



**Egyptian Council
For Foreign Affairs**

**Annual Report
2018**

Editor

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Egyptian Council for Foreign affairs

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ECFA Honorary Chairman Speech

As I sat down writing a preface on the achievements of our dear council for the year 2018, I found the picture of my friend and colleague, Ambassador/ Dr. Mohamed Shaker, who was my fellow during this council's establishment journey and course. In vain I attempted to just write a single line, but the picture of the late honorable colleague was wandering in my mind all the time.

Here, I ask your permission; that all what I do now is to record what I said on the evening of 19th April in that well-attended ceremony which was held in the Council in commemoration of the late honorable colleague.

The day before yesterday, I woke up at dawn time and I heard some words that I will now read out. Those words were imprisoned inside me like a sparrow in a cage, so I recorded them. Then, on April 18, 2018, I attended the important discussion that was conducted with Dr.Nabil Al-Araby; With the inspiration of those words and that discussion, **here do I speak:**

You did not pass away ...

Farewell, my lifelong friend

I lost you one day

And I shall miss you every day

I attended your crowded condolence ceremony

At the ancient mosque

Where giving condolences therein approved the departure ...

The Quran Reciter recites verses of the Holy Quran
Family and Friends come from Urban and Rural areas
Acknowledging, and speaking about the distinguished character and moralities of the late honorable colleague
Then they leave reminding each other that no one is eternal but
ALLAH

.....

I suggested in the Press that the best way to honor you is
A book about you and your preoccupation for half a century
With that issue which you had always spoken about
And on its matters and concerns
For which you had attended meetings east and west
And you travelled all over the world calling for and inviting to
But no matter what you said⁽¹⁾, it was always in vain

.....

Over a magnificent spot on a tiny mountain
In the Swiss village of Schönard
Since twenty years or more
Hosted by a common lifelong friend⁽²⁾ of our generation
Our agreement came out
So, we invited friends from two other successive generations
Then came others from various places
And we launched this council⁽³⁾
Where we meet today

(1)The issue of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

(2) Professor Georges Abi-Saab, one of the leading professors of international law in the world.

(3) The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs.

To speak about your virtues and the thoughts and actions you
provided us with
With an energetic and untiring determination
Let us resolve to keep and preserve this Council
And to never let it be despoiled by impasse or leave it as a prey
to inertia
But to let it be a field where thoughts are implanted
And grown
Where minds are stimulated to secrete their best
So as to be proud of, and look forward to it
And we recommit to work on its development
To drive it to new horizons and new depths
To remain a beacon over Nile
And “a flame that remains lit” to be received by generation
after generation
Where our cumulative experience becomes embodied in it
So that your departure won’t be a departure but a travel to new
horizons
To keep the traditions that we inherited and laid down
.....
Yesterday one of the leaders of our generation⁽⁴⁾ spoke here on
failure of The Collective Security System
In the past, Law won over the tripartite aggression
But recently the tripartite aggression won over Law
But perhaps, a glimmer of hope might still be there

(4) Ambassador/ Dr. Nabil Al-Araby.

No despair with life
As such spoke a great young leader⁽⁵⁾
Over hundred years ago
And his vision has been proved to be right
.....
We will continue working for a better world
A long road on which generations succeed each other
We will build a platform for Egypt “ Mother of the World” and
for our Continent, Africa
Over the Eternal River Nile in Aswan
That I have always visited for the remedy of the soul and the
body
All of that, we will do, with the help of ALLAH
And thus transforming sorrow into positive energy
Thus your departure, won't be a departure
But a travel
To new horizons and distant goals
Of perspicacity and beneficial dialogue
ALLAH wills, next generation shall
Remain committed
Keeping their promise
And we shall move with determination
And thus the flame is transferred from generation to generation
.....
Then you shall know, my friend, that you did not leave

(5) The Leader Mustafa Kamel.

Because the flame will remain glowing
And you shall stay and remain in us
We know that death is a fact
But you will remain with us
And we shall publish that book about you
And we shall build that ideological platform in Aswan
And we shall have our own roundup magazine
And we shall keep and preserve the traditions that we inherited
and established
The research unit shall be transformed into a research estab-
lishment
And we shall continue working
So that the Force of Law becomes superior
Over the Law of Force
And we shall continue working for the sake of our beloved
Country
And its national security
For the benefit of our good, patient, and gallant People
And thus your departure shall not be a departure but a travel

Along with the previous speech I mentioned Five points for the attention of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA):

1- Publication of a book on the late honorable colleague with the title of “ Mohammed Shaker and the Question of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation”

-
- 2- Establishment of Aswan Forum
 - 3- Issuance of a quarterly magazine that would be modeled on the “Foreign Affairs” magazine.
 - 4- To include the collective security issue on the agenda of The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA).
 - 5- The work of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) to be assessed after 20 years of its establishment (2019).

**Honorary Chairman of the Council
Ambassador Abdel Raouf El Reedy**

ECFA Chairman Speech

It is my honor to congratulate the Egyptian Council For Foreign Affairs (ECFA) and its members on the occasion of the publication of the 2018 annual book, which includes the most important conferences, activities, symposia, and workshops that were organized inside and outside the council, or in participation with similar entities about international policy topics of priority and concern at regional and national levels during 2018.

The book includes a brief on meetings and visits conducted by some of the council members to other states for consultation with similar councils about global and regional topics of mutual concern, and within the framework of enhancing relations with such councils, and enhancement of bilateral relations between states. As well as representing the council in international and regional meetings on important fields. The book also includes a study of the problems of concern to the public opinion in Egypt, as well as in the Arab, African, and Islamic Worlds; which includes combating terrorism and corruption, and recommendations on issues of priority to the Egyptian People.

The activity of the council, during 2018, was characterized by continuous activity within the framework of the Arab Nuclear Forum after its presidency has been transferred to the Arab Institute for Security Studies in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for two years starting by the end of 2016.

This book is considered to be a key reference to all council activities during 2018, and complementary to all publications issued by the council, especially the quarterly publication covering council activities that include conferences, symposia, workshops, visits, meetings, and participations by council members in international, regional, and local Egyptian meetings, as well as press and media statements published by the council on some occasions.

I seize this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts made by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, in overseeing the preparation of this annual book and his continuous consultation with me and with the Board of the Egyptian Council For Foreign Affairs (ECFA) on all council activities and its pre-planning. Thus, this annual book is considered to be a scientific and academic reference that would be sought by researchers and those interested in the activities of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) and Egyptian foreign policy issues.

May Allah Guide Us to Success

**Chairman of the council
Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran**

Editor's Speech

This is the third publication of the council's annual report (2018), which is the year that has witnessed various and intense activities over the year. This year has also witnessed a great loss for the council by the death of the late Ambassador Mohamed Shaker, who was one of the prominent leaders of Egyptian diplomacy, one of the founders of the council, and one of the eminent personalities that have committed themselves to emphasizing the importance of nuclear disarmaments and creating a safe world free of weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

Regional security issues have received the council's special attention during the year covered by that report, for example: a round table on Syrian issues developments, a second one on future of the peace process in the Middle East in the light of President Trump's announced the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a third one on reflections of US withdrawal from the "Iranian Nuclear Deal", and a fourth round table on security in the Red Sea region and in the Horn of Africa. The council has selected the topic of "Egypt and the Arabs in a changing Middle East," for its 2018 annual conference, that tackled the role of major powers (US, Russia, China, and the EU), the role of regional powers (Iran, Turkey, and Israel), the role of Arab States, and the topic of "Egypt and regional Issues". The council's attention was also drawn to deliberating and researching some regional and international issues

of special significance from the perspective of Egyptian national interests, for example: developments of situations in Ethiopia after Abiy Ahmed became prime minister, the current situations in the Korean peninsula, a symposium on “Turkey at crossroads,” and the implications of the Senate and House of Representatives mid-term elections.

Domestic situations also received the council’s attention, as usual every year, for example: a symposium on “Ideas for advancement of Egyptian soft power,” a second one on “Empowerment of Egyptian women as a soft power in conjunction with the National Council for Women, and a third symposium on “The Egyptians’ revolution between economics, politics, and the path of development”.

The council received, during 2018, a number of senior officials, foreign ambassadors, and some of major powers’ envoys to the Middle East, including Mr.Amr Moussa; Mr.Nabil Fahmy; Mr.Ahmed Abul-Ghait; Dr.Nasser Al-Kidwa, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Yasser Arafat Foundation; Ambassadors of France, Switzerland, Japan, Argentina, and the Special Envoy of the Chinese Government on the Syrian peace process issue; Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic studies in Ramallah; the Ambassador for China-Arab States Cooperation, and others.

The members of the council ladies and gentlemen who were participated, this year, in many internal and external events, including special events on Nuclear Security, Non-Proliferation,

Disarmament, Global Governance, Egypt and the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as some UN activities in the international law field, and others.

Moreover, the council paid only one external visit, namely, its visit to China from May 7- 11, 2018.

We hope that this publication fulfills its objective and serves as a true reflection of the Council's efforts throughout the year covered by this report.

Director of the Council
Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad

Chapter I



Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

A Panel Discussion on “The Role and Importance of Think Tanks in Light of Current Global Changes“

At the invitation of Professor James McGann, Professor at the University of Pennsylvania and director of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP), the Council called for convening a panel discussion on think tanks and their role in light of current global changes, on January 30, 2018. More than a hundred similar panel discussions were convened in many cities of the world, at the same time of convening this panel discussion; they derived their themes from the title «Why Think Tanks Matter?..» Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran chaired this panel discussion in which many council members have participated.

Firstly: The most important interventions of the participants were as follows:

-Ambassador Hussein Al-Kamel:

∑ He is participating in this round table as part of the so-called International Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) initiative for the creation of the global networks of think tanks since 2017; that has been developed and is being followed by Dr. James G McGann, professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and his team. He added that he has participated in the conferences of that network for many years, both at the international and African levels, by virtue of the affiliation of Egypt to Africa and

the Mediterranean Region at the regional level, in addition to the council's relations with Arab think tanks. Accordingly, the Ambassador Al-Kamel indicated that he would focus on the situations of think tanks in both Africa and the Mediterranean basin, to arrive at suggestions for developing their role among decision makers.

Firstly: African think tanks:

Egypt took the initiative to establish the first think tank (along with Namibia); that was Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies (ACPSS) in 1960. A study of the TTCSP program clearly showed that states having the largest number of centers were: South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Zimbabwe, Ghana and Senegal, while states having the least number of centers were: Guinea-Bissau, Sudan, Mauritania, Gabon and Sierra Leone.

In spite of the excellence of some African think centers, whether in the research field, conferences, or communication with decision makers, in fact most of them suffer from several challenges, of which the most important are:

- Shortage of financial resources.
- Low professional and technical quality of human resources.
- Bureaucracy.
- Having difficulty communicating with decision-makers and influencing them; the inability of think tanks to inter-communicate.
- Not taking advantage of knowledge society and future studies.

In order to enhance these African think tanks, it is necessary to

seriously consider taking advantage of the following:

- Relying on researches, independent and security recommendations without political or governmental pressure.
- Human resource development through training and practice.
- Communicating with national, regional and international think tanks to exchange experience and joint activity.
- Bridging the gap between the North and the South of the continent.
- Focusing on research and recommendations related to national interests associated with international changes and challenges.
- Encouraging membership of former decision-makers in think tanks for supporting communication with decision-makers.
- Encouraging youth membership and activity, in order to build a future generation.
- Self-contribution to financial resources while taking advantage of international donor support.

Through African think tanks conferences, Ambassador Hussein El Kamel concluded the following:

- Establishing an information network for African think tanks that was recently accomplished and is based in Harare, and is open to participation without restrictions.
- Establishing the African Media Information Network.
- To develop training and capacity building programs such as the establishment of the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development (EAPD) and the African Capacity Building Foundation

(ACBF) in Zimbabwe.

- To finally arrive at establishing an international think tanks assembly that shall include world think tanks.

Secondly: The think tanks in the Mediterranean basin:

There are few in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Region, some of them may be active in Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt. In a study carried out by the University of Pennsylvania, the number of Egyptian think tanks was estimated at 55. This number needs to be statistically reviewed; on the other hand, think tanks in the Northern Mediterranean Region are the most active and effective, especially in Italy and Spain.

Thirdly: The challenges facing Africa:

In spite of all the indicators and natural resources possessed by the continent and that have been highlighted by numerous studies, plans and programs, of which the most important was the 2063 development plan prepared by the AU, and that has been recommended by the Union to be included in the national programs of member states; Africa is the poorest continent. For Africa to achieve the 2063 program goals, it must face a number of challenges, such as: tribal conflicts, terrorism and extremism, border disputes, human rights violations and democratization, water resource conflict; modern education and science and technology; poverty, epidemics, corruption, and national industrial and agricultural development plans.

A Closed Round Table on the Developments in Syria in connection with the Turkish military operation in the Afrin region and its repercussions on “the overall situation in the country”

On 7th of February 2018, the Council organized a closed round table entitled “Developments in Syria in connection with the Turkish military operation in the Afrin region and its repercussions on the overall situation in the country”, in the presence of Ambassadors Dr. Mohamed El Badry, assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs, Dr. MounirZahran Chair of the Council, Dr. EzzatSaad Executive Director, and a number of board members. The following were emphasized:

- The Russian intervention played a major role in changing the situation on the ground after exhausting the Syrian army in the battle of Damascus in February 2012, to take care of Russian interests on the one hand and to ease international pressure on them because of the Ukrainian crisis; and that the meetings of Astana contributed to the creation of safe areas, but the Sochi Conference wanted the West to appear as a culmination of international efforts, and only once to appear not as an alternative to Geneva, and the document issued by Washington on the Syrian crisis prepared by (America, France, Britain, Saudi Arabia and Jordan) is a clear violation of UN Resolution 2254, which affirms that the constitution is being drafted by the Syrians themselves, and the paper states that it lacks executive mechanisms.

- The United States historically did not oppose the idea of a Kurdish state and the dispute was on timing, and despite the reliance on the element of Turkey in its presence in Syria, but that does not mean a confrontation with Turkey, in light of the rise of the US military and its impact more on decision-making amid the weakness of the US State Department and the intelligence service for internal American reasons.

- He explained that the decision to freeze Syria's membership in the Arab League is contrary to Article VIII of the University Charter, which is a serious mistake, but the expulsion of Syria from the Arab League was made when the role of Qatar in 2012 strong and effective. It is necessary to think about how and when to restore Syria to its seat in the University Council. It is necessary to rethink how to conduct a dialogue with Tehran, to stop adopting the American and Israeli views on this matter and to alleviate the current pressures and escalation. The Gulf states will be concerned about the importance of that issue and the crisis in Syria will only move with Arab action.

- Egypt should exert greater efforts and provide moral support to the Kurds in the current war, and defeat the Turkish operations in Afrin amidst international idleness and stay silent in the framework of Turkey's double strategy. Cairo should also adopt a strategy to work on Kurdish reintegration in the Arab region and the return of historical relations with the Kurds as it was in the era of Nasser.

- With regard to the Turkish intervention in the predominant-

ly Kurdish country of Afrin, Turkey's position is governed by historical sensitivities towards the Kurds, special economic interests and at least half of the oil fields in Syria are located in the Kurdish areas of Syria.

- Despite America's support for Kurds, it is keen on its relationship with Turkey for its strategic importance to America and to NATO in general.

Lecture on “The Origination and Development of Ancient Egyptian Civilization”

On February 11th 2018, the Council organized a lecture by Dr. Hazim Attiatalla, Member of the Board members on “The Gift of the Nile: The Origination and Development of Ancient Egyptian Civilization”, to highlight the ancient Egyptian civilization as one of the elements of soft power. It was attended by Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council and a number of experts and specialists members of the Council.

Following his review of the concept paper, he stressed on the following points in particular:

- Regarding the claims of the Jews’ contribution to the construction of the pyramids, he pointed out that these were mere lies that were constantly said from the Israeli side. He explained that given the ancient Egyptian thought at the time of the construction of the pyramids, which was expressed by one of the texts written in the terraces of “Memphis”, and refers to the organization of work in the construction of the pyramids and the division of work groups concerned with the construction, beginning of stone-throwing in the quarries of Tora or Mokattam, and the group that carries out the transfer, as well as the group involved in laying stones and construction of the Egyptians. It is mentioned that the

person who contributes in the construction process must not come to the role more than once, which indicates the rush of ancient Egyptians to build, and their desire to sacrifice their lives in order to accomplish this construction, noting that this poetic condition of the ancient Egyptian was closer to what is now circulating on who dies at building a church or a mosque, where he is martyred in the cause of God, stressing that all these allegations are mere fabrications and not unfounded.

- Concerning the question of the history of the dynasties, he pointed out that the first dynasty began in 2900 BC in the ancient era, where it took about 250 years, while the second dynasty took about 300 years, and therefore the total of the old age 450 to 500 years. The beginning of the third dynasty with the beginning of the era of the ancient state in 2654 BC, noting that the date between the first dynasty and the present age is 5000 years on the beginning of the ancient Egyptian civilization, noting that the passage of the current century to complete 5000 years of ancient civilization.

- He pointed out that migrations in the prehistoric era can be summed up in the high migrations that came from Asia and minor Asia, pointing out that the Semitic race settled in the East Delta and then in the entire delta, and on the relationship between the high sex and the Arab sex who were present in Asia and minor Asia, pointed out that it is an independent subject.

Round Table Discussion on “the Future of the Middle East Peace Process, in light of the Trump Declaration of Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel”

On the 1th of February 2018, the council held a panel discussion on the “Future of the Middle East Peace Process, in light of the Trump Declaration of Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel”, with the participation of the Chair of the Council and a number of its members.

The meeting dealt with the American administration’s policy towards the peace process, and President Trump’s talk about what he called the “deal of the century”, until his declaration of recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, which complicated the situation and increased the series of measures taken by the American administration to pressure the Palestinians to force them to negotiate, and the discussions reached the following points in particular:

- The need for Arab States to consider alternatives to the formula of peace talks of the past decades, in which the United States has played a pivotal role. Some have argued that US mediation is inevitable and that no other force will be able to fill this void. The United States is a mediator in the peace process between Israel and Egypt and Jordan, Rabin’s deposit with Syria in 1994-1995 before his assassination, and Olmert’s 2007 depository. Even the Madrid negotiations of 1991 were under the threat of the United States. So all these treaties and initiatives included America as a mediator.

-
- America can be amongst other parties in the mediation for peace.
 - Resort to the United Nations as the Palestinian issue has been dealt with in the scene and the issuance of dozens of resolutions, both from the Security Council or the General Assembly, and is expected to be resisted by the United States.
 - That the peace process in the region should also include occupied Syrian territory in the Golan and the Lebanese territories still under occupation in the Shab'a Farms and KafrShuba.
 - For the Quartet, it is proposed to be five-nation annexation of China to encourage it to engage in the peace process in light of its four-point initiative introduced last July. The foreign minister can brief the Chinese side on this matter before the idea is officially put forward.
 - The need for coordination and close cooperation with countries that have shown sympathy for the Palestinian position since the declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, because it is important to build on these positive indicators. There should also be an Arab delegation visiting these countries and affirming their appreciation to these countries and continued cooperation with them.

Seminar on “Ideas to Promote Egyptian Soft Power”

On 19th of February 2018, the Council organized a seminar on the promotion of Egyptian soft power, with the participation of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council and a number of members of the Council of experts and former ambassadors, including Minister Hisham Zazaoua, former Minister of Tourism and Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization for the Middle East and North Africa, Dr. Samir Ghareeb, Member of the Council and First Undersecretary of the former Ministry of Culture, Ms. Mona Zaki, Founder and President of Soft Power Production Corporation, Mr. Raouf Kamal, Member of the Council of Experts for Science and Technology, and Mr. Hassan Al-Mastakawy, and Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Anis Salem, member of ECFA.

The seminar took place in five sessions including:

- The role of culture and arts in promoting Egyptian soft power, the role of tourism in promoting Egyptian soft power, the role of science and technology in promoting Egyptian soft power, the role of youth and sport in promoting Egyptian soft power, the role of diplomacy in promoting soft power in Egypt. **The seminar concluded by stressing on:**
- Egypt has a great potential of soft power, which needs to be developed and invested in the interest of economic and social

development to serve the sectors of culture, media, science, arts, education, health, science and technology, tourism and promotion at the same time.

- The need to rationalize the means of social communication, especially as they fall within the parameters of soft power and need to rationalize and control the service of society in the framework of adherence to the rules of ethics and public order and respect for ideals and traditions and purification of the impurities of extremism.

- It is necessary to formulate a national strategy involving the institutions of the State concerned for the use of soft power, the optimal use of the objectives of economic and social development, and in particular the achievement of the 17 sustainable development goals by 2030.

- Building on the existing foundations for the promotion of soft power, including Al-Azhar and the Egyptian churches to evaluate the religious discourse in favour of building society on rational basis and respect for the rule of law and the fight against terrorism and extremist groups.

- The revival of specialized national councils and the implementation of studies and recommendations.

- Activate public diplomacy by deploying soft power.

- Modernization of cultural cooperation agreements, and the re-establishment of the Golden Age to the television.

- The need to develop a comprehensive strategy for all tools of soft power to develop, both in the areas of culture or arts and

Islam, tourism and human development and maximize the role of soft powers in the promotion of human development and modernization and reform of education and scientific research in Egypt from the stages of pre-education to university education.

- Periodic review of Egypt's foreign policy along the lines of other countries.
- The need to train diplomats at all levels and work on developing both approach and content.

Round Table Discussion on the Munich Security Conference(2018)

On March 12th of 2018, a round table discussion was held at the Council to discuss the results of the Munich Security Conference held on 12th of February 2018 in the presence of the Egyptian Foreign Minister and Ambassador Ahmed Salama, Assistant Foreign Minister for Security and Strategic Organizations. It was attended by Ambassador Dr.Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, Dr.Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council and a number of the Council's members .

He stressed that the most prominent at the Munich conference this year is the release of a report before the conference gave a perception of the situation in the world and security issues and hotspots and current actors on the international scene.

During his participation in a session on terrorism, the minister expressed his objection to the title of the session, "Jihadism, after the Caliphate" i.e. the state of the Caliphate, stressing that ISIS is not a succession state, and that what is happening is not a Jihad.

He also pointed to the Egyptian view of what it needs to face terrorism in a post-conflict phase, with the need to consider creating safe havens for terrorists, fighting sources of funding that are placed under the guise of charity, and the need to avoid duplication in dealing with terrorist groups. As well as the need for cooperation between these countries to develop a strategy to counter terrorism and put efforts at the internal level to stop the expansion of extremist thought.

Seminar on “the Challenges of the Globalization of the Red Sea”

Within the framework of the regional arrangements undertaken by some regional and international countries for re-positioning in the Red Sea region, by strengthening the military presence there in a manner that will have security implications for Arab countries including the Egyptian national security; The Council in cooperation with the Friends of League of Arab States, organized on 21st of March 2018 a seminar to discuss a paper presented by Ambassador Mohamed Anis Salem, member of the Council, on the “Arab States in the Globalization of the Red Sea”. It was attended by Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, and a number of members of the Council.

The paper included a presentation of the approaches that dealt with the importance of the historical background of the Red Sea and the geopolitical and economic dimensions. The countries of the Red Sea region were identified, the connection between the regional system of the Red Sea, the multiplicity of internal conflicts, failed regimes, regional conflicts, the liquidity of patterns of alliance and harmony, the review of new forms of international intervention, militarization of conflicts and the proliferation of military bases.

The paper also included a review of a comprehensive strategy to coordinate Arab efforts in the Red Sea, including elements comprising:

- To carry out an objective analysis of the current and future challenges in the Red Sea, with the introduction of multiple

scenarios that include, at the very least, the prospects of: Firstly the situation remains the same; Secondly, the deterioration of the situation significantly increases the severity of conflicts, increasing foreign intervention and increasing instability in the countries of the region; Thirdly, the improvement of security and economic conditions in the region, and Lastly, unexpected scenarios (called “black swan”).

- Identify the Arab interests that need protection in the theater of the Red Sea, and choose the best means and tools to achieve these goals, and limit the international parties that can be coordinated with in this direction, while identifying parties that have reservations or adopt targets that conflict with Arab interests (Some Arab parties joined the United States in opposing Djibouti’s intention to give Russia a military base).

- Revitalize the diplomatic processes that seek to resolve the multiple conflicts that interact in the Red Sea region and identify those that can be launched across the countries of the region and the concerned regional organizations with the aim of minimizing foreign intervention.

39th Arab Summit in Dammam 13th of April 2018
Issues of Palestine, Syria, Libya and Yemen At the upcoming
Arab summit

On April 11th 2018, the Council organized a panel discussion on the Arab Summit to be held in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, to discuss the most important issues on the agenda of the Summit and the outcome of the Summit, as the region is witnessing developments and conflicts on regional and international levels. With the participation of the Ambassadors, the Chairman of the Council, the Executive Director and a number of experts and specialists from the Council.

A number of files have been reviewed as follows:

With regard to the Palestinian file, Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim al-Duwairi, a member of the Council, said that the summit is required:

1. Focus on two main principles:
 - Rejection of any political projects on the table that undermine the rights of the Palestinians and the Arab constants or contradict any solutions to fundamental issues.
 - Returning to the negotiations, especially as the Palestinians and the Arabs are ready to enter into these negotiations with Israel in the coming period under the available references, which allows for the return of the partners to the Palestinian and Israeli partners

and to move the negotiations train amid the decline of Palestinian gains and the increase of its Israeli counterpart and the expansion of settlements.

2. The Summit reaffirms its commitment to the Arab Peace Initiative (Beirut 2002), as it is unchanged.

3. To adopt the Abu Mazen peace plan of 20 May 2017, a comprehensive peace plan that includes principles, determinants, flexibility and timelines.

Regarding the Syrian file, Ambassador Mohamed Anis Salem, member of the Council, noted the following:

The Saudi Crown Prince affirmed his coexistence with the changes by expressing his readiness to accept the Assad regime during a transitional period. Otherwise, he is subject to disagreement whether the election of a new president, and the problems of the Kurds in the north Syrian military intervention, as well as the problems faced by the Syrian army and all security forces.

The Western objectives are not clear in Syria, which is mapped during the military strike on Syria and the lack of clarity of its objectives, In April, 2017, the United States launched a strike that did not lead to Assad stepping down, and another similar strike in April 2018, whose purpose and duration are unclear. Is there any willingness to venture again?

UN Envoy DeMistura's work will not produce results, and he will only talk about humanitarian aspects and create safe corridors

amidst a faltering political process.

There is an attempt by some parties to drag the Arab region to the process of reconstruction of Syria, and talk that this could reduce the Iranian influence and can not put Iran's exit condition to recognize the current situation.

On the vision of the situation in Yemen, Ambassador Yousef Ahmed, former Egyptian Ambassador to Yemen:

Emphasize, that the political solution is the basis for resolving the Yemeni crisis, and speeding up in the face of the humanitarian disaster facing that country. Egypt's condemnation of the Al-Houthi group of launching ballistic missiles targeting several cities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including the capital Riyadh, cooperation between the coalition countries and the League of Arab States and the UN Special envoy on Yemen, and launching cease-fire initiatives.

Consider appointing an envoy of the League of Arab States to Yemen, within the framework of supporting and revitalizing the role of the League in the settlement of Arab crisis. Setting up a mechanism and timetable for the implementation of Security Council resolution 2216 on Yemen, forming committees to develop and implement confidence-building measures between the two sides, and other military and security forces to oversee the implementation of ceasefire agreements; and third to prepare for elections for new leadership and constitution; and stressing the establishment of a federal state for a period of time in accordance with the outputs

of the national dialogue and the hands of the Yemenis themselves. The negotiations and dialogues should be conducted in accordance with the basic terms of reference for resolving the Yemeni issue: the relevant UN resolutions, in particular resolution 2216, the Gulf initiative and the outputs of the Yemeni national dialogue. Emphasizing that the threat of navigation in Bab al-Mandab is a red line, and condemning the Houthi attacks on Saudi ships in the Red Sea.

On the Libyan file, Ambassador EzzatSaad, Director of the Council, said:

- The efforts of the UN Special Envoy for the Arab League, Salah al-deen Al-Jamali, to unify the Libyan parties and to develop ideas for reaching agreement on the amendment of the Sokhirat agreement. There is continuous coordination between the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and UN Special Envoy Ghassan Salama.

- There is coordination and joint action within the framework of the international quartet on Libya, which includes the Arab League, the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations. There is Arab involvement in the preparation of the upcoming Libyan National General Conference, which will be held on April 15th in the hope of finding solutions and mechanisms for national reconciliation and comprehensive unification of Libyan state institutions.

- Egypt is making efforts to unify the Libyan military estab-

lishment and restructure it.

- The Western approach focusing only on refugee issues, migration and other issues does not fall under this approach.
- Moscow plays a role in the current international moves on Libya and Egypt encourages this role, especially since Russia has a good working relationship with the Libyan national army.

Ambassador Sayed Abu Zaid spoke about the Iraqi file, pointing out the following point That Iraq, since the invasion, witnessed deteriorating conditions and even after the defeat of terrorism, and there are tensions on the internal arena related to the elections in light of the intensification of competition between the electoral lists, such as “Saerun” and “coalition Dawlat Alkanon,” which includes former Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and the alliance of victory and others ,the economic situation and inability to collect up to 15% of the donors conference in Kuwait, as well as the problems of the Kurds, and therefore it is the responsibility of the summit to discuss the situation of Arab national security, and deteriorating security conditions in the presence of factions to organize ISIS.

He concluded his intervention by calling for the importance of the Arab summit to emphasize the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq, especially since the state of chaos and instability is one of the dangers facing the Arab national state, condemning any foreign intervention, as well as mobilizing Arab efforts to address the Iraqi economic crisis; and the need to open an in-depth Arab dialogue

with the Arab countries to strengthen cooperation with the Iraqi state in the face of crises.

The work of the seminar concluded with an intervention of Ambassador Ezzat Saad on terrorism, stressing that:

That the Arab League has been making efforts for a while under the leadership of Egypt to develop an Arab system to combat terrorism. In this context, the decision of the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers was adopted (Resolution No. 8262 of March 7, 2018, 149th Session), which will be presented to the Summit for adoption.

Noting that, the problem of the Arab system in the field of combating terrorism lies in how to reconcile between the countries active in the fight against terrorism and extremism, and the coordination at the international level, especially since resolution 8262, which mentioned the international dimensions of combating terrorism and the state's obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions issued under the powers of the Council in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Tribute to the late Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Shaker

The meeting was held on Thursday 19th of April 2018 in cooperation with the Egyptian Pugwash Society. The session was a tribute to late Dr. Mohammed Shaker, a member of the Board and former Chairman of the Board and one of its founders, who passed away in the last hours of the evening of 28th of March 2018.

At the beginning, Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Board, presented the opening of the memorial ceremony, in which he discussed the distinguished biography of the deceased who was known for his competence and seriousness in performing his responsibilities as a brilliant Egyptian diplomat who is respected and appreciated by not only Egyptians but all Arab and foreign diplomats and politicians. It attests to the legacy of academic, scientific, diplomatic and humanitarian heritage of Dr. Shaker.

He said that he had an in-depth study of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). He participated in Egypt's delegation to the NPT negotiations in the 1960s, which is a major reference to the NPT and the nuclear nonproliferation regime, which was the subject of his PhD thesis from the Institute for Higher International Studies in Geneva.

Then the attendees were invited to stand up for a minute to mourn the late deceased's spirit and read the Fatihah, and then invite the audience to speak, Where many of them spoke about the friendly relations that they gathered with the late Dr. Shaker and

their memories with him and his generosity and cordiality with all, in addition to his respect and chastity and his keenness on the public interest at all national, regional and international levels. Among the personalities who spoke were:

Ambassador Dr. Abdel-Raouf El-Reedy, Dr. Mostafa El-Feki, Dr. Osama El-Ghazali Harb, Ambassador Dr. Amin Shalaby, Dr. Ali El-Din Hilal (former Minister of Youth and Sports), Ambassador Ahmed Haggag, Dr. Hazim Attiatalla, Dr. Hisham El-Sherif (Former Minister of Local Development), Dr. Anisa Hassouna, Dr. Heidi Ghoneim, Dr. Malak Faraji, Ambassador Mounir Faraj, Georg Stillfried (Ambassador of Austria in Cairo), representative of Magdi Yacoub Foundation, and many more ...

In his address to the Council, Ambassador Abdul Raouf Al-Rai-di presented a number of proposals for the Council's attention:

1. Publishing a book about the late "Mohammed Shaker and the issue of proliferation of nuclear weapons", so that some colleagues from the Council put the main elements dealt with in this book and personalities that can contribute to the knowledge and thought in writing, this book is not only an important work of the Council, but also In honor of the late Dr. Shaker and his well-known experience in the field of nuclear non-proliferation.
2. Aswan Forum
3. Quarterly magazine in the format of the 'Foreign Affairs' of the American Council on Foreign Relations.
4. Conducting an evaluation of the work of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs after twenty years of its establishment (2019).

Meeting of the Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs

On the 30th of April 2018, a meeting of the Permanent Committee for Arab Affairs, chaired by Ambassador Ehab Wahba, Coordinator of the Committee, was held at the Council's headquarters. It was attended by Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council and a number of members of the committee, to discuss the Arab summit and the situation in the Arab region as a whole, following the tripartite Western strike on Syria.

The meeting concluded with a number of results as follows:

- The need for more Egyptian-Saudi coordination on all issues of the region, and to stress that the source of the first threat to Arab national security is Israel, not Iran.
- To activate the Egyptian role on the Arab issues, and in order to do so, the meeting recommended the resumption of dialogue between Egypt and Iran and Turkey, where the two countries play significant roles in various files in the region, especially in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen.
- That Russia's strategic interests in Syria are a priority for the Russian presence there, and if President Putin received assurances from the West that Ukraine will not enter the European Union and will not join NATO, then Russia will have no interest in staying in the Middle East.
- The Arab regimes must move and turn to their brothers and talk to the Syrians, not just the idea of sending troops, as sug-

gested by the Armists, an idea that is not acceptable at the moment.

- The Western tripartite strike on Syria appeared to be marginal and has no value and no effect. The proof is that the three countries gave early warnings to all the countries there, whether Syria or Russia, and determined the places to be hit, and was not affected by the Russian or Iranian strike, or even the Syrians. It aimed at sending an American message to Russia that the arena will not be left to them and that any arrangements regarding Syria must be the United States in its heart.

Meeting of the Standing Committee for Economic Affairs

On Sunday the 6th of May 2018, a meeting of the Standing Committee for Economic Affairs, chaired by Dr. Faeka El- Refai, Coordinator of the Committee was held in ECFA's headquarters. Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council and Dr. Hafez Ibrahim, member of the Council participated in the meeting.

Where the meeting discussed the terms of reference of the Committee and the issues dealt with research and study, and then moved to discuss proposals of Dr. Ahmed Hafez, Board Member:

- 1) Egyptian Industrial Revolution.
- 2) Transforming the informal market into a formal market and enhancing the state revenues from service projects
- 3) Turn rice straw into paper
- 4) Rationalize the consumption of drinking water.
- 5) Linking postgraduate studies to the labor market, improving the performance of state companies and factories, raising the quality of education and rescuing troubled factories
- 6) Entrepreneurship and value chain - Egypt is an industrialized country.
- 7) Develop the health system and raise the quality of services provided, control the drug market and eliminate tax evasion.
- 8) Ionic precipitation of clouds and the provision of water deficit

9) System of real estate and financial inclusion and justice leap

On the third topic discussed, there are seven proposals submitted by Dr. Refai, “Coordinator of the Committee”:

- 1) Governance: its concept, standards, principles and relationship to diplomatic culture:
- 2) Energy, Sustainable Development and the Future of Energy in the Vision of Egypt 2030:
- 3) Climate changes: what preparations and the need for implementation throughout Egypt:
- 4) Local Government and Decentralization in Egypt.
- 5) The modern structure of the road system and its contribution to the development of investment in Egypt.
- 6) Environmental challenges and sustainable development and the role of the Ministry of Environment in Egypt.
- 7) Innovation and scientific research in the decisions of the Ministry of Industry:

At the end, it was agreed that the Economic Committee would meet twice a year, one in the second quarters and the other in the last quarter of the year, with the exception of any extraordinary meeting required, and the implementation of these activities before the end of 2018. These activities not implemented, will be included in the work plan of the 2019 Committee activities.

The implications of the US withdrawal from Iran's nuclear deal

On May 15th 2018, the Council held a closed panel discussion on the implications of the withdrawal of the United States from the Iranian nuclear deal on May 8th 2018, both on the process of nuclear non-proliferation and the regional situation in the Middle East. The discussion was held by the initiative of Ambassador Abdul Raouf Al-Raidi, Honorary Chairman of the Council, with the participation of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council and a number of ambassadors, experts and academics members of the Council. **The seminar concluded the following points:**

1) The decision to withdraw within the framework of the Trump management strategy and vision in how to control the current international situation, and consistent with the impact of a number of inputs, the most important impact of Israel and Saudi Arabia, and revolves this strategic vision on preventing the completion of the changes of the international system to prevent the rise of China and the Russian Federation of transformation To the international poles competing, and to redress what the exercise revealed defects of the Iranian nuclear agreement (only to limit the military nuclear option, without addressing Iran's missile capabilities and regional expansion of Iran), recognizing the performance of Trump of populism and transgressions and a challenge to International agree-

ments - which is explained in the extreme roots of Yemen.

2) In this context, it is useful to take into account not only the European reaction, but also the specificity and robustness of Sino-Russian coordination (which is at the top of strategic coordination in the Arctic and in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty).

3) The next challenge is the extent to which the European position is consistent in opposing, or not in line with, US policy, and so far most of the European reactions are moving towards expressing dissatisfaction with the US position. In the medium and long term, especially with the size and weight of the US economy.

4) Here the views differ between expectations of a gradual European decline and the continuation of the European position, which will be the beginning of profound shifts in the structure of transatlantic relations. In general, the European side will have to try to persuade China and Russia to renegotiate other areas of conflict with Iran (missile capabilities - regional expansion) so that they can withstand American pressure or justify a retreat from the agreement if Iran does not respond.

5) The Egyptian strategy faces a delicate and complex position to balance several considerations.

- Considerations of partnership and deep common interests between Egypt and the Gulf States.

- Egypt's consistent policy regarding the denuclearization of the region and other weapons of mass destruction.

- Egypt has reservations about the politics of Sunni-Shiite sectarian polarization and the complications it can cause in the region.

- Non-acceptance of Iranian expansion in the ‘Arab Mashreq’ and its opposition to Egyptian interests.

- The lack of relevance of Israel’s aggressive approach to this polarization in terms of Egyptian interests.

- In the assessment, all these considerations affect the Egyptian position of the crisis of the ‘Arab Mashreq’ and the Arabian Peninsula, as well as the issue of the Iranian nuclear agreement.

- There is an Egyptian interest to express more specifically these dimensions regarding the Iranian nuclear file and then to continue to open channels of communication with the Iranian side to follow the developments of the situation, many of which will depend on the European side.

6) On the other hand, the multiple dimensions mentioned in item 4 refer to the multiplicity of Egyptian decision-making inputs in relation to Iran and the Iranian nuclear file crisis, and there is a need for a calm Egyptian move to communicate between the parties and to remove or calm tensions and congestion, which requires consideration of changing the language of interaction with the Saudi and Gulf sides , which would allow the future to start a gradual and disciplined communication with the Iranian side through informal Egyptian channels, which will ultimately lead to two things: **The first** is to calm the sectarian tension that Israel is benefiting from and is not in the interest of the region, and **second**: to report and support the area of action and the Egyptian role regionally and internationally.

Round Table discussion on “ Developments of the situation in Ethiopia ... and the prospects for Egyptian Ethiopian relations after the inauguration of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed”

On the 4th of July 2018, a panel discussion was held at the headquarters of the council on “ Developments of the situation in Ethiopia ... and the prospects for Egyptian Ethiopian relations after the inauguration of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed” , with the participation of Their Excellencies Ambassadors Ezzat Saad Director of ECFA; Marwan Badr; Salah Halima; Ali Al-Hefny Members of ECFA; Dr.Amany Al-Taweel, Director of African Studies Unit at Al-Ahram Center for Political &Strategic Studies; and Ambassador Abdel-Hamid Nasser Mouhamed Hamzawy, Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for Nile Basin Countries Affairs.

The panel discussion aimed at conducting consultative discussions on the implications of what happened in Ethiopia since last March after resignation of the former Prime Minister Desalegn and election of Abiy Ahmed as Prime Minister, and the implications of this has over Ethiopia’s overall foreign policy, especially relations with neighboring regional countries and with Egypt in particular, in the light of the step taken by Ethiopia towards recognition of the verdict of the Arbitration Commission on the Ethiopian- Eritrean border dispute, and Ahmed’s tours in a number of Countries in the Region including Egypt, as well as the actions he took at the domestic level and his talks about a comprehensive economic reform process.

The participants agreed upon a number of points including:

1- The new Prime Minister adopted a conciliatory approach aiming at settling all key disputes between Ethiopia and the other parties, seeking a “ Zero Enemies” policy. He had paid official visits to all neighboring countries and to countries that are pivotal to Ethiopia where he visited Kenya, Djibouti, Uganda, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE. His tours to neighboring countries also included both of Somalia and Sudan. One of the axes of his strategic policies was to seek providing his landlocked Country with sea outlets. Under his reign, Ethiopia is planning to build a navy. All of which – in their entirety- are issues that have profound significance and clear indications in connection with Egyptian National Security in the Horn of Africa and in the Red Sea Regions which may contribute in enhancement of the relations between Egypt and Ethiopia within the framework of common interests and mutual security.

2- It is important for Egypt to coordinate with Saudi Arabia and UAE regarding its relations with the region as well as with Ethiopia particularly in light of the huge investments they have in the region, and Egypt should work for building its own mechanisms through intensifying direct investments of the Egyptian private sector in Ethiopia, and the possibility of considering establishment of partnerships between the private sector and the government in selected fields to serve the Egyptian strategic interests.

3- As regards the Renaissance Dam, the participants pointed out that during his visit to Egypt on the 12th and 13th of last June the Ethiopian prime Minister pledged not to effect on Egypt’s share

of the Nile waters, and he swore that he would strive to increase it. This statement represents, if adhered to, an implicit recognition of the 1959 Convention. This also differs from the previous statements made by his predecessors as he follows a more flexible policy in responding to Egypt's demands. This should be taken seriously for being a source of optimism in the possibility of détente in the Ethiopian attitude towards the Renaissance Dam.

Recommendations made by the participants included:

1- The significance of enhancing Egyptian-Ethiopian relations, and though the development of investment and economic relations has particular importance, adopting a comprehensive strategic vision for the development of political relations between both countries implies special significance.

2- It has been emphasized that any Egyptian strategy for the development of relations with Ethiopia necessitates the adoption of a wider strategy that includes the development of the relations with neighboring Countries in various fields, and that speaking about Egyptian-Ethiopian relations in absence of a clear Egyptian agenda in the Horn of Africa region would be a waste of time. And that the more our relations develop with East African Countries and with the Countries of the Horn of Africa to the best, is meaning more positive impact on the relations with the Ethiopians.

3- Adopting the idea of establishing an economic community that includes Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan and Eritrea. In this context, Ethiopia can be included in a system on security and cooperation in the red sea region.

Round table discussion on the Developments in the State of South Sudan and its Relations with Egypt

On the 11th of July 2018, the Council organized around table discussion on developments in The State of South Sudan and its relations with Egypt. Their Excellencies Ambassadors: Ezzat saad Director of ECFA; Marwan Badr; Salah Halima ECFA Members; and Minister Plenipotentiary Mouhamed Hegazy, Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for Sudanese Affairs, participated in this discussion.

- The discussion dealt with Egypt's Foreign policy towards the situations in The State of South Sudan which is based on the following principles:

- The need for cessation of all forms of violence by all parties.
- The significance of the 2015 Agreement that was signed in Addis Ababa for resolving the conflict in this country.
- Supporting President Salva Kiir's initiative to establish the National Dialogue.
- Coordinating regional efforts concerned with settling the conflict which includes "IJAD" , The African Union, and the other international efforts and endeavors.
- Achieving peace and stability in South Sudan need to support of State Institutions.
- Egypt ,shall coordinate with Uganda, to follow up the implementation of Cairo Declaration to unify the factions of The Sudan

People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) [which became a political party] in pursuance of The Arusha Agreement on the reunification of The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) [The National Dialogue Initiative, The Egyptian-Ugandan initiative, and the (IJAD) Initiative are three initiatives for the reunification of the factions].

- Egypt is keen to enhance political relations with the state of South Sudan. In this context, His Excellency The Foreign Minister visited Juba twice this year, the first one was on the 12th of last March and the second one was on the 3rd of last May for participating in the opening session of the SPLM National Liberation Council.

- Egypt strongly supported President Salva Kiir's initiative on the National Dialogue for restoring stability in The State of South Sudan.

The Participants agreed on that, Egypt's foreign policy strategy towards South Sudan shall include the following points in particular:

- Seeking openness to all mechanisms that aim to achieve stability in the State of South Sudan and others.

- Strengthening Egypt's bilateral relations with influential countries in the region, of which Uganda is a model in this respect.

Round Table Discussion on the “Iraq after the parliamentary Elections... between external pressures and internal data”

On the 12th of July 2018, The Council organized a closed panel discussion on the developments in Iraq after the Parliamentary Elections , under the theme “Iraq after the parliamentary Elections... between external pressures and internal data” with the participation of Ambassadors: Dr.Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council; Sayed Abu Zaid; Mohammed Badreldeen Zayed, members of the Council; Dr.Rajaei Fayed, Member of the Council and Director of The Egyptian center for Kurdish Studies; Dr.Gamal Abdel Gawad, Senior Advisor at Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies; a number of Iraqi Experts, Analysts, and politicians who are: Dr.Salah Nasrawy, Iraqi Political Writer and Analyst; Dr.Yassin Raouf Rasoul, Kurdish Iraqi; Dr.Mohammed Turkey Abu Kalal, Director of the Office of Mr.Ammar el Hakim in Cairo; Dr.Mohamed Arslan, Kurdish Journalist; and Dr.Abdel Rahman, Jaddoua Saad Al-Tamimi, The Iraqi Academic.

Participants agreed that the situation in Iraq showed the following points:

- The results of the elections have shown indicators related to the mood of the Iraqi electorate who is looking forwards to having new blood and Unfamiliar alliances in the Post-ISIS- stage, as well as the fragmentation of the political powers as none of them obtained the majority that allows for constitution of the Govern-

ment, and therefore this depended upon difficult negotiations and mutual concessions and this was regardless of questioning the election results by several coalitions.

- Recent Iraqi public objections have imposed itself over the negotiations for the constitution of the Government where the political powers have conducted a series of intensified contact for starting serious and different negotiations for constituting the new Government to reduce public anger and pressure as a result of the lack of essential services and corruption.

- The internal situation in Iraq suffers a state of liquidity for several reasons varying from the state of incoherence and the chronic problems related to political, economic and security situations, in addition to the political situation of the Kurds following the referendum over the separation and the issue of not reaching a solution or political settlement with the Iraqi Government. This is in addition being influenced by the external situations and the several interventions by the neighboring regional powers and the foreign powers.

- The Kurds must learn the lesson and the harms that followed the referendum process over the political practice by the Kurds and over the formation of alliances, and that is what have been reflected in the results they obtained in the elections. In fact, a political process must be launched to exit the state of chaos and for some of the political leaders to comprehend the result and the defeat, who despite the dictatorial system they faced, but they caused a lot of harms and risks to the Iraqi State and widespread

corruption, unemployment and terrorism. In spite of all, this they are insisting to hold onto the leadership of the country.

- What the Iraqi political process has reached to; indicates positive results represented in the break of Shiite alliances and the trend to form varying political alliances, this supports the view point of the Stream of wisdom that the minority shall take over the power and the opposition is to be formed by the majority.

- The results broke sectarian alliances and forced big leaders, who were the cause of the deterioration of political, economic and social crisis within the Iraqi State, out of the political process. In addition to refusal of current leaders to any agendas imposed from outside.

- The failure of these forces to formulate a national vision resulted in failing to determine the future of Iraq and in formulating a “Sumerian Iraq” combining East and West and becoming a bridge that links Iran “as a representative of the East” to the USA “as a representative of the West”, or will Iraq remain an area of conflicts and waging wars by proxy and the victims are the Iraqi people.

Joint Conference on “Egypt and Tajikistan in confrontation of Terrorist Organizations: Studying the case of Muslims Brotherhood Group and The Islamic *Renaissance Party* of Tajikistan”

The Egyptian Council For Foreign Affairs (ECFA) hosted joint Conference “Egypt and Tajikistan in confrontation of Terrorist Organizations: Studying the case of Muslims Brotherhood Group and The Islamic *Renaissance Party* of Tajikistan” on Wednesday the 1st of August 2018 . The conference was held with the participated of The Egyptian Council for foreign affairs, The Egyptian Media forum, The Egyptian Maritime Saloon and The Dialogue center for Political and Media Studies. The Conference was attended by a number of Egyptian and Foreign Intellectuals, Officials and academics, as well as the presence of a number of Media to cover the Conference.

The agenda of the Conference was subdivided into two sessions, the first which was an opening session was headed by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of The Egyptian Council for foreign affairs; Engineer Abdel Salam ElKhadrawy, Member of The Parliament and Director of The Dialogue Center for Political and Media studies; and Staff Major General Tarek Al-Mahdi, Director of The Egyptian Media Forum, who delivered the speech of the Forum and The Egyptian Maritime Saloon.

The second session, which was the main session, it had included

valuable and profound contributions from a number of academics and researchers concerned with terrorism and security. While the session was moderated by Dr. Mohammed Talaat, Assistant Editor in Chief of Al-Goumhouriya news Paper, the list of speakers included a number of participants interested in the subject of the Conference. And from the other side the Members of the Embassy of Tajikistan in Cairo attended the Conference and a number of Diplomats of the Central Asian states accredited to Cairo.

The Joint conference has ended with a concluding statement that included a number of important recommendations:

1- The emphasis on the role of all the political bringing up, and at their heads come the School and the Mosque to play their roles in collaboration and coordination with the rest of the Country's Institutes and State Organs in confronting the ideology of those Organizations and their risks.

2- Emphasizing the role of the media to refute all the faulty information which provided by these terrorist organizations (The Brotherhood and The Renaissance Party) to their followers, along with working to develop the content of the media discourse both on the level of quality and form of the media messages addressed to the public so as to represent a buffer wall against the ideologies and directions of those organizations.

3- Exchange of expertise between both Countries and that would be through the organization of numerous mutual visits for Experts, Specialists and researchers in the various fields related to combat-

ing terrorism.

4- Organizing several joint events that include (Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, Panel Discussions, Round Tables). These joint events shall aim at discussing various issues of mutual interest between both countries in general, and the matter of terrorism and how to confront it, in particular.

5- Joint action between the institutions which is concerned with the issues of terrorism in other countries, to work for the sake of enlisting the Muslim Brotherhood Organization and the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan as terrorist organizations in various Arab and Islamic Countries, as well as in the Arab, Islamic and World organizations.

6- Organizing an extended Conference at the level of Arab and Islamic States for confronting the risk of terrorist organizations, and in this respect it is suggested to have an extended Conference organized during this year and to include Central Asian States and some Arab countries that consider the Muslim Brotherhood group a terrorist group in order to develop a road map on how to work on the inclusion of these organizations within the terrorist lists.

7- Refusal of Iran's interference in the internal affairs of other countries and condemning its continuous and persistent support to terrorist organizations in various Arab and Islamic States and to demand Iran respect the sovereignty and independence of states.

8- Emphasizing the enhancement of security cooperation between Egypt and Tajikistan to strengthen their bilateral efforts for confronting Terrorist Organizations.

Participation of the Council in a Seminar on "The Belt and Road Initiative... political and economic reflections, and the positive interaction roadmap"

On the 23rd of September, the Council, in cooperation with the Institute of National Planning, organized a seminar on “ Egypt and The Belt and Road Initiative ... political and economic reflections, and the positive interaction roadmap”. The Council’s delegation included each of their excellencies, Ambassadors: Dr.Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council; Dr.Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council; and members of the council, their excellencies, Ambassadors: Gamal Bayoumi, Mahmoud Allam, Ali elhefny, and Magdy Amer.

The proceedings of the seminar that opened by Ambassador Dr.Mounir Zahran Chairman of the Council beside Professor/ Alaa zahran Head of the Institute were conducted over 2 sessions. **The first session** was entitled: “ Strategic readings of the Belt and Road initiative” and moderated by Ambassador Gamal Bayoumi and commented by Ambassador Mahmoud Allam. **The second session** was entitled “ The political and economic dimensions and spillover of the initiative and the positive interaction roadmap” and moderated by Ambassador Ali elhefny. Ambassador Magdy Amer participated during this session to speak on “ Basic platforms for positive strategic engagement with The Belt and Road Initiative” and Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad commented on this Session.

It was emphasized during the seminar that the initiative has two

perspectives one of them is the internal and is concerned with china's desire to develop the poor Western Regions and connect them to neighboring countries.

As for the international perspective, launching of the initiative is directly associated with several factors which are: World Economy and trying to avoid any economic and financial crisis, narrowing the gap between developed and developing countries in an attempt to manage the faults that were precipitated by Globalization, and formulation and reinforcement of a rational and responsible system for Global Governance.

The initiative also has six fields that have been identified by the Chinese president and through it the goals of the initiative may be enhanced, and these fields include: policy coordination, economic road corridors development, construction of multi-ports harbours, expanding the work area of Chinese companies globally, provision of the means of financial support through Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and other banks alongside The Silk Road Fund, and comprehensive cooperation in all fields.

In conclusion; The significance of Egypt taking advantage of its unique geographic location to achieve the maximum possible benefits has been emphasized; to work towards making Egypt virtually a maritime gateway to Africa, Asia, and Europe; to use the mechanisms provided by the initiative in order to become a manufacturing centre within the continent; and developing both industrial and export sectors with China to become a manufacturing centre with the help of Chinese investments.

Seminar entitled “Syria...The Post-Settlement Scenarios”

On the 26th of September 2018, The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, in coordinate with The Egyptian Center for Kurdish Studies, held a Seminar entitled “Syria... The Post-Settlement Scenarios”. This Seminar was attended by an Elite of Ambassadors, Academics and Researchers on the Syrian and Arabian affairs, and opened by Ambassador Dr.Mounir Zahran the Chairman of the Council. **During its four sessions, the speakers spoke in the following order:**

- 1- Ambassador Hazem Khairat, Member of the Council and former Ambassador of Egypt to Syria , spoke on “The internal situation...after the ending of the war” .
- 2- Ambassador/ Dr.Mohamed Badr El-Din Zayed, Member of the Council, spoke on “Syria in Its Arabic area”.
- 3- Dr.Rajaei Fayed, Member of the Council and Chair of The Egyptian Center for Kurdish Studies, spoke on “Syria in its regional area... Turkey/ Iran/ Israel”.
- 4- Professor Dr.Gamal Abdel Gawad, Professor of Political Sciences in The American University and the Advisor of Al-Ahram Center for Political studies, spoke on “The Attitudes of International Parties: Russia/ USA/ The European Union”.

In conclusion, Mrs. Elham Ahmed, Co-Chair of the Syrian Democratic Council, and The Chairman of the Negotiating Committee with the Syrian Government on the Future of Syria in gen-

eral and the Northern District in particular (The Kurds' Districts or the so-called "North Syrian Federation" or "Rojava" in Kurdish language), commented via Skype followed by the commentary of Ambassador Sayed Abo Zayed, Member of the Council, then the discussion was held.

Through the submitted documents, all issues currently related to the Syrian affair have been reviewed. These issues included the internal situations, the role of Regional and International Powers in the Syrian crisis, as well as attempting to predict the future of the crisis and providing several scenarios relevant to this respect. In general, there was an agreement in the view points of the participating parties over several points, **including**:

- The Syrian crisis is one of the most complex crisis that currently the Arab Region suffered from it. And that the Post-Settlement Period shall have a large effect on the future of The Middle East Region, due to the relative weight that Syria has in one form or another at the regional level.

- The Developing of situation in Syria related with the weakness of agents, who work for the competing powers involved in the crisis (Except in the case of the Syrian Kurdish faction who still has clear targets and visions). The conflict has currently become direct between these powers, in other words between The USA, Russia, Turkey and Iran. And that is fraught with the current complexities of the crisis as each party attempts achieving its own Agenda that contradicts those of the rest. Those Agendas are, of course, contrast with the interest of Syrian People and their suffering.

- Under these current complex situations, it seems difficult to reach a conclusive and satisfactory settlement of the Syrian Crisis in the short run or even over the medium term. It should also be emphasized that while settlement is unlikely, escalation is unlikely as well, as it would be very costly. In this context, status quo in Syria may be imagined as an in-between stage (neither settlement nor escalation).

- The international Community has double standards in dealing with the situation in Afrin compared to its dealing with the one in Idlib, as it is refraining from taking any action against Turkey in Afrin which is witnessing several massacres over its land, while pointing out to the Turkish Russian Agreement on Idlib. The explanation raised to justify this is: “ It is not possible to strike it due to the humanitarian status over there”.

- The Syrian democratic Forces are innocent of the charges accusing them of threatening the unity of Syrian Lands and the safety of Syrian People, and it was not for the role it played in partnership with The Popular Mobilization Forces Al-Asad Regime would not have been able to regain its influence and authority over several Syrian territories, and those areas would have completely become a hotbed for terrorist factions that would be manipulated by Regional Countries, and especially by the Turkish State, and those areas would have also been under the influence of Turkey which is imposing its authority over Afrin as a De Facto.

- Within that same context, Mrs. Elham affirmed that Syrian Forces believe the solution returns to the Syrian Regime and

to the extent of its will to perform a real Democratic process in the Country, and she is ready for that since the beginning of the crisis and till now. She is as well for the Syrian-Syrian dialogue, the Syrian solution, and against external intervention, and for Syria to be decentralized, with the consideration that the Nomination-whether it be a Federation or others- does not matter, and this matter is subject to the negotiations in case it has been resorted to the dialogue within the framework of the settlement process.

- Finally, and originating from the Principles of the clear Egyptian Foreign Policy concerned with preserving the unity and safety of The Syrian Territories, as well as originating from the Cultural and Historical bonds that bring both Countries together; the participants agreed on the pivotal and significant role Egypt can play in the attempts to settle the Syrian crisis. The participants had the consensus that there is a Regional, International and even a local Syrian will at both the official and popular levels for Egypt to play its role therein.

Meeting of the Permanent Committee on Arab Affairs **to discuss the situations in the Arab Region**

In the context of generation of ideas that are expected to be developed for presentation and discussion with Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary General of the Arab league at the meeting that was scheduled for 22nd of October 2018, the council organized a meeting on 11th October 2018 in presence of experts and specialists on Arab affairs.

A number of ideas have been reviewed as follows:

- Regarding the International and Arab environments, emphasis have been made on the critical and unprecedented period witnessed by the Arab Region, as well as the challenges faced by the Arab world, also the consequences of the American attitude towards the Palestinian issue following the decision of transferring the Embassy to Jerusalem and closure of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Office in Washington as well as the reduction and cutting off of the aids to “UNRWA” and not only that but even staying silent towards the aggressive actions committed by Israel, and moreover the tensions that Saudi relations witness with numerous world powers following the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul.

-Challenges facing the Arab League have been reviewed as well as carrying out discussions on the developments that the Arab League requires and the impacts restricting the ability of the Arab

league to take positions concerning current Arab issues.

- Also discussing the Regional and Arab attitude within the framework of the Arab-Israeli conflict and role of the Arab League in standing up against and countering Israeli violations.

- The need for a more effective Egyptian policy to counter the failure of some of the Arab powers in taking positions for pacifying the situations in the region.

- The need for beginning a different Arab attitude in dealing with Tehran through providing platforms for a dialogue with Iran and to stop adopting the Anti-Iranian Saudi policy that fuels the sectarian conflicts in the region.

- The necessity for caution regarding the Israeli infiltration in Africa, as such infiltration resulted in African support to Israeli targets and interests in numerous International platforms, that included abstaining from voting on the UN resolution with respect to the International community's condemnation of the American decision to transfer the American Embassy to Jerusalem.

Round table for discussing the current situations in the Korean peninsula

On 23rd October 2018, the Council hosted a Round Table Conference on “ Current situations in the Korean Peninsula” in collaboration with the Korean Embassy in Egypt. Participants included Ambassador/ Dr.Mounir Zahran; Chairman of the Council, Ambassador/ Dr.Ezzat Saad; Director of the Council, and a number of the Council’s members. Delegation from the Korean Embassy included the Korean Ambassador to Cairo Mr.Yoon Yeocheo and a number of the Korean Embassy’s members in Cairo.

Themes of the meeting included the following points:

- The USA-North Korean relations and developments with respect to the setting up of a “Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) – Free Korean peninsula” which was spoken on by Prof.KIM Hyun-Wook, Professor at the Korea National Diplomatic Academy in South Korea, who affirmed that the Year 2018 witnessed noticeable developments with respect to the toning down of rhetoric between the two sides and holding the USA-Korean Summit that was hosted by Singapore during which the two parties appeared as if they were pursuing to find a more peaceful alternative, abandon the established sanctions regime, the setting up of a “Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) - Free Korean peninsula”, and reach a full irrevocable agreement. But it is necessary to take

into consideration the need for greater understanding and more depth between the two sides, particularly as freezing of efforts are currently witnessed and there is no clarity with respect to the intentions of the USA and North Korea. But certainly both Countries will not resort to war in case negotiations failed, particularly as the USA is not willing to be involved in new wars. And from its side; North Korea does not possess the Economic Potential that would render it capable of getting involved in a war, as it is suffering difficult economic situations.

- As to the developments related to the signing of the Peace Agreement between both Koreas, spoke Mr. Kim Jihoon; Deputy Head of the Department of Policy Planning at the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who affirmed that peace efforts between both sides were called for by South Korea with the aim of creating comprehensive peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula. The outcome of these efforts was the holding of summits and summit meetings, signing a peace agreement through which Joint actions on the renaissance of bilateral relations between both sides are carried out, abstaining from performing any military or provocative operations on the borders between both countries, and working within a time-frame for establishing an overall peace framework. And it is a fact that those efforts are beginning to bear fruits, and this fact clearly appeared in the Asian Olympics of 2018 when one sports team was formed for representing both Koreas therein, and appeared as well in the re-unification of families torn apart by wars.

A bilateral summit is expected to be held between the two leaders in 2019 for dealing with all issues of common interest of which first and foremost is the setting up of a “Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)-Free Korean peninsula”.

Symposium on ”Turkey... at the crossroads“

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs held, on the 5th of November 2018, a symposium with the title of “Turkey... at the crossroads” which was attended by a distinct elite of Diplomats, Academics, and Researchers. This symposium was opened by Chairman of the Council, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran. Speeches were given in this symposium by Ambassadors/ Ezzat Saad, Mohamed Badr-El-Deen, and Abdel Rahman Salah, as well as Professor/ Mohamed Kemal (Professor at the Faculty of Economics and political Science, Cairo University), on Turkey’s relations with the Major Powers and the Arab Region, as well as on its internal situations and bilateral relations with Egypt.

In general, the symposium addressed the Turkish steps to circumvent the Arab region and its techniques to regain the glories of the Ottoman Empire in controlling the region particularly through interference in the internal affairs of Arab Countries of which first and foremost are its interference in the Syrian crisis, its support for the Muslim Brotherhood, and its support for the State of Qatar that sponsors terrorism and Hamas Movement, in addition to seeking military presence in a number of Arab States, of which the most significant are Sudan and Libya.

The symposium was concluded with a number of recommendations, but within the context of two points of view that prevailed over the discussions:

- The First: This point of view adopts an open vision towards Turkey based on establishing a non-official and unannounced dialogue between Egyptian and Turkish Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) that are closely related to the official circles in both countries, as well as establishing a similar dialogue between the Egyptian and Turkish business communities. The dialogue may aim at settling down matters of disagreements and disputes between both countries.

- The Second: This point of view originates from the presence of an Egyptian-Turkish strategic contradiction as the Turkish side continues to show lack of responsiveness- not even partially- to the requisites of The Egyptian national security, particularly adopting a hostile approach to the Egyptian State and policies, attempting to play a leading role in the region through the forces of Political Islam, and supporting hostile interventional policies in a number of Arab countries. Therefore, Egypt must follow active policies as an attempt for the containment of Turkish trends, as well as adopting an external and internal political and media discourse stating that continuation of such policies by Turkey shall support tension, instability, and extremism in the region and the world. This point of view supports as well the enhancement of strategic partnership with each of Greece and Cyprus provided that the management of this file shall be made with great caution.

Despite that, this point of view has no objection as to opening calm dialogue channels with turkey at proper and calculated timings that shall be preceded by informing Turkey that its regional weight and economic interests shall be in a better condition in case it abandons its escalational hostile policies towards Egypt with the emphasis on the necessity of avoidance of opening such channels in a context that would be perceived as if there was any Egyptian urgency to establish relations with Turkey.

Mr. Atef Al-Ghamry Discussion his book entitled
“In The Backstage of Press and Politics”

A session was held, at The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on Sunday 18th November 2018, for discussing Mr. Atef Al-Ghamry’s Book which carries the title of “In The Back Stage of Press and Politics” and published by The General Egyptian Book Organization (GEBO).

The book comprises a preface, 6 chapters, and an epilog. The First Three chapters speak on his experience in the press and journalistic and political life in Egypt since The Abdel Nasser Era then Sadat’s and then Mubarak’s with the reference to censorship, while the Fourth and Fifth chapters focus on the secrets and vaults in the U.S., and the Sixth chapter on post-ending of his mission in the U.S. and return to Egypt as well as to post-Mubarak experience since the 2011 revolution and the overlap between press and politics including The Brotherhood era until the June 30th revolution.

After Mr. Atef Al-Ghamry reviewed his book which represents the harvest of his own experience for more than 50 years since the early Sixties of the last century under 5 Presidents of the State, he emphasized a number of learnt lessons:

- 1- The role of Media in raising awareness among citizens before and during the January 25th revolution was the same thing that happened in the 30 June 2013 revolution.
- 2- The media rapid spread had negative aspects that were re-

flected in media chaos.

3- The positive and passive effects of social media, internet, TV channels, and talk shows on Mass awareness.

4- After The 25 January revolution, the press was faced by strikes and doubts about its credibility.

5- The effect of professionalism manifested by accumulation of centralism, not only at the state level, but at the level of the newspaper's management itself.

6- The mutual effects between, the press and media on one side, and the masses receiving the news and analysis on the other side.

7- The American Public Opinion has no more trust in the press which played a role in mobilizing public opinion before the invasion of Iraq by The U.S. through publishing false news on Iraq and its potential of possessing mass destruction weapons.

8- Press crisis during this era due to availability of information from other sources.

Symposium On “U.S Congressional Elections Spillovers”

The Egyptian Council for Foreign affairs held a closed panel discussion, on Tuesday 27th November 2018, on possible spillovers of the U.S Congressional Elections that were carried out on 6th November 2018. This Symposium was opened by Ambassador Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council, and was attended by elite of Ambassadors and Academics specialized in U.S affairs.

The participants agreed that winning of the elections achieved by the Democrats over their Republican counterparts in the House of Representatives (where they won 225 seats compared to 197 seats won by the Republicans) shall result in blocking Trump’s Internal Agenda due to their control over House committees, and may also expose him to interrogation and questioning every now and then, contrary to what used to be before the elections. At the international level, the Democrats may affect the U.S foreign policy, but not to a great extent owing to the fact that U.S President has extensive powers over such matter.

Among the characteristics accompanying these elections were that for the first time the U.S President is directly involved in such elections through his wide participation in electoral campaigns and festivals till the last moment indicating that they were basically elections over the person of Trump himself. The results of these elections also reflected new facts indicating more political

polarization which the two main parties could not overcome that reflects increasing weakness among the parties that the U.S has known over the past two centuries. And for the first time, a list of unconventional candidates, describing themselves as Socialists seeking achievement and application of social justice, already arrived to the House of Representatives. The list of new House Members included two ladies of Arab Muslim origin as well.

More sanctions are expected to be imposed on Russia as well as taking a closer look at the Russian interference in the previous U.S Presidential elections. Regarding China, both Democrats and Republicans, to a great extent, welcome Trump's more collisional approach with Beijing, while they may block Trump's seeking of issuing new sanctions against Iran especially that Democrats look at "Trump" as having wasted the efforts they exerted to reach the Nuclear Agreement under "Obama". On the other hand, there is a strong return to the Human Rights issue, thus freezing aids to some states based on the conditions of Human Rights therein. Probably Democrats are concerned with the decree on cutting UNRWA funding, particularly due to the humanitarian dimension more than being political, that this file includes. They support, as well, "Dissolution of the Two States" Policy for ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In addition to that, withdrawal of U.S. Forces from a number of World States is expected due to Democrats' opposition to U.S. military deployment in the territories of other states.

The symposium was closed with the conclusion that Egypt must communicate with both Trump's administration and the Democrats

at the same time as well as formulating a comprehensive strategy for this communication in anticipation of Democrats' victory in The 2020 U.S. Presidential Election as this is directly related to the Human Rights File in Egypt and thence to U.S. aids to Egypt.

Symposium On “Developments in The Horn of Africa and The Red Sea Region”

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with Egypt/ Africa Center at the British University in Egypt, organized a symposium on Monday 3rd December 2018 under the title of “Developments in the Region of The Horn of Africa and Security of the Red Sea”. Distinct elite of Intellectuals, Diplomats, Academics, and Business Men participated in this symposium. This symposium was held at a time when the Red Sea Surroundings are witnessing rapid and qualitative developments that would affect the security of the sea as well as patterns of interactions in and across the sea.

The first axis of the symposium tackled the latest developments in the Horn of Africa Region, its implications, challenges to stability in the region, and during which the geostrategic significance of the Red Sea and the challenges that threaten its stability and security were dealt with. On its eastern bank tensions are almost completely prevailing in the Arabian peninsula, while on the western bank of the sea and in spite of the positive signs that resulted from the moves of Ethiopian Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, challenges remain complex. Tensions over borders existing between Djibouti and Eritrea are still there, in addition to instability in Sudan and South Sudan, the surge of terrorist actions by “Mujahideen Youth Movement (Al-Shabaab)” in Somalia, in addition to considerable

Ethiopian presence there in violation of the agreement implying that not any of the forces of the states surrounding Somalia should enter its territories, and in addition to the trend shown by Djibouti, that its national security is continuously threatened and has no trust in its neighbors, and which is clearly manifested by the presence of various military bases of a number of major and regional powers over the Djiboutian territories.

The second axis of the symposium tackled the Red Sea Region security issue as regards opportunities and challenges, during which participants spoke on challenges of Red Sea globalization and risks to its security constituted by instability and related future scenarios. In this regard, threats, constituted by all previous challenges to Egyptian national security that would not accomplish its pillars without achieving the security of this region, have been emphasized upon.

In this context, the symposium was concluded with a number of recommendations of which the most significant were; formulating a comprehensive strategy for managing challenges imposed by current situations in the surroundings of the Red Sea, enhancement of cooperation amongst states of the Red Sea region to prevent further escalation, and creating an Arab-African security and cooperation system, based on mutual benefits and interests, in this significant region. The Participants emphasized that Egypt's Presidency of the African Union during the year 2019 offers a good opportunity for Cairo to introduce its vision in this respect, in terms that will secure the principles of Good Neighborliness and

Non-Interference in the Internal Affairs of States in the region, and solving their disputes within an atmosphere of security and stability which are necessary to achieve sustainable development for all the peoples of these states.

The Annual Conference of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs **Egypt and the Arabs in a Changing Middle East**

Over Two days; from 18th to 19th of December 2018, The Egyptian Council for Foreign affairs held its annual conference under the title of “Egypt and the Arabs in a changing Middle East”. An elite of ambassadors, academics, researchers, and those interested in regional and global issues, participated in the conference. The conference was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council, and Ambassador Hamdy Loza, Deputy Foreign Minister for African affairs, on behalf of His Excellency Foreign Minister Mr. Sameh Shoukry.

During the couple of days over which the Four sessions of the annual conference of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) were held, Speakers put forward their visions and analyses on the reality of what is going on in the Arab region, the role of the major powers, as well as that of the regional powers, and also that of the Arab States. Then the Fourth session tackled the topic of “Egypt and Regional Issues”. About Twenty Speakers participated in the Four sessions including Ambassadors; Mounir Zahran, Abdel Rouf El-Reedy, Ezzat Saad, Mohamed Tawfik, Raouf Saad, Ali El-Hefny, Hussain Hassouna, Abdel Rahman Salah, Hazem Khairat, Sayed Abou Zeid, and Salah Halima. Experts and intellectuals who participated in this conference were Aliy El-Din Helal, Bahgat Korani, Niveen Saad, Amr El-Shobaky, Mohamed

El-Saeed Edris, Shireen Shams, Gamal Abdel Gawad, Wahid Abdel Mageed, and Hassan Abou Taleb.

The Council selected the topic of this year's conference, with its complex and interlacing aspects, taking into consideration the changing regional and international environment and its reflections over the situations in our Arab World; particularly, the continuation of the increasing influence of Non-Arab States (Iran- Turkey- Israel) in Arab affairs and crisis; at a time which the Arabs do not seem to have a major role in causing the ongoing changes in our region, and the Arab League, which represents the official political regional organization bringing the Arabs together, with its declining role; led to aggravation of the challenges facing the Arab Countries such as the risks of fragmentation of some States, terrorism, and many other risks threatening the Arab National Security, which is still a controversial and divisive concept between the Arab Countries that view Iran as the main risk source threatening the regional security and Other States emphasizing that Israel, by continuing its occupation of Palestine and other Arab lands, as well as its aggressive and racist practices, constitutes the major risk that must be dealt with and confronted.

With respect to the First view point; noticeably, there is a clear diplomatic and political Israeli activity towards some states that do not find communication with Israel a drawback, based on its being in the same ditch as such states are; against Iran.

In addition to the aforementioned; the roles played by the major powers in what is taking place in the Arab region are obvious and

cannot be ignored. These are mostly conflictive competitive roles taking new military and economic forms. The matter here is not only related to the changes in US foreign policy towards the region's problems; of which the most prominent was Washington's shameful irresponsible position on the Arab-Israeli conflict; but also to the roles played by the other major powers (Russia- China- EU), as each is working to advance its own interests which might not necessarily match the interests of the region's states, or their security and stability needs.

Firstly: In the First session the participants presented their vision which viewed that what to be detected from; both the US National Security and National Defense documents issued in December 2017 and January 2018; is that the relative significance of the Middle East region as a whole, including the priority of countering international terrorism, has diminished. The axis of US policy in the Middle East has shifted from the Arab-Israeli conflict to a conflict of the Saudi-Gulf-Israeli side against Iran; a development which is not surprising as it has been gradually crystallized over the last years and decades so that it became an officially announced policy.

However, that does not mean a full US withdrawal from the Middle East but trends toward preserving US interests with a lower cost, Even if this led to giving up certain spheres of influence that are considered marginal by Washington or abandonment of regimes and political groups that are allied to the US. Protection of Israel's security remains a priority issue in Washington's policy

in the region, as well as guaranteeing gas and oil supplies from the region to US allies in Asia and other areas at reasonable prices, and preserving the security of waterways in the region; primarily Suez Canal, in addition to preventing the extension of Chinese and Russian influence in the region.

In light of that all, the US still has military presence in Iraq and possesses military bases in the Gulf and the Red Sea, whereas these bases provided logistic support to forces of the Allies in Yemen.

The US role, to get the Arab region out of liquidity it is currently facing at all levels, is unreliable. Although the US still remains the world's and the region's dominant super power, having huge capabilities and great potential, several internal determinants have negatively affected its role in the Middle East and made the prediction of US reaction more difficult and less accurate. It is no more possible to count on the US concept of peace in our region after having the goal of rearranging it in order to ensure the inclusion of Israel and Turkey, take advantage of the region's wealth, particularly the Gulf region, and weakening its states so as to make them dependent states in their decisions and policies.

With respect to Russian foreign policy in the region as it represents a significant factor in the equation of Russia-US relations; whereas Moscow seems to be keen to restore the role of the super power in the region, particularly after the Ukrainian crisis and annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the resulting US and European sanctions that aimed at imposing global isolation on Russia. Moscow has returned back with a different face from that of the Soviet

one, so that the Middle East became the region where Russian policy has, at least, a tactic advantage making it different from Western policies. No doubt that military interference in the Syrian Crisis last September 2015 that was brought about as a Russian reaction toward the Western attitude from the Ukrainian Crisis; marking a milestone in the Russian policy in the region. In addition, its being the first time for Russian forces to fight outside the former Soviet territories since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has succeeded with great skill to overcome the diplomatic isolation it found itself in, after the annexation of Crimea, through playing the Middle East card.

However, Russian military interference in Syria remains an exception to Russian policy toward the region's problems as it has avoided, interference in conflicts of the region, sometimes even if diplomatic.

While the Russian role in the region is condemned and considered to be opportunistic by the EU and the US. Great openness and a cooperative more than a competitive or a conflictive nature characterize Russian policy in the region. As the Russians have always emphasized that there is no alternative to international collective efforts for solving regional and international problems.

As Russia's relation with the US and the EU in the region, in its entirety, is characterized by competitiveness; on the contrary China stands out as a major power that firmly stands politically with Russia. It is noticeable here, the relation of the Two powers with the region, that China seems to be satisfied by letting Russia play

the leading role in the Middle East, as well as recognizing Russian interests in Syria. As is the case with Russia, China's foreign policy is characterized by an obvious extent of balance between various parties; a position dictated by China's national security considerations and supreme interests.

After China has become the Premier trade power and the Second largest world economic power, It started seeking engagement in international affairs and actively participating in multilateral institutions through proposing regional and international initiatives of which the most prominent was "The Belt and The Road Initiative". Beijing has put forward Its vision of the Arab-Chinese relations and Its strategy towards the Arab region in a paper submitted by the Chinese President during a meeting with representatives of the Arab States at the headquarters of the Arab league on the margins of his visit to Cairo in January 2016, inviting these states to join "The Belt and The Road Initiative" and promoting the relations with his country on the basis of joint interests and mutual benefits; considering that the region is central to the initiative.

Indeed, the participants in the Conference had no difference in views on the fact that the Twenty First century is perfectly an Asian century after the space between China and the US has been narrowed in numerous fields. However, certain related questions have been raised before; what would happen when China becomes the First global economic power, and whether it is going to be militarily so, as well?, how would the US and the West react to that, and how would China deal with the developing countries then?.

Regarding the role of the European Union (EU) and the styles governing its relations with the other major powers in the region; the declining role of the US in the region has been in favor of the role of the EU that is witnessing a rise due to its huge economic and commercial interests in the region, including cooperation in the field of energy so as to reduce the EU States' dependency on Russian gas, and in order to address the challenges related to refugees, illegal migration, transnational crime, as well as the Libyan and the Syrian crisis, and the Iranian nuclear issue. There is continuous coordination and consultation on these issues between Egypt and the EU. The EU seeks confirming its worth and significance in light of Britain's departure out of the Union next March, as well as the rise of populist and right-wing extremist trends in several European countries raising doubts on the survival of the EU and promoting the concept of national identities against that of the Union and its objectives.

The regional and international organizations are playing a significance and positive role in dealing with regional issues cannot be underestimated; there are UN Peace keeping forces and UN peace missions in a number of Arab States. With respect to the Arab League; all major Arab initiatives such as the Arab Free Trade Zone took place within its frame, and an Arab development summit to be held in Beirut on January 2019. Thus implying that, it is still of importance in the attempts for Arab reunion. In this context, both Egypt and Saudi Arabia, in particular, as being influential in the region must take reform and corrective initiatives

within the league, to attract the rest of the member states to adopt such initiatives; let this be on issues such as the sustainable development, climate, and human rights, but first and foremost is the exertion of constructive efforts in order to settle inter-states differences in the region.

How to restore the political balance in the region in favor of the Arab States?

During the last three sessions; discussions were held on regional issues, the role of the regional powers, the role of the Arab States, and the real opportunities for Egypt's foreign policy to be in favor of the Arabs.

On the regional powers the views which discussed on the second session based on the participants, assessment, the political balance in the region is not in favor of the Arab countries at the moment, but rather in the hands of the neighboring Non-Arab countries (Iran, Turkey and Israel). And that each of the US, Israel, Turkey and Iran want the steadfastness of the Mid-East regime at the expense of the Arab system, which would lead to marginalization and dilution of the Arab identity in favor of the Mid-East regime.

The chances of settling the Palestinian issue through a process of negotiations face a serious challenge in light of the Trump administration's full acceptance of the vision of the Israeli right that totally denies considering the rights of the Palestinian people as national rights. In spite of the settlement policies of Israel and their related procedures in Jerusalem and the Haram Al-Sharif itself, and the encouragement of successive Israeli governments

to divide and split Palestinian entities; the normalization of Arab States with Israel, particularly the Gulf States, is no longer related to a just settlement with the Palestinians. Hence, the conference emphasized the need to restore the Palestinian issue to its position in the hierarchy of priorities, as the central and main Arab issue, which is to be achieved through collective Arab effort, in addition to the importance of reviewing the management process of the Arab-Israeli conflict and extracting the policies that have led to positive results in favor of the Palestinian issue. In this context, the achievement of Palestinian national reconciliation must be accelerated and the Egyptian efforts to accomplish it must be strongly supported.

The necessity for communication with Iran and Turkey has been looked at as well as it was pointed out to by some speakers. Whereas diplomacy was found to deal with both friends and enemies alike, and that cutting off communications between two «Central States» in the region was not in the favor of Egypt; therefore, the Egyptian state may allow some sort of a second track diplomacy through a reliable civilian body to communicate with these two states without informing or announcing, and the role that can be played by businessmen in this regard has been mentioned here.

During the Third session's discussions on the role of the Arab States assured:

The Arab States seem to be surrounded by different forms of penetration, influence, pressure, and blackmail. The region as well witnesses the emergence and promotion of sub-ethnic identities.

This necessitates respecting all sub-cultures, such as the Kurds, that are present in the region. The cultural rights that the Arabs claim for themselves must therefore be fully guaranteed to such sub-ethnic identities as long as they remain an integral part of Arab States.

Declining African and international support to Arab issues has been noted. This requires reviewing some of the Arab rhetoric to make it acceptable to the regional and international communities.

It is important to exert efforts for clearing the air over differences and disputes among Arab States, and putting forward a clear vision on the definition of Arab national security concept and the real nature of the challenges and threats faced by Arab States.

On the Fourth session's discussions on Egypt and regional issues:

It was agreed upon that major powers, in some instances, do not look at the Arab States individually but as a group of countries in a particular geographic area such as the Gulf region, the Arab Mashreq, or the Maghreb region. Hence, one of the options that Egypt has is to present itself within a frame of collective position which would seem difficult under the existing circumstances, and the other option is to present itself as an influential element that can exert pressure over the collective position.

Egypt's influence and the significant regional role it has; necessarily requires having the ability to afford that, in both material or human terms, for such role. Speakers emphasized here that the main challenges faced by Egypt are; the economic and social de-

velopment process, accelerating the economic recovery through implementation of its reform programme, and achieving high growth rates for several consecutive years without depletion of resources which would allow maintaining equal and balanced relations with other states, even if they were allies, and also to speak from a position of strength. In this context, it was pointed out that despite the difficulties and the events the Egyptian state has faced in recent years, it is still the most acceptable state among the Arab peoples, and the influence it has over the states of the region is not limited to official and media channels, but also through unofficial popular channels which are many.

Negative developments taking place regionally and internationally offer to the Egyptian foreign policy real opportunities for the contribution to the reunification of Arabs and to clear the air through rational policies emphasizing the concepts of the national state in the face of sectarianism, and dealing cautiously with the initiatives that might be proposed by the US administration in such uncertain circumstances.

With respect to countering terrorism, the conference focused on three main axes of interest to the Egyptian policy: military and security confrontation, cultural and intellectual confrontation, and coordination with other states in countering terrorism. The greatest success achieved so far is mainly noticed in the first axis, ie; the military and security confrontation, and it is also possible to say that coordination with other parties in the face of terrorism has achieved great success. But the second axis of cultural and intel-

lectual confrontation was less successful, despite its great importance.

Regarding Egypt and the Arab future; President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi expressed Egypt's vision in this regard since 2014, which is based on the following main elements:

-Egypt views that the future of the Arab world is related to arriving at a comprehensive Arab security strategy.

-Facing external threats.

-The Arab League to remain; as the institution of the Arab system, the umbrella, and the framework that plays an essential role in activating the Arab agreements, arriving at the economic integration, and also achieving the comprehensive Arab security strategy.

In the context above, and at the level of the movement, Egypt currently believes that there is no so-called sole leadership of the Arab regional system, but a collective leadership necessitating a sort of coordination and prioritization with the active States.

It is understood that the participation of the Arab states in shaping their future is of particular importance, although the current situations do not suggest the availability of a collective political will to repulse external interventions in the region. Thence, the Arab countries bear the responsibility of what is happening; and that is the case as with all Arab crisis.

Chapter II



Visits to the Council

Figures:

ECFA's Meeting with Amr Moussa on the occasion of the release of his book "Kitabiah" and of current developments in the region and the world

On 16th of January 2018, the Council welcomed Mr. Amr Moussa, former Foreign Minister and former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, to meet with the members of the Council and to highlight several important points in his new book, Keta-biah, and to shed light on many current developments in the region and the world. It was attended by the Chair of the council; Ambassador, Dr. Mounir Zahran as well as Ambassador / Dr. Ezzat Saad, the Executive Director and many other board members of the council, Ambassadors, specialists, academics and businessmen.

Mr. Amr Moussa stressed that the purpose of writing his memoirs is to review dates and issues, in light of the persistent attempts by certain forces to push Egyptian history towards trends that serve particular interests and avoid dealing with important and dangerous developments in modern Egyptian history. By discussing what happened in May 1967, its causes and the motives of decisions and the reasons for the unfortunate defeat in the 1967 war in order to avoid repeating them. Furthermore addressing the causes and events does not mean to diminish the extent of one of the shedding light on an important stage in Egyptian history, especially as Egypt

as a developing country, how did it bear the entry into two wars in 3-4 years (meaning the military involvement in Yemen and the war with Israel) Egypt bears the consequences of those wars, and whether there was an estimate of the Egyptian military efficiency at that time. He pointed out that these questions will be asked sooner or later, especially as they represent a serious of negative signs in the Egyptian history, and a negative turning point that led to subsequent developments, leading to the revolution of January 25, 2011, confirming that he was supporter of late President Gamal Abdel Nasser until 5 June 1967, and witnessed the date of conflicting reports that included the confirmation by the Egyptian radio to drop Israeli fighter jets, while foreign newspapers and news agencies broadcasted the success of Israeli forces approaching the Suez Canal - which proved to be right later.

He also stressed that his book dealt with the impact of regional issues on the course of Egyptian diplomacy, especially the Palestinian cause, which was the first priority in Egyptian foreign policy, and the Egyptian interest and Gamal Abdel Nasser's interest in it to occupy a distinguished position in the world. Egyptian diplomacy, which opened the door to the rivalry of all Arab and regional diplomats as well as developing countries, and to occupy a prominent position in the agendas of these countries.

He stressed on the point, that the Middle Eastern region is experiencing a vacuum similar to the vacuum of the fifties caused by the withdrawal of colonial powers from Africa; This vacuum is trying to force Iran, Turkey and Israel to fill it, which is needed to

move the Arab forces led by Egypt and Saudi Arabia to confront those forces, calling for work to re-discuss the previous presentation at the Arab Summit in 2010 in Sirte, Libya of the first two initiatives is “Arab Neighbourhood League” 40 to 45 countries from the Sahelo-Saharan States, the Horn of Africa, the Mediterranean countries, the three Asian countries, Turkey, Iran and Israel, and the suspension of Israel’s domination of the Palestinian issue and the opening of dialogue with Iran on the outstanding issues. These are related to their environment any association expanded to include 22 to 24 countries.

The other initiative is based on the establishment of a Middle East Security and Cooperation Organization to deal with the issues of security, terrorism and development, which will initially include 5-6 countries and then expand it to other countries including the Maghreb, the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Gulf and the Arab heart. He stressed that there are many centers talking about the need for a new regional system in the Middle East, and Ethiopia must be included in such a system, to be part of it and to develop its visions and priorities.

Meeting with Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa Chairman of Yasser Arafat Foundation explained the activities of the Organization and the position on the Issue of Jerusalem

- On 26th of February 2018, Ambassador Abdul Raouf Al-Reedy, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Misr Public Library, organized a meeting with Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa, Chairman of Yasser Arafat Foundation, at the library's headquarters where he briefed the audience on the activities of the Foundation and ways of enhancing cooperation and partnership between the Foundation and the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs.

- The meeting started with the welcoming of Ambassador Abdel Raouf Al-Reedy in the interaction and cooperation between the Council and the Yasser Al-Arafat Foundation. There should be an official framework for cooperation such as signing a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between the two sides or another practical framework such as conducting joint research and studies and joint seminars and workshops...etc, which was called for by Ambassador MounirZahran.

- **Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa confirmed that the Foundation has issued four reports:**

- The first on the US Congress and the Palestine Liberation Organization / legislation in Israel's service, the second on Trump and the chances of a political deal or move, the third on how to confront U.S plans after the declaration of Jerusalem as the capital

of Israel; the fourth on the state and national independence as a final goal.

- Stressing that the United States is unable to play a role in sponsoring the political settlement and the peace process, and it is necessary to search for a neutral international mechanism to take care of the peace process. Stressing that the Authority will not accept any deal that infringes on the rights of the Palestinian citizen and renounce the right to establish a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and does not expect to present balanced ideas from the American administration led by Trump. This is confirmed by the envoy of French President Emmanuel Macron (Duchvaletti), he also confirmed the need to move to confront Israel regionally and internationally.

Dr. Osman Mohamed's Seminar on his book "The Revolution of the Egyptians: Between Economy and Politics and the Road to Development"

On Wednesday February 28th 2018, the Council held a seminar at its headquarters, where the former Minister of Planning, Dr. Osman Mohamed Osman, talked about his new book "Revolution of the Egyptians: Between Economy and Politics and the Road to Development".

- Dr. Osman presented in his book a method to analyze the uprisings of the Arab Spring as an attempt to explain them scientifically, and concluded that these uprisings were accompanied by "an implicit collapse of the social contract." In an attempt to compare the idea of the rentier state to the Egyptian reality, it is found to be baseless and does not apply to it. Agriculture and construction contribute more than half of Egypt's gross national product.

- Economic and social developments over the course of a decade have led to a change in the balance of power among the strata of society, and this is a fundamental reason for the popular anger of Mubarak and his regime. Since the mid-1970s, and more so since 2005, businessmen and capitalists have sought to expand their political influence to maintain their financial and economic conditions. Their method was to distance themselves from the domination of the military mindset and the transition to a full civilian rule and to push the beauty of Mubarak to fulfill this pur-

pose. At the same time, there were Egyptian-American differences on the subject of the nuclear reactor in Dabaa, the military bases, human rights and democracy, and personal relations between the leaders of the two countries. The most serious thing came when the United States of America expressed its satisfaction with the Muslim Brotherhood to take over the reins of power in Egypt, at the time the army was working to defend the style of the Egyptian state that prevailed in the sixties; In this context, his prominent role in preserving the Egyptian identity is due to the spread of religious extremism and religious resistance.

Meeting with the Japanese Ambassador in Cairo

On 4th March 2018, the Council hosted the Japanese Ambassador in Cairo- Mr. Taki Hiro, to discuss a number of regional and international issues as well as the bilateral cooperation between the two countries; the meeting was chaired by Amb. Dr. Mounir Zaharan– the chairman, Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad – the Director of the council, and a number of members, experts, and academicians.

The meeting focused on the following points:

The Japanese Ambassador confirmed that the world is currently facing two contradictory processes which are globalization and nationalism, he clarified that the best solution to overcome this dilemma is develop an international relations regarding to the principle of achieving a mutual benefits and building on the globalization benefits, especially on the economic level.

The vision of the Japanese government based on implementation of peace and stability in the world, by playing a positive role, and cooperating with allies, especially the United States, as well as international organizations within a regional framework and solving the situation in the Middle East. Furthermore, strengthen the cooperation between the countries, in the field of freedom and economic openness, in addition to support the relevant regional and international organizations such as; the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) and Regional Comprehen-

sive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which includes the ASEAN countries, and there are six countries outside of the group like; Australia, India, Japan, China, South Korea and New Zealand.

– On the regional issues, Japan is keen to achieve peace and stability in South China Sea region, and resolving the dispute between the two Koreas peacefully, as well as achieving the stability in the Middle East, especially in Middle East as is an important region with enormous economic and human power.

– In the context of directions above, Mr. Taki Hiro discussed the Japanese initiative which known as the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy”, **which is based on the following aims:**

– Play a key role in improving a global communication by creating a stable global environment to counter the terrorism in the developing countries which suffered a lot from it, and this will be through the international cooperation.

– Japan aims through the Global Compact for development to achieve equality in the development process and in the distribution of economic returns in order to achieve a mutual benefit.

– work to achieve the Global Compact for development goals, ensuring the promotion of service sectors to strengthen community development, achieve gender equality, and contribute to develop the education and health sectors, environmental issues and Managing risk in the face of climate change.

– Through this initiative, Japan also keen to build frameworks for bilateral cooperation at all levels, through cooperation with the public and private sectors, and civil society organizations, and

encouraging developing countries to work with them to achieve stability

– The strategy consists of two main axes:

The first: promoting the cooperation between the Asian and African continents, within the framework of expectations for high rates to achieve an economic growth within the two continents.

The second: move freely between the Pacific and Indian oceans, and promote the stability and development in the region as a whole.

– Economic openness, and economic grouping formed with countries in manufacturing processes contributes to maximizing economic returns and reducing production costs. This means that each country will take advantage of its economic potential and specialize in specific industries. It is necessary to engage in negotiations to develop agreements on these disciplines and future plans. To achieve this, Japan will work in cooperation with certain regions to become a gathering point for the re-export of goods and services.

– He concluded his speech by stressing Japan's keenness to strengthen the Japan-Egypt-Africa triangular cooperation, adding that Egypt will call for a conference soon to discuss African-Japanese cooperation ways in all fields, and most importantly is transferring the Japanese experience in field of industry and entrepreneurship to a mutual benefit of all parties.

Meeting with the French ambassador

On 11th of March 2018, the Council hosted the French ambassador in Cairo Stéphane Romatet, to discuss the bilateral relations between two countries, as well as the Egyptian–French coordination of mutual concerns, this meeting chaired by chairman of the Council – Amb. Dr. Mounir Zahran, the director of the council Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad, and a number of ambassadors and experts from the council’s members.

The French ambassador emphasized the following points particularly:

He discussed the development of the Egyptian–French coordination, and added that the two countries had a special relationship on the Middle East, and at global level, Cairo had a special place in the French foreign policy as well.

-He stressed the importance of working together to strengthen the current Egyptian-French cooperation in the political, economic, military, health, education and training fields, especially, there is an expectation that 2030 will be a turning point in the global economy where countries such as India will climb up to be among the first five economies in the world with (the US, China, Japan, Germany, the UK, and France). It is necessary to work with developing countries to build frameworks for effective partnership for the benefit of all, and to open an Egyptian-French dialogue to highlight the challenges and how to overcome.

– for the regional issues, especially the Syrian crisis, the Ambassador emphasized it needs to further discussions, and there is a persistent need to offering more solutions for this crisis, in addition to coordinate between Russia and US work on achieving a balance in the political process for all parties including the United Nations.

With regard to the peace process, the Ambassador said that the Palestinian cause become in the forefront of the rest regional issues; due to Trump’s declaration on moving the U.S embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and the recognition of Jerusalem state as the capital of Israel.

The Ambassador affirmed that the importance of working together to resolve these issues because if we not work to solve it, the current situation will not leads to the stability or achieving the peace in the future, he added that the European countries will not accept the American situation, and the European countries will work to find a fair and comprehensive solution to the satisfaction of both parties. France will recognize Palestinian state in the right time especially that the unilateral recognition of France will not change the current situation, or achieve desired benefit. On the other hand this recognition can be used as a tool to pressure on Israel.

On the African level, he expressed that France’s great concern is on the African issues, and how best can strengthen the cooperation with the African States in all fields to deal with the challenges in the Middle East, especially in the African coast and the Horn

of Africa, as well as the cooperation between the two countries in establishing a common vision to contribute to the stability, Security, as well as the Economic and anti-corruption issues. Although Africa has a great challenges but it has a promising opportunities for the future in all areas, especially for infrastructure and others sectors.

For Europe, the mechanism which the president Macron follow will contribute to dealing with the challenge the European Nations are facing, and achieving the stability in the continent, in addition to promote France's place in the world, and correcting the fake news about the France's situation towards many crisis, indeed the president Macron expressed the new generation's thoughts who has a new political visions, as well as he see Egypt as the most important elements of stability in the region, calling Egypt to work on the rehabilitation of young Egyptians to get leadership positions to pump new blood into the Egyptian government.

He concluded his speech by stressing on Egypt's strength point in Egyptian youth, and the real challenge facing Egypt is the rapid population growth, which requires a strategic vision, especially as it devours any indicators of development.

He also called for the establishment strategic partnership frameworks between the Council and similar French Think Tanks as well as signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) for cooperation between the Council and these Think Tanks, the ambassador's proposal was welcomed by the audience.

Meeting with the Swiss Ambassador in Cairo

On 29th March 2018, the Council hosted the Swiss Ambassador in Cairo- Mr. Paul Garnier, to discuss the bilateral relations between two countries as well as regional and global issues of common interest. the meeting was chaired by Amb. Dr. Mounir Zaharan– the chairman, and attended by Amb. Ezzat Saad – the Director of the council, and a number of members, experts, and academicians.

The meeting began by lamenting the sadness of lose one of prominent Egyptian diplomat Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Shaker – former president of the Council and one of its founders, who passed away on Wednesday evening on 28th of March 2018. The Swiss ambassador expressed his sincere condolences for him, stressing that Ambassador Shaker had a great place in Egyptian diplomacy.

The Swiss ambassador emphasized the following points in particular:

1-He confirm that the Swiss and Egyptian presidents perceived the importance of coordination between the two countries; especially that Egypt attracts foreign investments, and it already has a great share in the foreign investments, such as the agricultural, livestock, and food industries.

2- For small and medium industries, there are many Swiss companies want to enter the Egyptian market, but they need more fa-

cilities to be able to deal with its counterparts, and there made many visits by Swiss companies and Swiss officials to Egypt due to identify the investment opportunities in Egypt.

3- For Smuggled money to Swiss banks since the previous regime “ex-president Mubarak”, the ambassador emphasized that the Swiss government is reserving the balances in Swiss banks until reach a deal to make a reconciliation between the two parties, then inform the Swiss government to release these funds, as what happened recently with the Egyptian businessman Ahmed Ezz.

4- All the above mentioned is a part of Switzerland’s foreign policy objectives, which includes enhancing the economic cooperation as well as coordination with all its partners.

5- On the Swiss experience to achieve consensus community, he stressed that Switzerland has relied on community participation by various communities and parties to build a federal state that includes different nationalities, and establishing a decentralized government which follow the central government to provide services to citizens, in addition to enhance the technical education for advanced industrial systems to contribute to the community, based on qualification, rivaling, development, improving the performance, set assessment standards, which the state’s institutions based on to improve staff efficiency, furthermore, set training courses to strength the experience, the hiring standards for leadership positions must base on the efficiency and productivity, achieve the balance between the competency and the employees level, and work on applying some reforms on all State sectors, public and private.

Lecture by Dr. Nabil al-Arabi on “the failure of the international collective security system”

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs hosted Ambassador Dr. Nabil al-Arabi on, April 18th 2018, former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, to talk about the international collective security system and the reasons for its failure. The session was chaired by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, and attended by a group of Egyptian diplomatic and intellectual elite.

Dr. Al-Arabi has put forward the causes for the failure of the international collective security system, proposing the following elements as a start for treating that failure:

- 1) To make a serious attempt to determine the scope of the use of the veto before the United Nations Security Council by amending the text of article 40 of the Council’s Rules of Procedure so as to state explicitly that its decisions on humanitarian matters and the use of weapons of mass destruction are outside the scope of its veto.
- 2) To promote the revitalization of the responsibilities of the General Assembly and to use world public opinion efficiently to put pressure on States whose behavior threatens international peace and security.
- 3) To revitalize the role of the Non-Aligned Movement, which at a certain stage represented a universal conscience, which in cooperation with the European Union, could try to rebalance international relations.

Meeting with Chinese Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Syria

On 22nd of April 2018, a meeting was held at the headquarters of the Council with Ambassador Xie Xiaoaan Chinese Special Committee for the Peace Process in Syria and its accompanying delegation, with the participation of Ambassadors Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, Ali Al-Hefny, Coordinator of the Permanent Committee for Asian Affairs at the Council, Hisham Al-Zamaity, Secretary General of the Council, Magdi Amer and Abdel Fattah Izz El-Din, members of the Council. **The meeting included the following points:**

- The Chinese envoy stressed that China encourages dialogue and will play an important role in bringing the views of the parties concerned closer. It also played a role in the Korean crisis. It also plays a role in promoting dialogue and negotiation between the opposing groups in Syria and holding international and regional conferences to achieve common ground among all players to resolve the crisis. But one can not forget the existence of parties who fear the Chinese rise as well as the division of the international community and division within the Security Council.

- The US decision to use military force and its continued support for the militias in Syria will lead to further escalation in light of the conflict between these groups and their differing interests,

as well as continued support of the regional forces of many militias and armed groups.

- The solution to the crisis can only be achieved through a transparent and expanded dialogue with all parties, abandoning the use of force and stopping the escalation of the conflict, especially since this will not lead to stability of the region.

Meeting Minutes
with the Minister Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Cairo

On May 9th 2018, a meeting was held at the headquarters of the Council, which included Mr. Ibrahim Al-Duwairi, an expert in Palestinian and Israeli studies, with the Minister Delegate from the Chinese Embassy in Cairo, Ms. Liu Yong, to discuss current developments in the Palestinian arena.

During the meeting, a number of points were emphasized:

- That the solution of the Palestinian issue is important to maintain Egyptian and Arab national security and stability of the region.
- That the two-state solution is the only solution to the Palestinian crisis and to achieve peace by establishing a Palestinian state alongside the Israeli state.
- That the imposition of any solution from any party will return negatively to the overall situation on the ground and will cause aggravation, and reluctant to deal with the “century” American to disregard the rights of the Palestinian people in an independent sovereign state is an unacceptable solution, and this rejection included in the final statement of the Arab summit in Dammam.
- Egypt supports the resumption of negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides and makes efforts to resolve the Palestinian divide.
- Mr. Ibrahim presented the current situation in the region in connection with the peace process. **He stated the following:**

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- The political negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides have been suspended since April 2014 until now.
 - There are many crisis in the region, which have become a priority at the expense of the Palestinian cause.
 - Egypt's efforts to achieve reconciliation are facing many obstacles. Despite the Egyptian attempts and the travel of security delegations to meet leaders from both sides, they have not produced any decisive results so far.
 - The repercussions of the American decision to transfer the US Embassy to Jerusalem and recognize the city as the capital of the State of Israel.
 - The difficulties of the economic situation in Gaza and the humanitarian crisis there and Cairo's efforts to support the Palestinian brothers in the Gaza Strip through the opening of the Rafah crossing for the passage of individuals and assistance.
 - That what happens on the border, from protests every Friday, under the so-called "marches of return," aimed at giving a message that the Palestinians adhere to their right to return.
 - The meeting of the Palestinian National Council, held last April, was boycotted by Hamas and Islamic Jihad.
 - Trump declaration of withdrawal from the Iranian nuclear agreement, and the implications of that and the confrontation between Iran and Israel on Syrian territory.
 - Al-Duwairi expressed his pessimism that any negotiations with Israel's extreme right-wing government will not lead to any positive results.

Meeting Minutes with the head of the Iranian Interests Office in Cairo

On June 7th 2018, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council and Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, received Ambassador Nasser Kanani, Head of the Office of the Interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Cairo, at the headquarters of the Council in Maadi, **where the meeting addressed the following:**

1) Ambassador Mounir Zahran welcomed the guest, referring to the role and activities of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and being an independent non-governmental organization working within the framework of the Egyptian laws and receiving no external funding in accordance with its rules and regulations. He then gave the floor to the head of the Iranian office.

2) The Head of the Office indicated that he had been in Cairo for a month and that he had been in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 25 years. Most of his years were in the Central Asian and Former Soviet republics. He also worked in Jordan and as a representative in the Iranian National Security Council. **He added:**

- He praised the role of Egypt, its civilization, its historical and cultural weight and the appreciation of the Iranian people for that, stressing that there are common denominators between the two countries in this regard, allowing the possibility of building on them.

- He added that, he met with the head of the Egyptian Interests Section in Tehran before his visit to Cairo where he discussed

with him bilateral relations in various aspects, pointing out the need to activate these relations as well as coordination and joint consultation on regional issues, especially the Syrian file.

- The Iranian guest was keen to emphasize the special importance of the cultural relations between the two countries, pointing out the cooperation between Al-Azhar and the religious authority in Iran and the relations between the two historical institutions during the Shah's rule and their role in bringing the sects closer to Islam. In this context, he pointed out that most of the religious authorities in Iran have positive impressions of Al-Azhar and wish to revive their relations with him, and they asked the head of the Office to work on this during his work in Cairo.

- He said that while they understand the current conditions in Egypt and their keenness not to cause trouble for them, there is a need to resolve and revive bilateral relations and cooperate on resolving the crisis of the region by activating contacts between the two countries in various fields.

- On this point, the guest concluded that he proposes to establish a kind of informal dialogue, under what is known as Track II diplomacy, between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the Center for Strategic and Foreign Affairs Studies, supervised by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution and headed by Mr. Kamal Kharazi, Former representative of Iran to the United Nations in New York and former foreign minister. He added that this practice exists between them and many European countries and Saudi Arabia itself, despite the poor relations with them, stressing

that there are no caveats in this regard and that this proposal has been transferred to colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- The head of the office indicated that the head of the Egyptian Interests office in Tehran enjoys full freedom to conduct contacts and meetings with officials of foreign affairs and parliament. He was received by Foreign Minister Mohammed Jawad Zarif after his arrival in Tehran, while he finds it difficult to meet with the Foreign Minister in Cairo.

3) The Chairman of the Council, as a personal representative, welcomed the proposal of the head of the Iranian office, explaining that during his tenure at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he personally had an informal dialogue with the Permanent Representative of Iran in Geneva to restore relations with Iran in the early 1990s. Iran's parliament has issued an anti-Egyptian statement in Iran's parliament, thwarting efforts to restore diplomatic ties. And the second time the Iranian side maintained the name of one of the main streets against the desire of Egypt, especially since the accused accused of terrorism and convicted by a court judgment.

The Chair of the Council commended the Iranian position on the withdrawal of the United States from the nuclear deal with Iran not to escalate the position of the nuclear agreement with the group p5 + 1, stressing the need to stick to it by Tehran

4) Ambassador Ezzat Saad asked the Iranian guest to learn about the developments of the Syrian file and the dimensions of the growing tension between Israel and Iran in connection with the Iranian military presence in Syria and the reality of the Rus-

sian position in this regard. In this context, **the Iranian guest explained the following:**

- The Syrian file has become a complicated file, and all its interpretation of what is happening there, and on the field there is great progress in favor of the Syrian regime, and with the exception of limited military operations here and there, the file is completely political. There is a conviction among all parties that the solution of the Syrian crisis is political, and that armed extremist militias can no longer regain their former status. He added that what is going on from the Western alliance is to try to make political use of their continued support for extremist militias.

- He noted that the United States did not participate in the last meeting of the Astana Group, the first meeting after Washington withdrew from the Iranian nuclear deal. The Iranian guest believes that the path of Astana is the most important compared to the Geneva process, despite the limited number of parties. He noted that the Sochi platform plays a significant role in the Syrian dialogue with the participation of all the Syrian opposition and the regime.

- He Hinted that Iran has strategic cooperation with Russia in Syria, and that there is not necessarily a convergence in their views on each state's position of other issues such as relations with Israel or relations with the West. However, in general, Moscow does not support Israel's position on the Syrian file.

- Excludes any political intention of Israel, and no possibility, to wage war against Iran or its allies in the region, and what is happening between the two countries is a kind of hit and run.

Meeting with Mr. Nabil Fahmy, former Minister of Foreign Affairs To talk about “Is nuclear armaments in the Middle East an imperative?”

On June 12th of 2018 and upon an invitation from Ambassador Abdelraouf Al Reedy, the honorary Chairman of the Council, ECFA received former Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy to discuss his article published in Al-Ahram on 20th of May 2018 on “Is Nuclear Disarmament in the Middle East an Imperative?” It was attended by Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council and a number of ambassadors, experts and academics members of the Council.

He was keen to inform the audience about the content of the paper and the proposals it contained, instead of the withdrawal from the nuclear agreement with Iran or the withdrawal of other parties from it, where he proposed dealing with the failure of the agreement comprehensively, especially supported all countries in the Middle East, in principle, including Iran and Israel have established a Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Egypt has shown its readiness to accede to the Chemical and Biological Weapons Convention (CWC) if Israel accedes to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The movement entails five steps:

- 1) To establish a negotiating group from the countries of the

Middle East, under the auspices of the five permanent members of the Security Council, to provide continuity and work within the framework of the United Nations, with the participation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBTO), the most relevant technical organizations, in order to rid the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction and to preserve their means of delivery.

2) This can be achieved under the umbrella of one major system that brings together all countries of the region and various weapons of mass destruction, or by acceding to existing international agreements, adding some inspection procedures and the issue of means of delivery. The preferred choice for Mr. Fahmy is a combination of the two propositions.

3) The confirmation of the seriousness of the negotiating parties and prior to the commencement of the negotiations, they shall submit letters to the Security Council in which they commit themselves to achieving that objective during the period of the Joint Action Plan for the Iranian Nuclear Program (JCPOA).

4) The need to commit themselves not to develop their weapons of mass destruction during the ongoing negotiations. In this context, the international organizations concerned with the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction (IAEA, OPCW, CTBTO) can offer some confidence-building measures, provide a better environment for negotiation and contribute to the development of the verification system.

5) It is no exaggeration to say that the Middle East is on the verge of an extremely dangerous arms race, and the countries of the region and the international community have two options, either to begin serious and comprehensive negotiations on ensuring that all countries in the region are committed to eliminating nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction, or bear the serious consequences of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction among the countries of the region as a result of the international community's failure and double standards.

Meeting with the political adviser to the EU delegation to Egypt

On the 5th of August 2018, Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad ECFA Director and Ambassador Dr.Mohammed Badr Eldeen Zayed Member of ECFA received Mrs.Carole Demol, the political adviser to the EU delegation to Egypt at the Council's Headquarters. Upon the request of the guest, the meeting dealt with a brief presentation of the Council's mission, activities, partnerships, and the nature of the issues addressed in the conferences, workshops, and round tables organized by the council.

The Director of the Council, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, pointed out that the Council retains good working relationship with the European delegation to Cairo, as Mr.James Moran, the Former Head of the delegation, has more than once called for speaking with the members of the Council on developments of Egypt's relations with the European Union, whether on the aspects addressed in the Egyptian European partnership agreement or those which are out of the scope of this agreement, indicating the particular importance that Egypt attaches to its relations with the European Union for being Egypt's biggest economic and trade partner.

Mrs.Demol was interested in seeking our views on the following issues in particular:

- Developments in Syria, Egyptian vision on these developments, and recently concluded agreements between Syrian opposi-

tion groups under Egyptian auspices and Russian support.

- Egypt's vision on developments in Ethiopia, and the implications of these developments on the Egyptian Ethiopian bilateral relations particularly those concerned with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam issue.

- Recent developments in the State of South Sudan, and the last agreement between President Salva Kiir and the opposition leader Machar Sidoum.

Ambassador Saad and Ambassador Zayed clarified Egypt's position toward the above mentioned issues, in addition to answering some of the questions related to Egypt's African relations, and the security situations in the Middle East in general.

Symposium presented by HE Secretary General of the Arab League
Mr.Ahmed Aboul Gheit

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, on the 22nd of October 2018, hosted HE Secretary General of the Arab League Mr.Ahmed Aboul Gheit for giving a lecture on “ International developments and its impact on the Arab World”. The session was attended by an elite of ambassadors, academics, and experts in the field of foreign affairs. This session was opened by Dr.Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council.

During this lecture Secretary General dealt with the unprecedented risks through which the international order is passing during the current stage. He stressed that global situations are passing through a state of massive liquidity and rapid change, as well as witnessing the return of conflict between the Super Powers, and erosions in the stable rules upon which the Post- World War II Order was established. He also added that synergies between various phenomena such as the rise of right wing trends and the return of nationalism in their extreme forms alarm of forthcoming turbulence, and that other phenomena as climate change and the increased dependence on artificial intelligence applications, might get out of control and increase the state of liquidity and uncertainty .

His Excellency Secretary General also made reference to the tragic phase that the Arab World is going through, and the state of division and fragmentation from which the Arab world is suffering

which makes it incapable of dealing effectively with the serious challenges that the global situation poses in the future. He also added that the Arab League still represents the only framework through which the Arabs can discuss their problems and deal with jointly. But Absence of political will as well as the weak support offered by the States sometimes reduce its margin of activities and effectiveness in dealing with the challenges and risks facing the Arab World, particularly at the strategic level, pointing out that in spite of all of this, the Arab League continues to play its role through the pursuit of full integration and coordination between the Arab States in the economic, social and cultural policies.

A Meeting with Argentina's Ambassador to Cairo

On the 25th of October 2018, The Council received, with the participation of Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran; Chairman of the council, Ambassador/ Dr. Ezzat Saad; Director of the Council, and a number of experts and academics from amongst the members of the Council, His Excellency Ambassador/ Eduardo Antonio Varela, Argentina's Ambassador to Cairo.

During the meeting, a number of issues related to Argentina's internal economic situation and governmental procedures taken to combat such social and economic crisis, aiming at the reduction of debt ratios, domestic consumption, inflation ratios, and promotion of the rates of investment, were reviewed.

As regards Egypt-Argentina bilateral relations, His Excellency emphasized upon the political and economic relations that bring both countries together as well as the continuous talks between both sides for discussing the political situations and the crisis that the region witnesses, expressing his hopes for a comprehensive strategic dialogue to be launched by both countries with the objective of deepening cooperation fields between both of them.

Meeting with the Director of the Palestinian Center for Strategic Studies in Ramallah on Developments in the Palestinian arena, Chances for National Reconciliation Process, And the Proposals of Ideas and Initiatives With Respect to the Stalled Peace Process

A discussion, was held at the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs on 28th of November 2018 with the participation of Major General Mohamed Al-Mesry -the Director of the Palestinian Center for Strategic Studies in Ramallah together with Professor Ahmad Rafik who is Professor of Political Sciences at Al-Quds University and a group of Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs members, on developments in the Palestinian arena, chances for the national reconciliation process, and ideas and initiatives related to such issues with respect to the peace process.

The discussion addressed Three levels:

- 1- The Palestinian level which includes Two points of which the First is related to the current division among Palestinian Factions and the Second related to building of the political system as entire structure that can protect the Palestinian Issue.
- 2- The Palestinian-Israeli level which is not considered to be a part of the Arab-Israeli conflict any more but basically a Palestinian-Israeli conflict due to a number of reasons of which the most significant are: the signing of peace treaties with Israel by a number of states (Jordan and Egypt), progression of Arab region

towards normalization with Israel, and the Israeli internal changes as reflected by the rise of the extreme right.

3- The international level and what is being said on “The Deal of the Century” and the attempts made by the U.S. to pass it amid international concern about other issues related to countering terrorism and illegal migration.

- The discussion was concluded with emphasis on the presence of political personages who do not wish to achieve reconciliation and resolution of tension among peoples of the same nation.

- The Palestinian Authority probably sees that the solution does not lie in the 2011 document but lies in the 2017 document. And the Egyptian Leadership is now working on reconciling visions of both documents.

- The decision of boycotting U.S. Administration was wrong, and it would have been better off to reject the proposed solution without boycotting.

- Egypt would not establish any project outside the Gaza strip to help the people of Gaza over Egyptian territories, and no matter how the situation is, Egypt shall not open Sinai borders with Gaza.

- Both parties have erred and the past must be forgotten starting from today as there are major hazards threatening the Palestinian issue, which are of greater importance than Fatah and Hamas, and facing such hazards requires cooperation between both parties, in order to confront them, for the sake of boosting the Palestinian immunity to counter this great political project.

- The Arabs must be aware that Israel is not just the enemy of

Palestine alone, and the Arab Countries must unite on the basis of an Arab project as there is an Arab peace agreement that we can proceed from in negotiations with Israel as this Entity is not only a risk to Palestine alone but to all states of the region, where Egypt comes first as Egypt is the largest, leading, and most well-armed state in the region.

Delegations:
Visit of a delegation from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)

On Wednesday, January 3rd 2018, the meeting was attended by Ambassador/ Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, and Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna, member of the Council, together with a delegation of representatives of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, consisting of General Kristin Lund, Head of Mission, Judy Hyltn, Nils Vindeson and David Foley.

General Christine confirmed that the headquarters of the Authority is the city of East Jerusalem and its branch is located in Egypt in the city of Ismailia. She stated that the mission was the only one in the Middle East to monitor all cease-fire agreements between the five countries; Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan with observers in the Golan and the southern part of Lebanon. The other task is to support the countries concerned and to speak with the authorities and governments, not just the armies but the actors, which requires the need for further consultation with experts on regional developments, particularly the peace process, is essential for the visit of the Council, especially as the Council has an independent vision of transparency and clarity.

She also stressed that during the delegation's meeting with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **they assured them:**

- Egypt's first priority is to combat terrorism, followed by

the Iranian role in the region, then the repercussions of the American decision to transfer the US Embassy to Jerusalem, and the impact on the Palestinian cause.

- The declaration of East Jerusalem as the capital of Israel has hampered the peace process. All parties must cooperate to avoid further conflict within the region, all borders of all countries of the region must be preserved, work to develop a comprehensive approach to terrorism and reform of religious discourse, and finally work and coordinate with all the United Nations to activate its role on the ground.

- The United States can't be excluded from the peace process, although Washington can be integrated into a body of the five permanent members of the United Nations under the auspices of the United Nations to take care of the peace process.

The Pakistani Delegation's Visit to ECFA

The council received Dr. Maria Sultan, President of the South Asian Strategic Stability Institute (SASSI); and Mr. Nadeem Ashraf, Consul General at the Pakistani Embassy in Cairo; on March 6th , 2018.

This meeting's work was arranged by The Pakistani Embassy in Cairo for seeking the council's opinion on the agenda of an international business forum that would be held by the Pakistani side in Cairo on early May or late June, 2018; and which will coincide with the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Pakistan. Being a member of the forum organizing committee, Dr. Maria Sultan clarified that they are planning for the participation of public and private sectors organizations from both countries, such as the investment and industrial Authorities of the two countries, leading companies in the fields of trade, small and medium scale industries, and businessmen, etc.

She added that since both countries are among those that lie within the framework of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative, particularly The Silk Road Economic Belt which passes through the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Aden and the Suez Canal (each having a share in global trade with a rate of 17.7%, 6.5% and 11.5%, respectively); the symposium shall focus on achieving the maximum benefit from this initiative so that Suez canal and the Pakistani port of Gwadar would become among the world's mega sea-

ports; and that requires studying the security dimensions, related challenges facing traffic and trade across these regions, and the means of encouraging joint investments, indicating that they will begin this year by convening this forum with Egypt, then with Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and finally with China in 2019.

Dr. Sultan clarified that they believe that the forum's activities would take place through 8 working groups, which would be jointly headed by Egypt and Pakistan, for discussing the issues of: (transport, free economic zones, major projects, small and medium scale projects, natural resources, banks and finance, digital economy, military industrialization, and a working group for discussing counter-terrorism issues, etc.).

Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, indicated that the organizing committee can benefit from the works of the successful Belt and Road Industrial and Commercial Conference held on April 2017. That conference was organized by Egyptian Businessmen's Association and China Federation of Industrial Economics, under the auspices of the Minister of Trade and Industry; with the participation of the ministers of planning, transportation, energy and others, in addition to a number of banks and financing institutions such as China Development Bank, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) and several Egyptian banks.

Ambassador Saad added that he participated in the conference and noted the participation of Pakistan Board of Investment.

Dr. Sultan commented that she had already arranged for meet-

ings with officials of Egyptian Businessmen's Association, and that she requests the Council to provide her with the Egyptian authorities or persons that can, in this connection, provide advice on the preparation for this conference. In fact, the Council provided some of the information requested by the Pakistani delegation; expressing readiness for active participation in the works of the forum to be held later this year.

Meeting with the delegation of the Shanghai Institute for Political Studies (SIIS)

On April 22nd 2018, a meeting was held at the ECFA's headquarters with the Shanghai Institute for Political Studies (SIIS). It was attended by Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, Ambassador Ali Al-Hefny, Coordinator of the Standing Committee for Asian Affairs at the Council, Ambassador Hisham Al-Zmaiti, Secretary General of the Council, Ambassador Magdi Amer, and Ambassador Abdul Fattah Ezzeldine. The Chinese delegation consisted of, Ye Qing, Vice-Director of the Shanghai Institute for Political Studies, Prof. Li Weijian, expert and researcher at SIIS, Prof. Wang Yuzhu, Social Researcher, Mr. Wang Senhao, Third Secretary, Political Planning Department, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- The meeting began with Dr. Ye expressing his happiness at the regular meetings held between the two sides to discuss and consult on various issues, noting that the Chinese president is keen on many occasions to open a dialogue to discuss ways to open up to the world and enhance cooperation with international partners, especially the Arab world. The Arab-Chinese Forum will be held in Beijing next June to discuss ways to enhance cooperation. Beijing will host a major international exhibition from November 5-10, and a seminar on Arab-Chinese relations will be held on the sidelines.

- The meeting concluded by stressing that China is constantly evaluating the agreements and follow-up implementation and work with its partners to address the obstacles to implementation, and study the reasons for stopping, noting that the initiative of the belt and the Silk Road will benefit all countries and make joint efforts. There is an evaluation of the projects under the initiative and several studies are undertaken prior to the conclusion of any agreements.

- That the progress and development witnessed by Egypt within the framework of the international organizations are tangible indicators of this improvement, and focus on strengthening the local economy and face many crisis and challenges and try to work to achieve stability in the region and face the developments in many issues, and there are many opportunities for cooperation between the two sides.

- What happened in Syria is an example of the game of balance of power between nations. When the United States saw the balance of power being disrupted, the last military intervention was to give a political message that the United States would not allow others to control the drawing of the Syrian situation and the region as a whole.

A Visit by a Delegation of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)

Within the framework of exchange visits and strategic partnership that brings the Council and its partners in China, particularly the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), a delegation of the China Institutes paid a visit to Cairo within the period from 15th till 18th October 2018 . The visiting included business dinner and discussions were held on Tuesday 16th of October 2018. The Council's delegation included Ambassadors/ Dr. Mounir Zahran; Chairman of the Council, Dr. Ezzat Saad; Director of the Council, Hisham Al-Zamaity; Secretary General of the Council, Ali Al-Hefny; Coordinator of the Permanent Committee for Asian Affairs in the Council, Dr. Mohamed Tawfik and Magdy Amer; members of the Council, while the Chinese delegation included each of : Prof. Liao Baizhi; Deputy Director of the Institutes, Mr. Gong Zheng and Ms. Tang Tianbo; Researchers at the institutes.

The discussion agenda included a number of themes as follows:

- Development of Egyptian- Chinese bilateral relations following President Al-Sisi's recent visit for the attendance of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).
- Results of China- Africa cooperation during the forum, as well as the latest developments with regards to the Belt and Road Initiative.

- American foreign policy and Regional Issues.

The discussions were concluded with a number of points, the most important of which, were:

- Both Egypt and China are aware of the facts of the changing situations in the region and the necessity for coordination between both States within the framework of the peaceful settlements of the Regional issues. As well as the developments witnessed in the bilateral relations in all fields, particularly in the political field aiming at the exchange of common expertise and visions on the developments witnessed by the political scene under what China is looking forwards to greater openness to the Region and World States in an attempt to correction of the mistakes brought about by Western practices that aimed at achieving their Political Agendas, which shall only be fulfilled by correct understanding of the situations in the region and that necessarily requires a strong partnership with Egypt as for its leading role in the region with the aim of playing a role in the settlement of crisis in regions of conflict in each of Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq. Furthermore, China needs to be kept informed on developments related to the Palestinian Issue in order to stimulate the Palestinian parties to engage in an Inter-Palestinian Factions in-depth dialogue and to complete the reconciliation process, as well as to the Egyptian efforts made with regards to that context. All this comes within the framework of China's aspiration of creating a more safe world and not taking a dominating role such as the one aspired by the west which led to the consequences from which the region currently suffers.

The need for promotion of security issues in order to be upgraded to suit the level of relations between the two countries has also been noted, especially that it has not been upgraded to express the depth of relations which brings both countries together, particularly the challenge of terrorism which is one of the most common challenges that represents a threat to the Chinese “Belt and Road Initiative” as well.

With regards to Chinese Investments in the African Continent and the challenges facing Chinese Investments within the framework of the initiative as well, the importance of transparent and in-depth confrontations with the accusations directed to China has been emphasized. It has also been affirmed that China aims at achieving development. Furthermore, studying the possibility of reducing interests over loans granted to states bound by the initiative, particularly the African States, especially these interests are high compared to their Global counterparts.

The meeting was concluded by emphasizing that the China-Africa Cooperation is not instantaneous but it extends for years as China has been and is still the first trade partner of the Continent’s States, and that is the case with many other developing Countries, for China is an effective partner that has been able to establish numerous projects which offered thousands of job opportunities and did not seek to interfere in the States’ internal affairs, impose domination over such states, or change their regimes; but sought the creation of an atmosphere suitable for investments, provision of facilities, transfer and exchange of information, technology, and Chinese expertise.

Chinese Foreign Policy primarily focuses on working for the protection of its interests in the region and achieving peace and stability through joint actions, and does not aim at causing damage to the region or repeating mistakes of the West therein by changing the region's map with the resulting spread of terrorism and chaos, as well as using the region as a theatre of conflicts among the Super Powers in order to achieve their Agendas. But China aims to cooperate with our partners in the region, particularly Egypt in order to find the possibilities available for solving the crisis of the region and settling the situations. Particularly, China has no interests in getting involved in any conflict in the region which would lead to chaos that might cause threats to the Chinese Investments Projects and the Chinese Initiative.

China's Vision is to take over its responsibilities as an International Power seeking the achievement of Global Peace and Stability, enhancement of Global Economic Cooperation, achievement of integration amongst World States, creation of a more safe and secure environment, helping Developing States in achieving their economic renaissance, promotion of such States for the eradication of poverty and destitution therein, and the creation of an environment that enables their People to achieve their interests.

A Meeting with the Sino-Arab Cooperation Forum Delegation

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs received on the 10th of December 2018, at its headquarters, a delegation from The Sino-Arab Cooperation Forum. The Delegation was headed by His Excellency Ambassador Li Chengwen, who was accompanied by a number of Representatives of the Chinese Embassy in Cairo; as a part of his current visit to the region that included Mauritania, Tunisia, and Egypt.

The Egyptian Delegation included each of Their Excellencies: Ambassador Dr.Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the council; Ambassador Dr.Ezzat saad, Director of the Council; Ambassador Hisham El-Zamaity, Secretary General of the Council; Ambassador Ali El-Hefny, Coordinator of the Council's Standing Committee on Asian Affairs; Ambassador Dr.Mohamed Badr ElDeen Zaied and Ambassador Magdy Amer, Council's members.

The meeting included the discussion of a number of topics as follows:

- Chinese position towards the Sino-Arab cooperation,
- The Belt and Road Initiative,
- Highlighting the developments witnessed by the Middle East region.

Both sides agreed on continuing cooperation between the Council and the Forum; building relations of joint cooperation with the China-Arab Research Center on Reform and Development which

was established in the year 2016; holding meetings and dialogues within the framework of interests of both sides regarding a number of issues related to countering terrorism and extremism; and that both the Egyptian and Chinese sides shall seek the promotion of economic and security cooperation, information exchange, and also cooperation within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative for achieving development in the African Continent as well as in the region as a whole.

Chapter III



Council's Visits Abroad

The Development of Relations between Egypt and China in a visit of a delegation from the Council to China

At the invitation from the Chinese Association for Friendship, a delegation of the Council visited China from 7th to 11th May 2018, consisted of ambassadors: Mounir Zahran, Hisham Al-Zamaity, Ezzat Saad and Ali Al-Hefny. The Chinese delegation consisted of Chen Zhimin, president of the China Association of Friendship and member of the CPC Central Committee and deputy director of the Social and Legal Affairs Committee of the CPC Central Committee, and membership of Mr. Wang Sijie Director of China Association for Friendship and Former China's Special Envoy to the Middle East, Mr. Yin Gang Researcher at the Institute of West Asia and Africa of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Deputy Secretary General of Middle East Society of China, Mr. Wang Lincong Assistant the Director at the Institute of West Asia and Africa of Chinese Academy of Social Science and Director of the Office of International Relations, Prof. Dai Xiaoqi Professor at the Department of Arabic Language of Beijing International Studies University, Mr. Chen Shaoxin Deputy Secretary General of China Association for Friendship, Mr. Gu Fan Deputy Secretary General of China Association for Friendship. The visit included participation in a seminar on "Egyptian-Chinese social issues ... stability and development"

The conclusions and recommendations of the symposium are as follows:

- The development process in any country depends on its stability, and there is an organic link between the two as development is to ensure stability. In this context, Egypt was the first country in the region to overcome the repercussions of the Arab Spring and restore its stability after the successful campaign to combat terrorism in the Sinai Peninsula.

- The Chinese side expressed its optimism about the future of Egypt, praising the foundations of the development process set up by President Sisi and the Egyptian economy witnessed in recent years, recovery and achieving growth rates of about 5% of GDP, all of which have positive repercussions on the movement of foreign direct investment to Egypt and its overall economic and social conditions.

- Egyptian-Chinese bilateral relations have witnessed positive developments since the June 30th 2013 revolution and the numerous visits by President Sisi to China, as well as the historic visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Egypt in January 2016. In this context, emphasis was placed on the special importance of investing in the economic zone of the Suez Canal, especially in light of its importance to the economic belt of the Silk Road.

- The discussion touched on the situation of Muslims in China, especially in the Xinjiang autonomous Region in northwest China, where the Chinese side pointed out that there are no restrictions on the construction of mosques there and the improvement

of economic and social conditions in the province, with positive implications. The Chinese side was interested in learning about the relationship between religion and politics in Egypt and the mechanisms provided by the Egyptian state to combat poverty. In this regard, the Chinese side pointed out that 25.2% of the Chinese, the overwhelming majority of whom are in rural areas, continue to suffer from poverty as the state seeks to develop the health and education services provided to them.

- The two sides agreed to intensify exchanges of visits between them and further consultation on issues of bilateral cooperation and regional and international issues of common concern

Chapter IV



Council's Members activities

Ambassador Ezzat Saad's Participation in a Symposium at the Institute of National Planning

Ambassador Dr. Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council, participated on February 11, 2018, in a symposium organized by the Institute of National Planning on a paper presented by Dr. Heba Gamal El Din, a member of the Council, on “The concept of spiritual diplomacy ... a new path, latent risks, and alternative policies for decision-makers,” with the participation of the Institute’s faculty members, a number of council members, and some colleagues from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Dr. Heba, in her paper, sought to prove that in addition to traditional diplomacy, there is a clear rise of what she called spiritual (religious) diplomacy, which, in her view, aims at viewing religion as source of solution, and the political solution so as to be the source of governance and decision-making at the international level, within the framework of the so-called Abrahamic religion. Attempts to apply this concept inside the occupied territories have been initiated by UNRWA in order to change the identity of Jerusalem so as to become the capital of the Abrahamic state, but this approach must be taken advantage of and countered at the same time; advantage to be taken through considering service coexistence, and shifting from dialogue to the rationale of common services that calls for coexistence, common interest and community peace. Reassessment of the role and mission of some institutions, devel-

oping new ways of negotiation, and establishing partnerships with new partners under the banner of common spiritual interests to advance the cause of Arabism and interests of the Muslim world, to defend Jerusalem and bring about unification. Countering this approach is brought about by creating a preparedness and resistance front and promoting the tolerant Egyptian model; reviewing some of the issues that cause societal congestion and resolving them in terms of spiritual service cooperation under the Egyptian civil state.

During his speech, Ambassador Saad emphasized the following points:

1. There are religious and philosophical roots for many of the rules of public international law and international relations, including, for example, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rules of international humanitarian law, etc.

2. There is a clear confusion in that paper with respect to concepts, for example: there are differences between traditional diplomacy, whether bilateral or multilateral, and public diplomacy (The two concepts have been confused in that paper).

Dr.Ezzat Saad's Participation in a Symposium at The Egyptian Center for Kurdish Studies and Research.

Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, Director of the council, participated on February 24th 2018, in a symposium organized by the Egyptian Center for Kurdish Studies and Research, which is headed by Dr. Rajai Fayed- a member of the council. The theme of the symposium was “The idea of Mr. Abdullah Ocalan, Leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), on the democratic nation as an alternative to Kurds' tendency to separate from the states in which they live (Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Iran)” .

A number of academics and experts, including council members, in addition to some Iraqi academics and a number of Kurds residing in Cairo , participated in the symposium.

His intervention was centered upon the fact that the Post-World War II International Order was settled on the non-recognition of any minority group's right of secession, wherever they may be.

In this context, the right to self-determination and independence has been recognized by the United Nations system of Territories dominated by colonialism, falling under colonialism, or those under the mandate system. Ambassador Saad added that the foundation of the international system is based here on the idea that once human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected without discrimination on the basis of race, religious belief, color or sex, then there is no need to adopt a special system for the pro-

tection of minorities similar to the one that prevailed during the League of Nations era and was one of the causes of the League of Nations' collapse.

The United Nations was not the only organization to adopt this approach, but also all regional international organizations, including the Council of Europe.

Report on the participation of ECFA in the Second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Geneva from 23rd of April to 4th May 2018

During the period from 2rd of April to 4th of May 2018, the delegation of the Council under the chairmanship of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chair of the Council, and ECFA Members Dr. Sayed Bahi al-Din Abdul Hamid, and Dr. Yousra Abu Shadi, the experts in nuclear issues, participated in the work of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference 2020. A report was prepared containing the deliberations and results of the meeting, and observations thereon, and a number of recommendations for: Improving the review mechanism and preparatory committees, ‘Talk Shop’, so that the preparatory committees turned into isolated islands, without follow-up between them, and each concludes with a summary of the president on his personal responsibility, without negotiation with the delegations of the state parties, and does not honestly reflect the views of the delegations of the 117 participating state parties

These recommendations are the responsibility of the State Parties to the Treaty, including Egypt, and it is necessary to activate, if there is faith in them, perseverance and serious follow-up, especially in a collective framework such as the Non-Aligned Movement, Treaty.

It was also stressed on the need, in the event of belief in all or some of these recommendations to move on the official and political level to put them on the Non- Aligned Movement Agenda for adoption or improvement, and the League of Arab States could provide an initiative in this regard; to amend the rules of procedure and submit draft resolutions to the 2020 Review Conference for the purpose of improving the review mechanism and reforming the nuclear-weapon States, which cannot be played by civil society organizations because of their limited role in campaigning for such initiatives.

It is conceivable that the indefinite extension of the treaty, adopted in 1995, could be re-presented for discussion at the 2020 Review Conference, especially since that resolution was adopted without a vote on the 1995 Middle East resolution, which the United States retracted through working paper number (33), which was presented to the Second Preparatory Committee, although it was one of the three depositing countries it adopted -with Russia and Britain in 1995.

The participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad, Director of the Council in the work of the Fourth International Symposium on Modern Global Governance from the 14th to 15th of May 2018 – Beijing

On May 14th and 15th 2018, Ambassador Dr. EzzatSaad participated at the Fourth International Symposium on Modern Global Governance in Hangzhou, Southeast China, at the invitation of the Chinese Institutes of Contemporary International Studies (CICIR). His Excellency presented a working paper entitled “Diplomacy in the Information Age ... A Window to Good Governance”, **which included three main points as follows:**

- 1) The definition of good governance, which is the relationship to diplomacy in light of the information age and the challenges it faces under Western applications, which can be described as one of the bad forms of governance.
- 2) Standards of good governance in the information age, in connection with American practice in the era of the new American administration.
- 3) Discuss some ideas on how to be effective in the age of the modern diplomatic system.

He stressed that good and effective governance is one of the basic ways to make a fair and effective decision according to the criteria set by the United Nations, which affirms that good governance “must be accountable, transparent, rule of law, participation,

inclusiveness, legitimacy, efficiency and justice”.

He also pointed out that digital diplomacy is one of the means of diplomatic work as a result of the technological progress of the modern era, which in turn influenced political concepts, systems of government and actors.

He also reviewed the negative developments witnessed by the Western society in the information age in terms of lack of good governance standards in the context of advocating isolation rather than openness, as advocated by the new American administration, unlike other countries such as China, which call for more joint efforts to promote Common development and mutual benefits under the belt and road initiative. **In this context he pointed out:**

- The bias of some Western media and its lack of credibility, which is reflected in the handling of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the demonstrations in the Gaza Strip.

- The use of force and pressure in the face of legal obligations, which is highlighted in the International withdraw from the Iranian nuclear agreement, despite the commitment of other parties to it, and the declaration of the US administration to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in violation of all relevant international laws, rules and principles which affects the credibility of the United States and solving, regional crisis.

- The trade war in the face of free trade, through the imposition of US tariffs on Chinese goods and products and Chinese investment in the United States, which is conducive to further conflict and trade wars affecting the world economy, the international

trade system and the role of the World Trade Organization.

- Working outside the UN system, the Western tripartite strike led by the United States, Britain and France presages the beginning of a new era of threat to the stability, integrity and territorial integrity of States; these are principles affirmed in the Charter of the United Nations.

- He concluded by discussing how diplomacy can cope with the modern era of information by working on the concept of digital diplomacy and its tools, especially that it goes beyond the concept of using social media, working to raise the skills of diplomats, and developing a special strategy for spreading the concept and developing tools for improving and enhancing the use of this tool from the tools of diplomacy.

Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna's Report
On United Nations' Activity in the field of international law

During the period from April till June 2018, Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna Member of Board Member of ECFA was participated in numerous activities convened by the United Nations in the field of international law, either within the framework of the International Law Commission (ILC), the General Assembly or the Security Council.

As well as he participated US Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) meeting with several members and leaders of the council. Furthermore, at the invitation of Dr. Yassin Al-Ayouti, he gave a lecture at the University of San Francisco in New York and spoke in this lecture on the activity of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs in following up regional and international issues.

The most Significant of these activities was the United Nations celebrated this year the International law Commission's seventieth anniversary at the headquarters of the International Organization in New York, as well as in its European headquarters in Geneva. An official ceremony was held on 21st of May 2018 in New York. President of the United Nations General Assembly, the Legal Counsel of the United Nations, Chairman of the International Law Commission (ILC), Chairman of the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, and the Legal adviser of the United States Department of State as representative of the host

State, spoke during this ceremony.

Being one of the oldest members of the International Law Commission; he had the honor to speak during the ceremony. He addressed in his speech on the Commission's work, achievements and relations with the Legal Committee of the General Assembly, emphasizing the significance of the Committee's work since its establishment in 1947. The Committee has prepared multilateral treaties addressing the most significant areas of international relations, the law of the seas, the law of treaties, the jurisdictional immunities of States and their property, and the law of the non-navigational uses of international watercourses, etc. The Commission is currently preparing legal articles on a number of important contemporary issues. This includes drafting an international convention on the determination of international efforts to combat crimes against humanity, developing rules that stress upon the responsibility of international organizations for their illegal acts in accordance with the responsibility of States, determining the obligations towards the protection of persons in the event of disasters, the situation of aliens and migrants with respect to their expulsion from a state territory, protecting the environments that are prone to destruction during armed conflicts, protecting the atmosphere from pollution, providing for the immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction, the responsibility of the State in cases of international succession, and the customary international law, etc. All these legal articles shall be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly for adoption and demanding states to

enforce these laws and abide by them.

In Geneva, on the occasion of the celebration, a number of symposia were held by the International Law Commission (ILC). Legal advisers from Member States and senior experts of international law participated in these symposia which focused on various aspects of the Commission's work in the field of progressive development and codification of international law. The Somali judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, the current president of the International Court of Justice, the Legal Adviser of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs as the representative of the host country and the heads of a number of specialized organizations based in Geneva, spoke during these symposia. President of the International Court of Justice addressed in his speech on the position of developing countries and their contributions to the development of international law.

Professor Kennedy Gastorn of Tanzania, Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), in which Egypt has participated in its foundation, emphasized the significance of the participation of the "AALCO States" in the Committee's work in order to reflect the legal bases of their interests and aspirations. He also announced that the annual conference of the Organization will be held this year in Tokyo, Japan, from 8 to 11 October 2018, with the aim of promoting legal cooperation between African and Asian countries and unifying their positions on contemporary international legal issues. He invited several members of the International Law Commission (ILC) to participate in

this important conference, and Amb. Hassouna has been invited as the representative of the African Group in the Committee.

He also followed the meetings held by the Security Council on 17 May 2018 on the subject of the application of international law within context of maintenance of international peace and security. All of the Security Council's members, as well as many UN members, and judges of international tribunals, participated in the Council's discussion on this subject. In this context, UN Secretary General emphasized that international law is a fundamental pillar to the work of the United Nations, and that the Security Council is responsible for ensuring respect and commitment by all Member States. He also praised the role played by the Council over years in supporting international law, supporting peaceful settlement of international disputes, and the development of international criminal law through the establishment of international criminal tribunals to counter impunity.

Several developing countries, including Egypt, called for the reform of the United Nations and the provisions of international law during this discussion. They also called for developing the role of the United Nations in peace-keeping and peace-building processes, noting the significance of early intervention in settling disputes to prevent the parties of a conflict from using force to protect their rights. And they emphasized that international law guarantees protection for all countries, particularly developing countries suffering the oppression and domination of major powers.

In Washington, Ambassador/ Hussein Hassouna participated in

a meeting, held by the US Council on Foreign Relations, on the Middle East and related US policy, during last June. he was keen to clarify Egypt's position on the current developments in the region and the role it plays in order to arrive at a political settlement of disputes, countering terrorism and maintaining peace and stability.

On the other hand, meetings were conducted with a number of the Council's leaders, including Ambassador Robert Danin, former official at the Department of State , and Ambassador Frank Weisner, former US Assistant Secretary of Defense and former US Ambassador to Cairo, during which he held talks with them on the possibility of enhancing communication and cooperation between the US Council and the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs. This was welcomed from their side and they suggested that our Council's activities, publications, research and suggestions, be provided to them as this could facilitate establishing such cooperation.

Through Amb. Hassouna's work at the International Law Commission (ILC), he observed an important case brought before the British courts concerning a matter proposed before the Commission, namely the customary international law. Since, nearly, two years, the banned Freedom and Justice Party filed a lawsuit before a British court in London demanding the arrest of the members of an Egyptian military delegation, headed by Major General Hijazi, during their official visit to London, through alleging their responsibility for crimes against humanity in confrontation with members of the Muslim Brotherhood during their tenure.

After consulting him on this case, Sir Michael Wood, a British

member of the International Law Commission, who served as the legal adviser to the British Foreign Office, provided the British legal body, both foreign and competent, with the conclusions of the study conducted by the Commission on customary international law.

Thereupon, the British Court, in unanimous opinion of judges, issued a ruling that the Egyptian military delegation enjoyed immunity according to the rules of customary international law, which is considered to be a cornerstone of British law, under which the host state is obliged, in accordance with the 1969 UN Convention on Special Missions, to grant immunity to special missions during their stay in the State so that they may not be subjected to interference, arrest, detention or criminal prosecution, similar to the immunity enjoyed by members of permanent missions, in accordance with the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The British Court stated in its ruling that its opinion was based on the analysis and conclusion of the United Nations International Law Commission (ILC).

**A Brief Report on the Participation of Dr. Yusri Abu Shadi in
the proceedings of the Sixty-Second Annual Regular Session
of the IAEA General Conference held
from 17th to 21st September 2018.**

Dr. Yusri Abu Shadi, a member of the Council and a former inspector for the IAEA, participated in the proceedings of the Sixty-Second Annual Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference held from 17th to 21st September 2018; he was keen to submit a report on the proceedings of the meeting; the following were among **the most significant of what was pointed out to:**

170 member states of IAEA were invited to attend the conference, of which only 157 states had the right to vote on the resolutions, as 13 countries did not fulfill their financial obligations towards IAEA. Ambassador Marta Giakova of Slovakia was selected for the presidency of the conference; Egypt had participated with a high-level delegation led by Dr. Mohamed Shaker, Minister of Electricity; Ambassador Omar Amer, Egypt's ambassador to Austria; and a number of heads of Egyptian nuclear authorities; as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

-The agenda of the conference was agreed upon without discussion or voting, including the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities, that was later submitted by the Arab states, despite Israel's objection. The agency's budget for next year, amounting to \$371 million, in addition to \$86 million as a voluntary contribution, mostly

from USA for technical cooperation, was also approved.

Dr. Shaker delivered Egypt's statement to the first morning session, in which he spoke on the near construction of the Dabaa nuclear plant; the signing of engineering contracts for construction of reactors and fuel supply in December 2017; the visit, that Egypt awaits, by a delegation of experts from IAEA to the Dabaa site; and Egypt's need for energy from various sources. He also spoke on Egypt's nuclear activities, particularly those of the second research reactor; radioisotope production; and increasing the energy of the nuclear accelerator. The Minister also called for the importance of accession of all Middle East States to the NPT and subjecting all nuclear facilities to inspection by IAEA.

- The Israeli delegate strongly attacked all Arab states for lack of cooperation in the field of regional security and for submitting the Israeli nuclear capabilities issue; and he singled out Iran and Syria. In another intervention, he mentioned that there are four states in the region that are not adhering to the safeguards system as a justification for rejecting the Arab clause. It is the first time in this conference for the names of these states to be explicitly mentioned in order: Iran - Syria - Libya - Iraq.

- As is the case every year, Egypt proposed a draft resolution on the applications of the IAEA safeguards system and freeing the Middle East from nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction (WMD); a resolution that Egypt used to annually propose and submit to a direct vote since 2006; for which approval is always obtained but without any mechanism for implementation, and per-

haps not explicitly mentioning the name of Israel in such resolution is the most important reason for obtaining approval. Israel has, as usual, objected to the second clause of the resolution on the necessity for accession of all states of the region to the NPT and requested a special vote on such clause, which led Egypt to ask for voting twice on such clause and on the resolution as a whole. This scenario is being annually repeated since several years. **The voting results were as follows:**

The second clause: 114 states agreed upon that clause (The number of states accepting that clause was 123 in 2017), was rejected by one state (Israel), and 13 states abstained from voting (only 5 states abstained from voting in 2017), namely, The US, Canada, India, Togo, Malawi, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jamaica, Lesotho, Mozambique, and Zambia. India used to justify its abstention from voting by stating that it does not believe that the agency is the political body responsible for inviting accession to this treaty.

As for the resolution as a whole: It was agreed upon by 115 states (Out of 123 states accepting that resolution in 2017), and was not rejected by any state; with 14 states abstaining from voting (Compared to only 6 states in 2017), namely, the US, Israel, Canada, Togo, Malawi, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jamaica, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zambia, Philippines, Burkina Faso (89.1%), (Compared to 96.1% in 2017, i.e.7% less).

Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad at The Ceremonial Celebration of “The Russian Statesman and Academician, Yevgeny Primakov”

At the invitation of the Russian Embassy in Cairo, Ambassador Dr.Ezzat saad, Director of the Council, took part in the ceremonial unveiling of the bust of the Russian statesman and academician Yevgeny Primakov on October 14th, 2018. During his intervention; His Excellency mentioned that he came to know the late academician Yevgeny Primakov, at the beginning of his work as Ambassador of Egypt to the Russian Federation, in the winter of 2016, at the kind invitation of a common friend, Journalist Samy Emara. His friendship with Primakov was an extension to years of working in Moscow and working closely with him, whether within the framework of his initiative “ The Russia- Islamic World Strategic Vision Group” or as President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation.

He said that Late Primakov represented the voice of the Middle east, particularly the Arab Region, in Russia; as he was the person who was most able to know the regional issues, orientations of events, and policies therein, from an objective perspective consistently caring for the common interests of those states with his country, Russia.

The Late academician wrote numerous books on the region and its issues, representing a key reference for those who would like to stand over the region’s problems, including:

“The Middle east: the known and the hidden”, or “The Middle

East on stage, and behind the scenes”, “Years in major politics”, “Egypt in the age of President Abdel-Nasser”, “Anatomy of the Middle East Conflict”, “The World without Russia”, “The world after 11 September and Invasion of Iraq”, “The East after the collapse of the colonial system”, and others.

Primakov was keen, in his book “The Middle East on stage and behind the scenes” whose First edition appeared in 2006 under the title of “The Middle east: the known and the hidden”, before the publication of many further editions in several Arab Capitals, to review the events of the past through what is somewhat similar to commandments by which he aimed to rationalize present time steps for seeking a better future for his country and the world. This emerged from the cumulative experience and the lessons gained over several centuries since the Sixties of last century which has witnessed the beginning of his association with the region as a correspondent for the Pravda news paper that represented the mouthpiece of the Soviet Communist Party in Cairo; the City within which he came to be linked to the most important political symbols in Egypt and the Arab World.

Observers cited the extremely influential role primakov had in saving the most important State Institutions after the collapse of the Soviet Union as he accepted Presidency of the Foreign Intelligence Service during the early 1990’s of the last century before moving, in 1996, to the Russian foreign Ministry which was on the verge of collapse after the successive resignations of many of its most prominent stars in protest against the policies of Primakov’s

predecessor, Andrei Kozyrev. And once more, Primacov answered the Nation's Call by accepting the Premiership in very difficult circumstances at the time of the culmination of the Global Financial Crisis in 1998 and the State Duma Parliamentary Community rejection of President Yeltsin's nomination of Chernomyrdin for Premiership once more.

Report
On Participation Chairman of the Council; in Nuclear Security, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Workshop (Riyadh from October 30th to November 1st, 2018)

With the invitation of Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) in Riyadh, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the Council, participated in the workshop opened by University President **Dr. Abdulmajeed bin Abdullah Albanyan** and Prof. Wyn Bowen, Dean of Academic Studies of the Defence Studies Department at King's College London. Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) and the Security Studies Research Unit at King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (KFCRIS) also participated in this initiative.

Speakers who participated in the meeting included Professors and specialists from Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, Ambassador/Dr. Mounir Zahran from the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), in addition to those interested in nuclear security from Saudi Ministries of Defense and Aviation, Interior, and Health, as well as the Saudi Arabia National Guard (SANG), in addition to participants from UAE and Bahrain. Egyptians from the faculty of Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS), namely, Dr. Ahmed Saad and Dr. Adel Mohamed Ali, on secondment from Egyptian Atomic Energy Authority and Nuclear Power

Plants Authority (NPPA), were also among the participants.

The nuclear security regime has passed through several stages during its development since having been started by the USA at the end of the second world war in August 1945 following bombing of the two cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; after which came Eisenhower's initiative "Atoms for Peace" at the beginning of the 1950s, followed by Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (PTBT), then the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and then the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996, in addition to bilateral treaties between Washington and Moscow, the most important of which were the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty), from which president Trump has announced withdrawal.

Spread of nuclear and radioactive substances and weapons has great hazards and several negative influences on human health, life and environment, not to mention their destructive capacity to facilities in various world states. This led the USA and the Soviet Union to enter into talks to limit the influences of such substances and weapons as they both possess the largest stockpile of such substances and weapons.

Modern issues of Non-Proliferation include NPT and its 5 yearly review conferences, and which has its 10th conference being prepared for 2020, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its entry into force; concluding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in the UN in 2017 which is the treaty that nu-

clear states announced having no intention to join it; Humanitarian initiative for which conferences were convened since 2013 in Norway, then Mexico, and then Austria that adopted an announcement with respect to such initiative on not using nuclear weapons, that have been also adopted by more than 150 states.

A panel discussion was held on “Nuclear Security in the Middle East”. That discussion witnessed the participation of Ambassador Zahran; as well as Ambassador Naif Alsudairy, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Canada; Dr. Khaled Aleissa, Atomic Energy Research Institute Director and Advisor to President of King Abdel Aziz City for Science and Technology; and Hassan Al-Bahtimi, an Egyptian faculty member of King’s College London. While Saudis focused on Iran’s threat to region’s security through demonstrating the hazards of its nuclear capacities, Ambassador Zahran focused on the hazards of Israel’s nuclear capacities and highlighted its non-adherence to NPT; in addition to obstructing, in collaboration with the US, the project of establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) since 1974; whereas a resolution in that regard was issued by the General Assembly, then the Middle East Resolution issued by the 1995 NPT Review Conference; and based on that resolution, a resolution for the indefinite extension of the treaty has been issued, and then what has been decided in that regard in the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, including the call for convening an international conference on establishing that zone before the end of 2012, which was the con-

ference that Israel and the USA have so far prevented its convening. This would have negative ramifications for the future of the treaty, on occasion of preparing for the 2020 NPT Review Conference; not to mention the risks of nuclear radiations leaks from the Israeli Dimona nuclear reactor in Negev Desert, and its risks to the life and health of the Peoples of the Middle East, particularly in Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia.

The symposium indicated internal threats related to nuclear programmes, and reviewed various crisis to which peaceful nuclear installations were exposed to, especially in South Africa before joining the NPT in 1993, in the USA where Uranium fabricating facilities in Tennessee were breached due to insufficient security procedures, and the Smirnov accident in Russia who tried selling Uranium in the Market after stealing it due to his need for money. In this regard, nuclear security procedures formulated by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were reviewed.

The importance of spreading nuclear security culture to officials responsible for nuclear facilities and employees, has been focused on, so as to take the necessary security precautions for protecting these facilities through strengthening of security and surveillance measures by using alarm devices and cameras, and raising awareness among workers, companies in charge of building and maintaining such facilities, and officials responsible for guarding them. In this regard, officials at Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) reviewed educational and study programmes, as well as training courses, at the university; including the obtain-

ment of Masters Degree.

The symposium did not tackle two important disasters whose fame spread globally in the area of nuclear facilities for peaceful purposes, namely, the Chernobyl reactor disaster in Ukraine in the 1980s, and the Fukushima disaster in 2011; though I publicly alerted the organizers to such disasters.

Ambassador Zahran submitted a paper on nuclear security in the Middle East, especially indicating Israel's non-peaceful nuclear capacity, the risks of Dimona reactor and its radiations to environment and health of the inhabitants of neighboring states, particularly Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, the risks of Israel not subjecting all its nuclear facilities to the IAEA comprehensive Safeguards System. He also noted failure of attempts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East, indicating the 1995, 2000, and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, resolutions, and their non-implementation; non-implementation of the nuclear disarmament commitments by nuclear states, failure of the 2005 and 2015 Conferences for not implementing what have been pre-agreed upon with respect to the Middle East; warning that non-implementation of such resolutions and the nuclear states nuclear disarmament commitments will raise legal questions on the resolution for indefinite extension of the treaty in the 2020 Conference.

Avoiding mentioning the risks of Israel's continued nuclear weaponization and not subjecting its nuclear facilities to the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards System, by English speaking lecturers

as well as Arabic speaking lecturers, was noted; particularly for those from Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Bahrain; Ambassador Zahran was the only one to mention that issue, while those others addressed Iran's nuclear capacity and its threat to Gulf States.

Participation of Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad in the Fourth Session of The “Russia and The Islamic World: A Strategic Partnership” Group Meeting

With the invitation of Presidents of the Russian Republics of Tatarstan and Dagestan, Ambassador Dr.Ezzat Saad - Director of the Council, participated in the Fourth session of the “Russia and the Islamic World: A Strategic Partnership” Group meeting which was held from 11th to 13th of November 2018 in a resort on the Caspian Sea Coast in the Russian Republic of Dagestan located in the southwest of Russia.

The agenda of the meeting concerned issues of extremism, terrorism, as well as methods and means of youth protection against the dangers of terrorism through political, economic, and social empowerment; improvement of the quality of education, utilization of technology, as well as educational and youth exchange between Russia and the Islamic States.

As the first speaker during his participation in the work of the First session, he made a speech referring to the great role undertaken by the Egyptian Government, under the personal auspices of President of the Republic, to empower youth; whether through the organization of the World Youth Forum which held its Second session from 3rd to 6th November, 2018, or through the Decree of establishing “the National academy” for qualifying youth and government employees for taking on leading positions; pointing out

the possible utilization of Egypt's experience in such field by the Strategic partnership Group in connection with a proposal made by Russia to establish a "School of Future Leaders" for Russia and the Islamic World; this proposal was agreed upon by the group members.

Ambassador Mahmoud Karem's Report on his participation in International Group eminent experts for discussing: "The achievement of an objective progress with respect to nuclear disarmament"

Based on the initiative of Japan's Prime Minister Taro Kono through which he constituted an international group of eminent experts for discussing: "The achievement of an objective progress with respect to nuclear disarmament"; the committee held the Third meeting in the Japanese City of Nagasaki from 14th to 16th of November, 2018. Ambassador Mahmoud Karem attended those meetings.

The committee, which is funded by the Japanese Government in Nagasaki, was held after The United Nations General Assembly First Committee dealing with disarmament and international security matters had adopted, and voted on, the resolutions related to the committee. This marked a milestone for our meetings in Japan due to the emergence of deep substantive disagreements, before the First committee, among nuclear and non-nuclear states which submitted a draft convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Disagreement arose, as well, between Japan and the US over the draft resolution on the disarmament of nuclear weapons annually proposed by Japan due to the adoption of the new US nuclear policy that increases the reliance on nuclear deterrence. This disagreement between US and Japan was new in form

and content before the first committee, and thus had an impact on the work of our committee in Nagasaki.

Several key issues emerged during the meetings in Japan:

The composition of the committee was basically biased in favor of the nuclear states. Two experts from the US, as well as a Russian, and a French expert; who were fully in favor of nuclear weapons; had participated in the meeting, while the responsibility for achieving substantive balance fell on the shoulders of the sole representative of the Non-Alignment and Non-Nuclear States; namely the Egyptian representative. Despite the presence of an independent Canadian-Pakistani expert (Tarek Raouf), but the organizing committee succeeded in polarizing and using him to write the conclusive results summary which showed that his position stands far away from balance. And in spite of the presence of MS. Angela Kane the Former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, she was silent in many situations, and her speech, was given only after the Egyptian expert had asked her to speak and explain the UN position towards the issues and resolutions of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, as well as having been a brief one.

The Japanese Government was keen to hold the meeting in the City of Nagasaki that, as well as the City of Hiroshima, had been struck by a nuclear attack on the 6th and 9th August, 1954. This was done as an attempt by the Japanese Government to show governmental sympathy and support to the feelings of the peoples of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, for sending a governmental message to the

civil society and the numerous effective Japanese Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that are working to exert pressure over Japan in order to withdraw from the US nuclear umbrella, and to vote in favor of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This has been demonstrated in a message sent by Foreign Minister and delivered by the Japanese Parliamentary Minister in charge of foreign affairs in addition to our numerous visits to Governor and Mayor of the city in order to meet them, wreath laying over the cenotaph in memory of the victims, visits to the national nuclear museum, meeting the survivors of the Nagasaki nuclear attack, visiting some of the schools that have been rebuilt after August 1945, visiting the site of the nuclear explosion where the nuclear bomb had been dropped over the city in 1945. An extended meeting of the civil society with committee members was organized before the Japanese media by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this meeting we listened to the statements made by the representatives of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in which they demanded that the nuclear weapons used in Nagasaki be absolutely the last use of nuclear weapons, as that would contravene the international law, as well as contradicting the 1996 resolution of the International Court of Justice, contravening the provisions of the International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights Instruments as well, and the right of humanity to life. They also spoke on their refusal of the new theories on “the limited use of nuclear weapons”, calling upon nuclear states to change their nuclear deterrence policy that have led to nuclear brinkmanship and

threatening international peace and security, complying with the goals and objectives of Article VI of the Treaty on Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Others have requested the participation of feminist movements in the campaigns of international community for nuclear disarmament, dissemination of the culture of nuclear non proliferation through closer collaboration among Non Governmental Organizations around the world, particularly in the Middle East and the Arab world which are exposed to threats from Israel.

The committee concluded its work by an international press conference covered by both local and international media and during which Chairman of the committee spoke briefly on what took place during the meetings.

During all discussions, Amb. Karem deliberately made reference many times to Egypt's initiatives to establish a Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East since 1974 and the 1990 initiative for establishing a zone free of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction (WMD/FZ) in the Middle East including the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. He has repeatedly warned of the persistence of Israel staying outside the treaty which would constitute a hindrance to the achievement of its operations. He also reminded the attendees that the 1995 indefinite extension package deal wherein the Resolution on the Middle East, that did not include any other region, and which was adopted by all the nuclear depositary states, was an integral part of the indefinite extension package deal, without which this achievement would not

have been made. He noted that establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East is based on the provisions of article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as mentioning that 115 states have already joined Nuclear weapon Free Zones (NWFZs) around the World in the scope of international efforts to establish Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs), marking a great achievement that must apply to the Middle East as well.

Ms. Angela Kane replied, verifying what Amb. Karem mentioned, but she regretted the last Arab decision at the UN General Assembly which reflected an Arab insistence on holding the Conference on Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) in 2019 adding that our interest in the procedure came at the expense of the content of the initiative itself.

The French expert deliberately commented on his interventions stating the necessity for pointing out Syria's use of chemical weapons which contravenes the Prohibition of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) Initiative; He replied back to him clarifying that he is trying not to shed light on Israel so as to find Israel a way out, and that the mandate of our committee is to achieve progress in Nuclear Disarmament.

The US decisions to withdraw from the treaty banning intermediate range and shorter range missiles (INF Treaty) as well as withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty); due to which the renewal of the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks/Treaty (SALT Treaty) would be made difficult. Furthermore, the

US launched a new nuclear doctrine emphasizing the need to support US nuclear deterrent policy to counter the mounting threats from Russia and China, as well as producing new types of low-yield nuclear weapons known as tactical nuclear weapons, modernizing the US nuclear arsenal, and spending more than \$ 60 billion a year in order to achieve that goal. The US expert, Ambassador Brook, explained, in his own words, the advantages of the new US policy and doctrine, pointing out that the nuclear weapon has so far succeeded in maintaining international peace, preventing major world wars and successfully confronting the risks of Proliferation of The Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). He called for the modernization of conventional arsenals, development of conventional weapons, and the new non nuclear systems as well. As this matter led to a big debate between me and the US ambassador so Amb. Karem presented a working paper on the illegality of the threat and use of nuclear weapons- herein attached- to refute such allegations.

Chairman of the committee tried to bridge the gap between those divergent views by preparing a concept paper reflecting the limited progress and the “step-by-step” approach that can be achieved in reality to pave the way for accomplishing a complete and comprehensive nuclear disarmament as a long-term objective. In this regard, he circulated some ideas and proposals for general discussion, **including but not limited to:**

The need for an agreement within the committee for the establishment of a framework and a substantive dialogue on the poli-

cy of nuclear deterrence and the opposing views that prohibit it, Chairman of the meeting tried to propose an agenda that includes some conciliatory ideas for establishing a dialogue between the two camps; the first camp defending nuclear weapons, and the second camp defending nuclear disarmament. Identification of the differences and perhaps the points of convergence as well have been proposed through which proposals could be presented to the 2020 Review Conference itself, aiming at supporting security and gradual elimination of nuclear weapons.

This was opposed by a strong insistence from my side that there shall be no negotiations on the established principles prohibiting the threat and use of nuclear weapons due to the failure of the nuclear weapon states to satisfy their obligations to achieve nuclear disarmament and to comply with Article VI of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

However, this did not prevent the Chairman of the Committee from proposing further steps in order to bridge the gap between the two camps based on what was discussed during our meetings. This will determine, to a great extent, the most significant differences that can be crystallized for the coming discussion during our fourth and final meeting.

In this context, the Chairman of the Committee presented a concept paper defining some theoretical issues and theses that addressed: The “replacement” of nuclear weapons and their quality from the military doctrine of the nuclear weapon states.

Identifying the enforceable legal defenses that limit the use of

nuclear weapons.

Providing adequate security conditions to the “nuclear umbrella dependent states” that would make it possible for them to exit such nuclear protection and move faster towards achieving the principles of complete and comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

Coming up with recommendations that aim at bridging the gap between both camps and that is what Chairman has called “The difficult questions”.

Determining the means and solutions available, when a nuclear weapon state, and one of its allies, are being attacked; which would lead to its military defeat.

Determining the solutions to a virtual reality in which the nuclear deterrence policy fails and the nuclear weapon state finds itself confronted with a threat to its survival.

Is nuclear disarmament an “end in itself” or a “means to an end”?

Possibility of announcing that possession of nuclear weapons within the framework of the nuclear deterrence policy does not mean their use.

Shifting the arms balance in favor of conventional weapons so as to replace nuclear weapons in the military doctrine.

Identification of other non-diplomatic means for countering risks of war.

How to rely on and develop conventional military defense capabilities to reduce the growing reliance on nuclear deterrence policy?

Accepting the hypothesis suggesting that nuclear weapons are «weapons of peace» which have maintained peace and prevented major world wars since 1945.

Finding other alternatives to nuclear weapons such as artificial intelligence, drones, cyber war, and biotech warfare.

The possibility that China, having increased its naval and ballistic capabilities, and after its military agreement, would join the arms-control efforts.

How to convince Israel, India and Pakistan to join the dialogue?.

The Russian expert proposed a suggestion to invite nuclear weapon states for a meeting to discuss the military doctrine and the nuclear deterrence policies of the nuclear weapon states (Nuclear Posture Review) with a view to opening a transparent discussion that would constitute a step towards easing tensions and building confidence among themselves, as well as returning back to direct armament limitation negotiations. The Pakistani expert suggested expanding the dialogue so as to include India, Pakistan, and Israel. In this context, Amb. Karem commented on the last suggestion reticently as the general framework of these negotiations among the nuclear states and whether it would be conducted in the framework of the Implementation of the provisions of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is not clear. At the same time, he warned against legitimizing or granting a special international status or prestige imposing a *fait accompli* sought to be consolidated by these three states, including Israel. He requested not granting Israel any advantages rewarding

a policy of nuclear arrogance and a complete rejection to joining the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Furthermore, he called, in principle, for subjecting Israel's facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), until the elements of this proposal become clear. During the break, the Chairman of the Committee, with the assistance of expert Tariq Raouf, prepared draft conclusions reflecting some conciliatory ideas that can be studied from now on until the date of our fourth meeting in the spring of 2019. He will provide you with these conclusions as soon as they are received.

In conclusion, the work of our committee is surrounded by many problems. Firstly, in view of the theoretical nature of our work, and in attempting to find a way for resolving the disagreement between the two camps, namely the nuclear and the non-nuclear camps. Moreover, the current disagreement between Washington and Moscow and the withdrawal of the US from agreements that have established a solid foundation for action and bilateral co-operation in the field of arms control pose a serious challenge from now on and until the Review Conference itself in 2020. Furthermore, being certain that 2020 will witness an inevitable confrontation between nuclear and non-nuclear countries, Japan's initiative seeks to contribute ideas aimed at defusing the crisis. The situation was summarized by Chairman of the committee by stating that he would prepare a conciliatory concept paper that shall be sent to us for consideration in early 2019.

The Participation of Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem in the NATO Defense College Foundation (NDCF) Annual Conference in Rome

Ambassador Dr. Mahmoud Karem participated in the annual conference of the NATO Defense College Foundation (NDCF) in Rome on December 6, 2018, in cooperation with the NATO Defense College in Rome. This year, the conference discussed the topic of “international terrorism and its influence on international peace and security;” focusing on European security. The conference was attended by an elite group of international experts, military leaders, intelligence centers, NATO’s think tanks and analysts, as well as Egyptian Ambassador Hisham Badr, some Arab ambassadors and embassy representatives, including UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco; the conference was attended by the Israeli representative as well, etc.

In his speech, citing what happened at Al-Rawda mosque, Ambassador Karem expressed his regret over ignoring the sacrifices made by civilians, army, police and law enforcement forces in Egypt, and the use of extraneous words, describing the terrorist as “the armed opposition”, by some western sources. Deeming this conduct abusive and not expressing the truth as the terrorist must be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

He called for the necessity of having an international *partnership and a global responsibility to combat* the financing of terror-

ism. This is to be based on the achievement of the highest levels of cooperation and coordination among states in order to combat cross-border terrorism which needs addressing the factors that provide the fertile ground for the spread of terrorism and extremist ideas. Such fertile grounds include the spread of regional conflicts and further deterioration of economic and social situations, thus creating opportunities for terrorist groups to recruit individuals to engage in terrorist and illegal activities.

He presided over a session on terrorism financing sources and gave a presentation over the efforts and sacrifices offered by Egypt in this field in order to support regional peace as well as international peace and security.

He also dedicated the last book published in English, by the Egyptian House of Fatwa, that refutes the misguidance conducted by terrorist groups through misinterpreting religious fatwas so as to serve their purposes, by answering them with the proper teachings of religion to rectify them and reflect the tolerance of Islam; explaining that this is one of the most important means to combat extremism and rectify the religious discourse.

The three sessions focused, throughout the workday of the conference, on the necessary strategies needed to confront armed radical movements and to develop security and intelligence performance. The new varieties of terrorism financing sources and their development, which have been observed by major Western intelligence centers, with respect to the transfer of terrorism funds and their access to investment activities and legitimate cash portfolios,

have been discussed in a special session. The practical measures to confront the mechanisms of armed terrorism were addressed in the last session.

The most significant and highlighted points raised by experts revolved around the following:

- European statistics revealed the polarization and recruitment of more than 6000 European citizens from 35 states in order to serve within the ranks of ISIS.
- Europe now fears the problem of returnees; i.e. returning terrorists and their children. More than 1,400 children born to parents of European origin have been born and brought up in dire terroristic circumstances; in an atmosphere and in camps, that are mostly in Syria, where killings and bloodshed prevail.
- Europe fears prevalence of the Salafi ideology and replacing the ideology of ISIS, while the latter is still attractive to the minds of European youth.
- Although ISIS lost large areas of land that it has seized and occupied before, in Iraq for example, but the security and intelligence agencies in Europe are currently studying the possibilities of the evolvement of ISIS in a new face with a shift in thinking, diversification of funding sources, and resettlement elsewhere in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, expecting a new alliance with ISIS, led by Al-Qaeda, that would result in spreading extremism in Africa and even in Asia, particularly in Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia. However, some European researchers estimate that although ISIS lost 98 % of the land it seized, the

current estimate is that ISIS also lost its message of the promised dream of Islamic Caliphate that has been sent to Europe by not being fulfilled. This contraction in the activities of ISIS was also reflected, according to Western estimates, in the closure of more than 32 ISIS media offices in the region and around the world, and that only five ISIS media offices remained to be active still. Experts also note that social media propaganda to spread the ideology of ISIS has diminished as well. But the intensity and diversity of operations, and their extension to previously unknown locations, have compensated for ISIS expansion strategy.

- Experts had the general agreement that there has been a reduction in the preparation for the European youth recruitment process, particularly in the states which had sent the highest number of young people to join the ranks of ISIS, namely France, Germany, Belgium and Britain, which are the states responsible for the presence of more than 3,800 European fighters in the ranks of ISIS. They also noticed that arrivals from the Netherlands, Denmark and Austria are following the same path, as well.

- Experts expected that one of the new tools for operations focus and development in the ideology and organization of ISIS is through a greater role being played by the women of ISIS in the next stage, as well as committing suicidal operations by one family and spreading that over the scenes of terrorist operations, citing the recent suicidal attack committed by a mother and her daughter, wearing an explosive belt, in Indonesia.

- Experts also expected that ISIS would develop its perfor-

mance style through learning lessons from cross-border crime, or organized crime and the Mafia, warning of the possibility of emergence of a new kind of terrorist whose task would be the blind imitation of thought, organization and implementation.

- Another expert also mentioned that the extreme right organizations in Europe that are against Islamic presence and expansion in European cities, have also begun to use the terroristic methods that are used by ISIS, to threaten the Muslim communities in some European regions.

- In response to a question, the spokesman mentioned that despite what has been said so far on the contraction of ISIS, he did not expect the disappearance of this phenomenon from the field operations during the next decade.

- A French expert warned of the possibility of the entrance of Iran into the finance market, carrying out terrorist attacks and opium trade through the Revolutionary Guards whenever the nuclear agreement problem with the Trump administration in the United States becomes intensified and complicated. She also added that the security agencies in Europe are currently monitoring Iranian criminal activity that is easily changing from criminal activity to political and terrorist activity within few hours.

- Some experts explained that they expect a serious change in the funding methods of ISIS, particularly since they have achieved financial successes and huge financial gains through the trafficking of antiquities, the establishment of a black market of antiquities, continuing to receive funding from charitable organizations, fun-

draising, and attachment of the salaries of some of the employees working in Gulf States to finance their activities. They also noticed the entrance of ISIS into cigarette trading and creating a black market on the border between Chad and Algeria through which ISIS gains millions of dollars. Finally, the sudden entry of ISIS into the trade of Bitcoins and Crypto Currency was pointed out.

- The Algerian expert also mentioned that ISIS has been successful in raising a lot of funds through the trade in stolen Iraqi oil as well as imposing taxes on citizens as one of the most important sources of terrorist financing operations. They also noticed that ISIS has carried out counterfeit currency trading, and that such terrorist organizations have gained access to West Africa, especially on the coastal regions, where they have seized the trade of fish and expensive marine products, displacement, , money laundering, and shifting such money into legitimate trade areas such as investing in bond trading, the real estate market, and the stock market, all of which were means that have been used by organizations of organized crime and Mafia before. The expert added that trafficking, of more than \$ 400 million as well as tons of gold, from Syria, has been spotted.

- Another expert warned that after losing much of their territory, armed terrorist organizations could turn towards possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD's) such as "Chemical Weapons" and the new "Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's)", for the affirmation of their identity, and for a forceful return to the theater of operations.

- Some experts explained that the recruitment methods employed by ISIS in Albania and Kosovo were based on a deep study into the history of the people of Albania and Kosovo. The propaganda focused on Albanian history and the tragedies to which the people of Albania were subjected, in order to increase the number of volunteers, legitimize the use of force, and provide the legitimacy to murder. This policy was successful in the same way as it was in attracting the Arabs by reminding them about the Palestinian issue and the suffering of the Palestinian people under occupation.

- The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism official, from New York, presented some of the activities of the Office, such as the United Nations Plan on Countering Extremism, and the International Strategy proposed by the office in New York. This includes more than 70 recommendations, explaining that the main pillars of the strategy are based on facing the circumstances leading to terrorism, the procedures which are necessary in this respect, developing the skills and building up the capabilities of states to counter terrorism, and finally to respect the principles of human rights when facing terrorist operations. She also pointed out the appointment of Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov of the Russian Federation as the United Nations Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office on June 21st , 2017.

Chapter V



Council's Statements

Cairo, April 5, 2018

A statement of Congratulations

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) congratulates President of the Republic Abdel Fattah El-Sisi on winning a second presidential term.

In this regard, the Council is confident that this significant percentage of votes obtained by President El-Sisi reflects a clear authority granted by the Egyptian people to His Excellency in order to proceed forward with the completion of the economic, financial and social reform policies; to achieve comprehensive economic and social development; and to attain prosperity for the masses of Egyptian people, which he has started since his first term.

The Council also highly appreciates the independent and balanced foreign policy adopted by Egypt under President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, which enhances national interests and country's security, and restores Egypt's leading role at the regional and international levels.