-13 September 1994); the "World Summit on Social Development", held in Copenhagen, Denmark (March 1995); the Fourth World Confer-

ence on Women, Beijing, China (1995); and the Second UN Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II), held in Istanbul, Turkey (3-14 June 1996) after his mandate was expired. All of those conferences and their outcomes were the building blocks for the 2000 Millennium Summit. History will also remember Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his remarkable contributions to the within the “La Francophonie” International Organization as well as in the domain of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and global levels.

After my service with the Egyptian diplomacy was ended, Dr. Boutros-Ghali advised me not to stop working in any field to serve the homeland, as long as my health allows me. Our personal relationship continued, with consultations on issues like reforming the UN, oversight and accountability processes at the UN and its specialized agencies, as well as within the framework of peace-making, peace-building and peacekeeping operations.

Dr. Boutros-Ghali is truly a role model, and I call upon youth in general and young diplomats in particular, who did not have the opportunity to know him, to get to know him and to follow him as a role model. He left a great legacy of intellectual, cultural and civilizational heritage in the fields of law, politics, journalism and media.

Both personally and on behalf of the ECFA, I pray to Allah, for our dear deceased Dr. Boutros-Ghali, asking God to forgive him, surround his soul with His generous hospitality, for the great services he delivered to humanity and to our dear Homeland, Egypt, and to grant his longtime companion and widow, Leah, his Kindred, lovers, students and followers with patience.

Date: 13th March 2016

ECFA Congratulates Mr. Ahmed Abou El-Gheit on his Election as Secretary-General of the League of Arab States

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs has the honor to convey sincere congratulations to Mr. Ahmed Abou El-Gheit, the former Foreign Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on his election as Secretary-General of the League of Arab States as of July 2016. ECFA wishes Abou El-Gheit every success in his new duties.

The Council looks forward to continue to cooperate with the League of Arab States under the tenure of Mr. Ahmed Abou El-Gheit in the coming years to serve the common goals of both the Arab League and ECFA.

As ECFA also takes this opportunity to express to Dr. Nabil El-araby, the current Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and whose term will expire at the end of June 2016, its sincere thanks and appreciation for his achievements during his tenure and for his sincere efforts in steering the Arab League and the joint Arab action at a critical phase and amid hard circumstances. The Egyptian Council wishes him success, health and happiness ever after the end of his term.

Date: 19th March 2016

Ambassador Abdel Raouf El-Reedy Pays Homage to Ambassador Waheeb El-Meniawy

Dear brothers and sisters, members of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs,

We have lost a unique man who joined us in the establishment of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs seventeen years ago. It earned him our love and respect, and he was constantly a model of noble manners and unqualified sacrifice by which the Council achieved much and grew to occupy a high place in civil society.

I am writing to you on Friday, 18th March 2016. Yesterday afternoon Waheeb called me. My heart leapt in joy when his name appeared on the screen and when he told me that he was getting better and came out of the Intensive Care Unit, where he had stayed for many weeks. I said praise be to Allah and may God keep you in His care and you join us again at the helm of ECFA which misses you so much and recalls how it elected you unanimously.

We were always happy to see you steering ECFA at its first Board meeting, which no one knew that it would be the last meeting you would attend as Board Chairman. Then you were rushed to El-Salam Hospital to remain there until you departed our world, leaving behind numerous colleagues who love you so much and you loved them. Here, they are today mourning you and always remembering your picture with your smile which never left your face.

I kept to myself all day yesterday. I did not go out except for

Friday prayer and return to my sorrows for the loss of a dear friend whose friendship was among the best things our dear ECFA presented to me since its inception in the closing years of the last century. Whenever, I mentioned your name to anyone, I would see a broad smile fill his face, and words of praise flow welcoming you as Board Chairman.

Your diplomatic talent was matchless and your noble manners and wisdom are unrivaled. Today, I invite you colleagues to work together to achieve what this beloved man hoped to realize, to see our Council at the highest level and give our country the fruit of its experience and wisdom for a brighter and a greater future.

Goodbye dear brother, good friend and noble colleague. As for you, dear colleagues and fellow ECFA members, we pledge to continue to work in order to raise ECFA to what our dear departed hoped and worked for.

Date:27th March2016

ECFA's Statement in Response to the Letter dated on 23 March 2016 Addressed to President Obama by the American Working Group on Egypt

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs ECFA is deeply concerned with the American working group's letter on Egypt to the President of the United States, calling for the U.S. government to halt assistance to Egypt as a retaliation to unfounded human rights violations.

It is a fact that sovereign nations have the full right to regulate the foreign political activities and foreign funding of those activities within their borders. The false allegations and misinformation presented in the said letter only serve to hurt the strategic U.S-Egyptian relationship at a critical time while the cooperation between the two countries is crucial, in order to face the tremendous challenges threatening the entire Middle East and North African region, including Egypt's search for a comprehensive peace in the region and confronting all forms of terrorism which is a serious violation of all human rights, especially the right to life.

Egypt has undergone deep fundamental transformations during the last five years towards building a more open and democratic society, based on the respect for the rule of law. In the new democratic Egypt, no one is above the law, no one is exempted from judicial investigations in case it is required in conformity with the applicable law. President El-Sisi has reiterated numerous times that he will not allow the executive branch to interfere in the judicial proceedings and emphasized the importance of

respecting the decisions of the judiciary.

Thus, a fair judicial process shall be the only way to determine the faith of individuals and organizations referred to in the "Working Group on Egypt" letter. Egyptians will not allow any country, including the United States, or a group of individuals to pressure Egypt's judiciary to terminate or reshape the outcomes of ongoing investigations. As the oldest civilization in the world, with thousands of years of rich history and culture, Egypt is confident that its people will develop a vibrant and flourishing democratic society. Many positive steps have already been taken, such as adopting the most progressive constitution in the Middle East, which enshrines the protection and promotion of human rights, freedom of association, and the role of civil society organizations.

Today, Egyptians have also elected their president and representatives in the newly elected parliament freely and fairly. The political democratic trajectory of Egypt, in the context of the ongoing regional upheaval, must be praised and supported in order to advance a more stable regional order.

As for civil society organizations in Egypt, there are more than 47 thousands, the greatest majority of which abide by the Egyptian applicable laws. A small minority of them fails to inform the competent Egyptian authorities either with the foreign funding it receives or the domestic social activities it finances or plans to do so.

Against this background, it is a legitimate issue to enquire about who mandated the "Working Group on Egypt" to examine the human rights situation in Egypt? By the same token, is this to be considered as a precedent that invites the civil society organizations in other countries, including the Egyptian civil society, to interfere in the domestic affairs of the United States including questioning its judicial system, together with the examination of the human rights situation in America, taking into consideration the US regular records presented to the United Nations Council

on Human Rights in Geneva?

In the light of the above, the "Working Group on Egypt" should immediately discontinue all of its covert and overt efforts of interference in the Egyptian judicial system, as it seeks to serve a set of narrow self-centered interests and extra-national objectives. The "Working Group on Egypt" should therefore refrain from spreading the ongoing false allegations and information about Egypt and stop undermining the strategic bilateral Egypt-U.S relations.

Date: 24th April 2016

ECFA's Statement Concerning Statement of the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the Golan Heights

Reference to the recent dangerous statements launched by the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that the Golan Heights will always remain in Israel's hands, and Israel will never withdraw from the Golan Heights. Netanyahu called, during his speech on 17 April 2016, the Israeli government to hold its weekly meetings in Golan Heights.

Hence, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs reaffirms that such escalating and provoking statements is violating the principles of the International law, the UN resolutions and the League of Arab States' decisions. These irresponsible statements also hinder any peaceful efforts to reach a settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In that Context, ECFA assures its absolute support for the right of the Arab Republic of Syria in restoring its occupied Golan Heights to the fourth of June 1967 line, based on the foundations of the peace process and the Arab peace initiative and legitimate international resolutions.

ECFA confirms its full support for the collective decision No. 8041 issued by the Council of the League of Arab States at the level of permanent delegates in an extraordinary session about the Golan on 21 April 2016 that demands the international community represented in the UN Security Council to take the necessary measures to force Israel to take its full commitment of implementing the UN General Assembly and UN Security Coun-

cil relevant resolutions. ECFA supports, in particular, resolution No. 497/1981 which rejects the imposition of Israeli laws in the Golan Heights and considers them null and void, in addition to the resolutions of the UN Council for Human Rights issued in this regard. ECFA also calls Israel to implement the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to the citizens of the occupied Golan Heights.

Date: 18th May 2016

ECFA Welcomes the Vision of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi about Solving the Palestinian Issue

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs welcomes the initiative of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, which was launched during his visit to as suit Governate on 17th May 2016, in which he demanded the Palestinian brothers to be united and avoid disputes. President El-Sisi called the Israeli leadership and the Israeli public Opinion to understand the importance of reaching a consensus on the peace process, stressing that Egypt is ready to provide all possible assistance to find a real opportunity to resolve the Palestinian issue.

ECFA confirms its support for the vision of President El-Sisi that despite the circumstances in the region, there is a real opportunity to achieve peace, and Egypt is ready in this context to make all necessary efforts to ensure the success of initiatives launched to resolve this issue.

ECFA appreciates that Mr. President's remarks reflect the historic and pivotal role of Egypt in finding a comprehensive and just settlement of the Palestinian question on the basis of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with its capital in East Jerusalem. Egypt stresses that the solution to this issue will be a crucial factor in returning the stability and security in the region. This was the objective residing behind the decision of Egypt's historic peace agreement with Israel.

Date: 27th July 2016

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs Supports the Nomination of Ambassador Dr. Moushira Khattab for the Position of the Director-General of UNESCO

The Board of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs has decided to support the nomination of Ambassador Dr. Moushira Khattab, member of the Board, for the position of UNESCO Director-General, stressing on her autobiography and experience in international organizations and her excellent administrative capabilities as a former Minister for Family and Population.

We would like to confirm Ambassador Khattab's African, Arab and Mediterranean affiliations, which positioned her to such a high position of UNESCO, as confirmed officially by the speech of the Egyptian Prime Minister Sherif Ismail on 19 July 2016.

Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, the Chairman of the Board of ECFA, stated that the Council is determined to support Dr. Moushira's nomination in all events and forums that the council would participate in.

Date: 25th September 2016

ECFA's Statement on President El-Sisi Participation at the 71st Session at the UN General Assembly

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs expresses its full appreciation for active participation and intensive efforts made by the President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi during his participation in 71st session of the UN General Assembly on the one hand, and the intensive activities on the sidelines on the other one, which included meetings with a number of world leaders, senior officials and the Democratic and the Republican candidates for the US presidency.

The President's speech before the UNGA was an appropriate occasion to stress on a number of key points related to confronting the challenges that Egypt is facing internally and externally, in addition to reviewing its vision for the region's issues and challenges.

Mr. President was very keen to inform the world leaders about the political, economic and social developments in Egypt since the revolution of 30th June 2013 and the challenges it faces and its efforts to confront them, particularly, with regard to the program of economic reform and the role of Egypt in implementing the sustainable development goals for 2030. He was keen to present the major national projects implemented by the state in order to attract foreign investments and contribute to fighting terrorism.

ECFA stresses that the participation of President El-Sisi and the meetings are going to contribute to further strengthening the role of Egypt and consolidating its position as a leader in the re-

gion and the world arena. The participation confirmed the Egyptian determination to move forward to restore its historic role in establishing peace and security at the regional and international levels.

Date: 23rd October 2016

ECFA Condemns the Recent Terrorist Attacks in Sinai

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs has followed with great interest the recent terrorist attacks in Sinai, in which the Armed Forces and the Egyptian police took the responsibility to confront the terrorists manfully. There is no doubt that these terrorist attacks are targeting the security of Egypt, particularly in Sinai.

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs condemns these terrorist acts, which are targeting state's institutions, the armed forces and the police. ECFA confirms its complete rejection of all forms of support for such terrorist groups, including either financial support or protecting them. ECFA expresses its sincere condolences to the armed forces, police and to all families of the fallen martyrs in such coward events, stressing its confidence that these coward acts will not deter citizens from sacrificing their lives for the security, stability and prosperity of their country.

ECFA reaffirms its standing behind the Egyptian government in its fight against terrorism which seeks to undermine the foundations of the democratic and constitutional bases of the government. ECFA confirms its full solidarity with the government, the armed forces and the police to counter all forms of terrorism.

Date: 3rd November 2016

ECFA's Statement on the American Act of Justice against the Sponsors of Terrorism (JASTA)

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) followed with a great concern the legal and political implications of the U.S. Act (Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism "JASTA") which was vetoed by President Obama on 23rd September 2016. However, the United States' Congress has over – ruled the veto on 28 September 2016 with an overwhelming majority. As a result, JASTA entered into force in the territory of the United States and beyond.

ECFA considers that the enactment of JASTA beyond the U.S. territory would lead to various legal implications, especially to the following:

- JASTA violates the principles of the Charter of the United Nations as stipulated in its Chapter I. It contradicts the principles of the Public International Law with regard to the sovereign immunity of States. The sovereign equality of all States members of the United Nations is also enshrined in the UN principles according to the provisions of article 2 of the Charter.

- It is an unequivocal legal rule that national laws are enforceable only within the relevant State borders. Such laws are not applicable or enforceable beyond the national borders of each State. Hence, JASTA provisions violate the principle of the non – extra - territoriality of national laws.

- JASTA violates the widely accepted legal principle

of the non- retro - activity of national laws, with regard to acts committed prior to the date when the laws are issued. This rule is widely accepted in conformity with the 1969 Vienna Convention of the law of Treaties.

- JASTA raises the responsibility of the States regarding acts committed by its nationals of natural persons residing abroad, whether the residence is permanent or temporary. A problem will arise in case they receive instructions from their governments to commit illegal acts on the territories of other States in undercover operations.

- JASTA raises problems in relation to the application of the provisions of Private International Law, in case of multiple nationalities, conflict of applicable laws and conflict of the jurisdiction of courts belonging to several countries; the country of the original nationality and country of residence.

- JASTA would equally raise legal problems in relation to the activities committed by companies that operate in the territories of several States. This would also involve the responsibility of transnational corporations (TNCs), some of which have influence that goes beyond the authority of some States.

- Although JASTA does not specifically mention the government of Saudi Arabia, in relation to the September 11 tragedy, it may involve the responsibility of the Saudi government with regard to acts committed by its nationals, during the events of September 11 attacks, since 15 Saudi nationals have been accused in relation to these attacks. This may lead to the possibility of issuing verdicts and / or sanctions against Saudi government assets in the United States.

- In view of Egypt's historic commitment to the principles of the International law, as an important legal prerequisite in ensuring international peace and se-

curity, and since Egypt was among the founders of the United Nations, ECFA underscores the importance of Egypt's solidarity with Saudi Arabia and other States in rejecting JASTA on the basis of the above mentioned considerations.

• **For the reasons mentioned above, ECFA recommends the following:**

1. Rejecting JASTA and showing the need of solidarity with Saudi Arabia on the basis of the above mentioned legal considerations;

2. Provoking the issue in the United Nations General Assembly, in coordination with other States, to be considered in the Second Committee (Economic Affairs) and the Sixth Committee (Legal Affairs), with the view of adopting a resolution by the General Assembly condemning JASTA .That initiative requires an active diplomatic campaign with the States of the Non- Aligned Movement (NAM), G77 and China and other friendly countries;

3. In case of divergence of views, the General Assembly may be requested to adopt a resolution seeking an Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

4. Raising the issue in the Human Right Council in Geneva to adopt a resolution to condemn (JASTA) for the same reasons and requesting the U.S. to repeal the said law;

5. It is advisable that national parliaments should not adopt similar retaliatory laws to JASTA because in this case all arguments against the American Act will collapse and will be null and void.

Date: 11th December 2016

The Statement of the Council on the Terrorist Attack of the Botroseya Church in El- Abasseya, Cairo

On 11th December 2016, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs issued a statement condemning the horrible terrorist attack that happened on Egyptian citizens during their prayer on Sunday in the Botroseya Church in El- Abasseya, which resulted in 25 martyrs and more than 50 injured people. The Council expressed its deepest sorrow and grief to the Egyptian Citizens who suffered from this brutal attack.

The Council asserted that this brutal and terrorist incident was made by the enemies who are against Egypt and the Egyptians as a whole; Muslims and Christians. The Councils haws full solidarity with the victim's families of this cowardly aggression, begging God to fall his mercy upon the martyrs and their families.

Chapter VI



Council's publication

The Second Joint Conference between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the League of Arab States on “the Regional Security Implications of the Iranian Nuclear Agreement with the Group of (5 + 1)”⁽⁶⁾

In the context of the Council's keenness to include in its work agenda topics related to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in general, the second joint conference between the League of Arab States and the Arab Nuclear Forum – chaired by the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs – was held on 28th -29th February 2016 at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League on “the Regional Security Implications of the Iranian Nuclear Agreement with the Group of (5 + 1)”.

The points tackled in the conference and stated in the book issued are:

- Challenges confronting the Arab national security.
- Iran's nuclear agreement with a group of (5 + 1) and the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the follow-up of the implementation of the agreement.
- The security implications of the Iranian nuclear agreement with the group of 5 + 1 on the Arab national security, the security of the Arab Gulf countries and the chances of evacuating the Middle East region from nuclear weapons.

(6) Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.). Joint Conference between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the League of Arab States on “the Regional Security Implications of the Iranian Nuclear Agreement with the Group of (5 + 1)”. (Cairo: the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, 2016).

- The effects of the Iranian nuclear agreement on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in terms of nuclear safety and security, and the presentation of Arab models of peaceful nuclear programs, as well as an analysis of the content of the rights and obligations of the States parties to the Iranian nuclear agreement; its legal nature and its implications in relative to the non-proliferation system in the Middle East.

- The future of the Arab nuclear partnership and the Arab nuclear strategy until 2020, and preparations of the 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapon.

A Joint Workshop between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies on “An Egyptian Initiative for Regional Security and Cooperation”

Since the beginning of the Arab Spring revolutions, the Arab arena has witnessed rapid and successive changes; whether in the regional patterns of power and influence or the extent of regional and international interventions in the Arab affairs. From the concern devoted to these critical issues by the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, the latter participated with Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies to examine and study them variables in order to formulate an Arab vision and strategy to deal with these variables to preserve the privacy of the Arab environment and the Arab national security.

Accordingly, a joint workshop between the Council and Al-Ahram Center was held at the Council's headquarters on 31st May 2016 on "An Egyptian Initiative for Regional Security and Cooperation". It is worth noting that this was the first time the two sides are engaged in joint research cooperation.

• The main subjects of the book issued in this regard are:

- The importance and reasons of Egypt's adoption of this initiative at the current stage.
- How to lay new foundations for security and co-operation relations between the Arab States and their neighbors.

(7) Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.). A Joint Workshop on “An Egyptian Initiative for Regional Security and Cooperation”. (Cairo: The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, 2016).

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- The Middle East dimension in Egypt's foreign policy
 - The African dimension.
 - The Gulf dimension.
 - The Iranian dimension.
 - The Turkish dimension.
 - Issues of Energy and economy.

The Annual Conference of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on "The Egyptian Foreign Policy in light of the Regional and International Changes in the Middle East" (2016)⁽⁸⁾

As usual, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held its annual conference on 21st /22nd December 2016 at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club in Cairo to discuss one of the topics that intersects with the international political changes. The theme of 2016 Conference was on "The Egyptian Foreign Policy in light of the Regional and International Changes in the Middle East".

Subsequently, the Council issued a book containing the views and ideas presented by the research papers discussed. The book focused in its chapters on the following issues:

1. The transformations of the Arab regional system:

- The current Arab situations and the new patterns of power.
- The League of Arab States and challenges confronting it.

2. Egypt and the emerging regional roles, the focus was on three topics:

- The Iranian strategy towards the Arab region and the Egyptian interests.

(8) Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad (ed.). The Annual Conference of the Egyptian Council of Foreign Affairs on "Egyptian Foreign Policy in light of the Regional and International Changes in the Middle East". (Cairo: The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, 2016).

- The Turkish strategy towards the Arab region and the Egyptian interests.

- Israel, the region and the Egyptian interests.

3. Egypt and the major international roles:

- The American strategy towards the Arab region.

- The Russian strategy towards the Arab region.

- The European strategy in the Arab region.

4. The challenges confronting the Egyptian foreign policy:

- Change and continuity of the Egyptian foreign policy following the January 25th and June 30th revolutions.

- Analysis of the motives and orientations of the Egyptian foreign policy towards major Arab crises.

5. The prospects of the Egyptian foreign policy which focused on the alternatives available to Egypt to move through.

A Joint Seminar between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and Ambassadors of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on “The Economic and Investment Cooperation between Egypt and ASEAN countries”

As part of Egypt's keenness to diversify prospects of its foreign policy, including openness towards Asia, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs has been keen to strengthen this policy by organizing and hosting several events that serve this goal. In line with the above, ECFA has organized a joint seminar with Ambassadors of the ASEAN to address the economic and commercial relations between Egypt and the countries of the association.

The Council has formulated the outputs of the meeting in booklet which focused on the following topics:

- Opportunities and challenges facing trade and investment between Egypt and the Association.
- Investment frameworks and areas of future cooperation the two sides.
- Cultural dimension in Egypt's relations with the ASEAN countries.

(9) Dr. EzzatSaad (ed.), A joint seminar between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Ambassadors entitled “Economic and Investment Cooperation between Egypt and the ASEAN Countries”, Egyptian Council of Foreign Affairs (Cairo, 2016).

Publications

As part of the Council's continuous follow-up to the developments at the local, regional and international levels, members of the Council are presenting their intellectual contributions, reflections and analyses on these developments through several research papers. Throughout 2016, the papers issued were as the following:

- **The Nuclear Deal with Iran: Comprehensive Joint Action Plan (JCPOA) between Iran and the Group of (5 + 1)⁽¹⁰⁾:**

In the context of concern devoted by the research space and the media to the nuclear deal with Iran, signed on 14 July 2015, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad proposed a study about this issue. According to his point of view, the deal is considered a special one which has unique features differing from the treaty framework in which similar treaties are signed. On the one hand, this was the first time that the Security Council admits an enrichment program for a non-recognized nuclear State and endorses an agreement signed by several States within the framework of Security Council resolution No. 2231.

It was also the first time in the history of the United Nations that the State of Iran can rescind against the Security Council's resolutions without its implementation. Moreover, the document and its annexes (159 pages) are the most detailed and lengthy document of a multilateral treaty since the World War II. Throughout the history of the international law, this was the first and only time that a State that has been governed by chapter VII of the Charter to succeed in ending its case and get rid of its obligations under the provisions of this chapter through diplomacy.

(10) Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad. The Nuclear Deal with Iran: Comprehensive Joint Action Plan (JCPOA) between Iran and the Group of (5 + 1). (Cairo: The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, November 2016, Paper 23).

Due to UN denied consequences of the deal on the Middle East region in general, Amb. Saad's book came as a desire to monitor and find out the details of this deal and to discuss its effects and mechanisms on the Arab arena. The provisions of the book came as the following:

- The rights and obligations of the parties.
- The legal nature of the deal.
- Settlement of disputes arising from the execution of the deal.
- The goal of the final deal and its evaluation.
- Feedback on the deal and its implications.
- The issue of Iran's fundamental non-compliance with the provisions of the Agreement and its consequences.
- The impact of the deal on the declaration of the Middle East as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

• **The Scourge of Corruption and How to Eliminate It⁽¹¹⁾:**

This paper seeks to identify the dimensions of the phenomenon of corruption and how to diagnose it from a global perspective. The paper was delivered by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran in a seminar before the League of Arab States on 14 November 2016, and focused on the following axes:

- Background.
- The phenomenon of corruption globally.
- The International treaty position of anti-corruption conventions.
- The United Nations Convention against corruption.
- The related Arab Convention and its comparison with the United Nations Convention against Corruption.
- The situation in Egypt.
- Concluding recommendations.

(11) Amb. Dr. Mounir Zahran. The Scourge of Corruption and How to Eliminate It. (Cairo: The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, November 2016, Paper 24).

- **The Egyptian Foreign Policy and the International Law⁽¹²⁾:**

Due to the close link between the foreign policy of any state and the international law as the latter represents the framework and principles within which the foreign policy is formulated and defined, this paper began to trace the role of the international law in Egypt's foreign policy throughout various stations and phases in an attempt to show the impact and the extent to which the international law influences Egypt. Accordingly, the axes of this paper deals with the following:

- The first station: the partition of Palestine and the First Palestine War.
- The second station: Suez 1956 – 1957.
- Third station: the 1967 catastrophe.
- Fourth Station: The glorious October War 1973.
- Fifth station: Taba.

- **Egypt and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)⁽¹³⁾:**

In an attempt to satisfy the curiosity of the broad public opinion on the nature of the role of the International Monetary Fund, as well as to address questions about the reality of the political role exercised by the Fund over the States asking for loans in the stages of negotiation, which is known as “conditionality”, and in view of the significant role played by the Fund in the recent period, as a result of the challenges imposed by the post-revolution phase of the Arab countries, and the deteriorating economic situation of these countries, foremost among them Egypt, especially in light of the Egyptian request to receive loans from the IMF- this paper sought to deal with these conflicting questions in the light of the following elements:

- Introductory remarks on the Fund.
- The role, objectives and competences of the Fund.

(12) Amb. Abdel Raouf El-Reedy. The Egyptian Foreign Policy and the International Law. (Cairo: The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, November 2016, Paper 25).

(13) Amb. Dr. Mounir Zahran. Egypt and the International Monetary Fund. (Cairo: The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, November 2016, Paper 26).

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- The Financial resources of the Fund.
 - Decision-making in the Fund.
 - IMF's consultations with Egypt.

- **Reflections on the Lebanese Phenomenon and Its Regional Implications⁽¹⁴⁾:**

For three years, Lebanon has been suffering from a state of presidential vacuum and failure to choose the President for several times. There is no doubt that this issue has coined an exceptional phenomenon which revealed weaknesses in the Lebanese political system. Accordingly, a paper presented by Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Zayed is seeking to examine and study this phenomenon in order to identify the reasons and the motives that led to this crisis, and then its implications on the regional context, as well as the Arab regional system in general. These elements are reflected in the paper through the following titles:

- The sectarian structure in Lebanon and its role in the crisis.
- The political structure of the Lebanese society and the influential political forces there.
- The stages of political life development in Lebanon.
- Developments of the current Lebanese scene and the most important challenges facing the interior there.
- The stages of the Egyptian presence development on the Lebanese arena.

(14) Amb. Dr. Mohamed Badr El-Din Zayed. Reflections on the Lebanese Phenomenon and Its Regional Implications. (Cairo: The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, November 2016, Pper 27).

