



# **Annual Report**

## **2022**

**Edited by**  
**Dr. Ezzat Saad**

# **Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA)**

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## Word from the Editor

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) is pleased to launch this sixth edition of its annual report for the year (2021), which is the second year in a row in which the world continues to suffer from not insignificant difficulties due to the emerging epidemic of the Corona virus (Covid-19) with its negative repercussions at all levels, including the difficulties associated with social distancing and the continuation of practicing most of ECFA's activities virtually. Despite these unfavorable conditions, ECFA was able, thanks to the enthusiasm and interaction of its members, to carry out many activities, including conferences, seminars, seminars and workshops, in addition to receiving many guests, Egyptians and foreigners, at the Council's headquarters within the limits allowed to by circumstances.

As was the case last year, during the period covered by the report, ECFA did not make any foreign visits, under the circumstances of the closure. But it received a number of heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Egypt (Russia - United States - Ukraine - Netherlands - Netherlands - Iranian Interests Section - Japan - Sweden - Germany - European Union - Nepal - Belarus). Those meetings represented great opportunities to learn about and consult on developments in Egypt's relations with these countries, and the latters' positions on regional and international issues, especially the problems and challenges facing our region.

In addition, ECFA received a delegation from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), whose representatives are keen to hold regular annual consultations with the Council on the political and security situation in the region. It also received a delegation from the United Nations Group of Experts on Sudan to discuss the crisis there, especially in Darfur, and ways available to resolving it. Also, a European delegation headed by the European Union's Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa, Ms. Dr. Annette Weber, visited the Council, where the issue of the Ethiopian Dam and the water crisis in Egypt were discussed, especially in light of the failure to reach a binding agreement regarding both the filling and operation of the dam among Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia.

On the other hand, activities of ECFA also dealt with some internal priority issues. This includes a meeting in May 2022 with Ambassador Ragy El-Etreby, Alternate Executive Director of Egypt and the Arab Countries at the World Bank Group and a member of the Board of Directors, on "The Partnership between Egypt and the World Bank Group and its Impact on Economic Reform and Development". ECFA also held a seminar on "the National Initiative for Smart Green Projects" in October 2022. The activities also included some issues of special importance from the perspective of Egyptian national security, such as: the Palestinian issue, opportunities to strengthen Egyptian /



Sudanese relations, opportunities to move the settlement in Syria, in addition to the Ukrainian crisis and its various repercussions... etc.

In addition to the above, the report includes the usual annual activities such as ECFA members' participations in different events, including lectures, seminars and workshops. It includes also ECFA's press releases, memoranda of understanding on cooperation with new partners, and its publications during 2022.

We hope that this publication will achieve the desired goal and reflect the efforts of the Council and its honorable members, especially for the ladies and gentlemen members whose circumstances prevented them from participating in these activities throughout the year.

**Amb. Dr. Ezzat Saad**  
**ECFA Director**

## **Chapter I**

### **Conferences, Seminars & Workshops**

## **Symposium on the Russian–Western crisis over Ukraine and its repercussions on the Middle East**

On March 1, 2022, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs organized a symposium on “The Russian-Western crisis over Ukraine and its repercussions on the Middle East region”; It dealt with three main axes that addressed the Ukrainian perspective, the Russian perspective, and the vision of the United States of America and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for the conflict. The symposium was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by members of the Council, including experts, academics and former ambassadors.

First, the speakers pointed out that the post-Cold War arrangements are a major cause of this crisis, at least from the Russian perspective, as the West violated the verbal pledges it had made not to expand NATO to the East, and Ukraine violated the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, which stipulates Ukraine's neutrality, by seeking to join NATO. This led to an increase in Russia's security and strategic concerns. It was also emphasized that Russia is dealing with Ukraine as not the ultimate goal of its special military operation launched on February 24, 2022, but rather as an entry point to address the geostrategic and security system with the West. When launching its operation, Russia sought to exploit the Biden Administration’s focus on the domestic agenda, addressing the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, and placing the issue of strategic competition with China at the top of its foreign priorities, as well as the state of European division and the dependence of a significant number of EU countries on Russian energy supplies. However, the multi-level European mobilization in support of Ukraine was clearly noted, and the Russian military operation led to the European Union aligning behind the United States of America, a variable which extent might not have been estimated by the Russian side.

The participants pointed out that the U.S. gains from this war are represented in the revival and strengthening of the NATO file, and the easing of the financial burden on its shoulders within the alliance. However, the issue of European security represents an additional front in the U.S. external confrontations with China, noting that the international community is on the verge of a state of sharp polarization in light of the United States' unremitting efforts to mobilize the largest possible number of allies and partners to isolate Russia and damage its economy, in the framework of what might be called “coercive diplomacy”. Some participants suggested that it could be classified within the framework of protracted conflicts, given the intertwining of Russian/Ukrainian variables on the one hand, and Russian/Western on the other. The participants concluded that Egypt should lead a unified Arab stance regarding the crisis, avoiding bias towards a particular party as much as possible.

## **Symposium on the implications of the potential nuclear agreement with Iran on major powers relations and regional security**

On March 8, 2022, the Council organized a symposium on "The Implications of the Potential Nuclear Agreement with Iran on Major Powers Relations and Regional Security", which was attended by a number of experts, academics and former ambassadors, ECFA members and non-members, including some former inspectors at the International Atomic Energy Agency. The proceedings of the symposium dealt with three main axes: Iran's nuclear capabilities, and its proximity to the "breakthrough" point; Determinants of Iranian foreign policy during the era of Ebrahim Raisi; Iran's vision for its security and the security of the region.

The seminar indicated that Iran's nuclear capabilities have grown since the withdrawal of the previous US administration from the agreement in May 2018. It currently possesses 25 kg of highly enriched uranium to 60% with the possibility of increasing the level of enrichment to 90% within a few weeks, in addition to possessing more than 200 kg of highly enriched uranium by 20%, which can be converted to 90% uranium within weeks as well, thus enabling Iran to possess enough material for three atomic bombs within a limited period. Neutral estimates suggest that even if Iran agrees to remove its current stock of enriched uranium as part of a potential new deal, the knowledge that Iranian scientists have gained in the matter cannot be erased. There are also several estimates that say that Washington will not be able to reach normal relations with an Iranian regime whose identity is based on opposing it, and that - in the absence of quick solutions - Washington will resort to dealing with Iran like any opponent: that is, communication to avoid conflict, and cooperation when that is possible.

With regard to Iran's dealing with various regional files, the ideological doctrine which governs the special vision of the ruling religious regime for the country's security needs as an ambitious regional power competing regionally, is clear. Although there is no declared Iranian official document defining the Iranian national security doctrine, there are many indicators in the official speech of President Ebrahim Raisi, which reflect his strict concept of the national security of his country and the controls and directions of Iranian practice in this regard. Perhaps the first of these indicators is the regime's view of itself as an inspiring model that came to "support the oppressed," which was clearly reflected in Raisi's speech on February 11, 2022, previously mentioned. In this context, it was pointed out that the zero-sum approach towards Iran has failed, and that the Arab Gulf states need to develop an approach based on defining their interests and priorities while recognizing at the same time that Iran has interests in some countries in the region; bearing in mind that the United States has an interest in finding a way to deal with Iran, in order to protect American interests and the security and stability of the region, just as it repeatedly sought to do with the former Soviet Union during the Cold War period.

## Symposium on the 6<sup>th</sup> European Union- African Union Summit and the Developments of Terrorist Expansion in Africa

On March 20, 2022, and within the framework of its interest in developments in Africa, ECFA organized a symposium on the "6th European Union- African Union Summit and the Developments of Terrorist Expansion in Africa". It was inaugurated by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by a number of ECFA members. Ambassadors Salah Halima and Ali El-Hefny presented a paper on the topic of the summit, and another on the issue of terrorism, respectively; in addition, Major General Mohamed Abdel-Baset, Director-General of the Sahel Saharan Counter-Terrorism Center, commented on the two topics of the event.

The participants pointed out that the 6th EU-Africa Summit, which was held on February 17-18, 2022, under the slogan "Two Unions, a Joint Vision for 2030", may be the first that represents real harbingers in the process of reforming and strengthening relations between the two sides, given that it involved laying the foundations of a "renewed partnership" aimed at addressing three major challenges: security, health and stability, and the promises and strategies agreed upon by the two parties to combat irregular migration and border management, as well as providing 450 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines, and enhancing economic and investment programs through an investment plan in the continent with more than 150 billion euros, out of the 300 billion euros allocated within the framework of the European initiative called the "Global Gateway", which is hoped to change the status of relations between the two parties. However, progress made by Europe towards the African continent is still modest compared to what it should be. There are also some sensitive issues that may prevent effective cooperation between the two sides, perhaps the most prominent of which are the issues of human rights and democracy.

On the other hand, the participants expressed their concern about the rapid spread of terrorist organizations across Africa, noting in this context the existence of a new variable represented in the spread of the Russian "Wagner" forces in a number of countries of the continent, such as Libya, Sudan, Mali, Burkina Faso and Central Africa, which is pushing for promoting terrorism, as they are mercenary forces that practice violence to serve certain parties. The participants also stressed the importance of finding common ground and unified concepts in relation to terrorism and the criteria for identifying it. It was also pointed out that there are multiple references for terrorist organizations, not necessarily Islamic, that they are common in organized crime practices in general, while many African countries lack combat forces with a high level of qualification and readiness. In this context, reference was made to the role of the CEN-SAD Counter-Terrorism Center, based in Cairo, in an attempt to strengthen ties and trust among its Member States, and to exchange information in order to achieve a comprehensive confrontation of terrorism, organized crime and illegal immigration, as desired.

## **Symposium by Mr. Atef Al-Ghamry about his book "The Masonic Brotherhood"**

On March 31, 2022, ECFA organized a symposium in which the columnist/ Atef Al-Ghamry presented his book "The Masonic Brotherhood: Documents of Association Between the Brotherhood and Global Freemasonry", which was recently published by the Almaktab Almasry Alhadith. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by a number of ECFA members. The book, consisting of 12 chapters, presents documentary secrets of the global Freemasonry as well as the Muslim Brotherhood. It has highlighted the aspects of unique and precise compatibility between the Freemasons and the Brotherhood; It showed that these two secret organizations converge in not believing in a homeland, and not recognizing national borders, and that the states in the calculations of both are one world government for the Masons, and one caliphate state for the Brotherhood, and in their law, it is a revival of the Ottoman caliphate. They both also converge in the same rituals, such as taking the oath of allegiance and obedience in a dark room, placing the member's hand on the Holy Qur'an and the pistol for the Brotherhood, and on the Holy Book for the Freemasons, and the member's acceptance of the most severe punishment for him in case he discloses the secrets of what is going on within the organization. Likewise, the superior leadership of the two organizations are similar, creating an aura of distinction for themselves, rife with strict rules that forbid those at the base of the organization to know its true goals, which only the few leaders know about.

The writer shows that there is a similarity in the names of the two organizations; Brotherhood and Freemasons; The definition of the members is by the word "Brotherhood", which is the English translation of the word "Brotherhood", which is the same literally used to describe the relationship among the members of the Masons. There is also a similarity in the process of convincing members of the two organizations that they have a mission; They are the best organization in the Brotherhood's belief, and they are the supreme sect for the Masons. This prompted Sayyid Qutb to say that those who are not in the Brotherhood are infidels, to the extent that the idea of "world mastery" promoted by Hassan al-Banna since the establishment of the organization is the same as the doctrine of the Freemasons. In a related context, there is an amazing compatibility between the name of al-Banna, which the Hassan al-Banna family gave themselves, after abandoning the original surname of the family, which is al-Saaty, and the original name of the Masons, which is in Arabic is al-Bannas, as most of references agreed that Hassan al-Banna was originally a Mason, as well as Sayyid Qutb who acknowledged this in writing.

On the other hand, the book sheds light on the participation of the Masonic movement in Britain and the British intelligence together in creating the environment conducive for Hassan al-Banna to establish the Brotherhood, and in the city of Ismailia in particular, where the British occupation authority is based. It also explained that Britain was historically not far from supporting and sponsoring the Masonic presence in Egypt,

following the defeat of the Orabi Revolution and the beginning of the British occupation in 1882. In the same context, evidence confirm that the two organizations played the same game of igniting wars and armed conflicts; Historically, this began with the Masons in the United States, which is what the Brotherhood has done - and is still doing- in the Middle East. Similarly, the method of conspiracies and evasion was associated with both of them, according to British and American intelligence documents that the book used, including, for example, what the British intelligence service admitted about the conspiracy in which that agency assigned the Muslim Brotherhood to attempt to assassinate the late President Gamal Abdel Nasser in the Manshiya incident in 1954, and also the role of the Brotherhood in implementing the project of tearing up the Middle East region, with creative chaos and regime change.

The relevant information also raised a fundamental question: If the Brotherhood works - as it says - for Islam, is it part of Islam to betray the homeland? This is in view of the fact that the documents record their position during the Israeli aggression against Egypt in 1967, indicating the division of their opinions, as the opinion of the Qutb group was not to support Abdel Nasser's position regarding Israel's attack, even if Abdel Nasser was fighting an enemy of Islam, as they put it. Finally, the writer pointed out that many studies questioning the identity of the Brotherhood, and see that its immersion in foreign political relations resulted in its transformation from a religious group into an entity operating in politics.

## **Joint seminar with the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC)**

### **On "The Situation in Syria in relation to the Ukraine War"**

On April 26, 2022, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and its Russian counterpart for International Affairs (RIAC) held a joint virtual symposium on "The situation in Syria in relation to the Ukraine war", focusing on prospects for a political settlement of the Syrian crisis, and the humanitarian situation entrusted to it. It was opened and attended by both Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad and Mr. Andrey Kortunov, the directors of the Egyptian and Russian councils, respectively, as well as Ambassadors Dr. Alaa El Hadidi and Dr. Mohamed Badr El Din Zayed, from the Egyptian side; and from the Russian side, Mr. Igor Matveev and Mr. Boris Dolgov, researchers at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Mr. Vasily Kuznetsov, head of the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies, as well as Mr. Ivan Bocharov, researcher at RIAC, and others.

Ambassador Saad indicated, in connection with the Egyptian position on the crisis, that since the outbreak of the Syrian revolution in 2011, that position was based on two pillars: the first: the full rejection of the fall of the Syrian state in the hands of extremism and terrorism, and the second: support for the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people for a better future. Accordingly, Egypt supported the political settlement of the crisis in accordance with Security Council Resolution No. 2254, on the basis of preserving Syria's unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty, and putting an end to all forms of external interference in its affairs, in order to provide an environment conducive for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes in accordance with the standards of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This is while Mr. Igor Matveev focused on the repercussions of the transformations of the regional and international scene, as well as the Ukrainian crisis on the dynamics of the conflict in Syria, explaining that if an agreement is reached with Iran regarding its nuclear program, this will have positive repercussions on Syria economically, while a kind of alternation will result between cooperation and competition between Iran and Russia in Syria, but if this does not happen, confrontations between Iran and Israel in the Syrian territories are likely to escalate.

On his part, Ambassador Dr. Alaa Al-Hadidi, who tackled the international situation from Cairo's perspective, explained that there are several scenarios proposed, in connection with what is taking place in Ukraine now, including: (a) the end of the war in Ukraine in a short period of time, (b) the continuation of the war for a long period to come, which may extend for several months or more, given the belief of some that the United States and its allies seek to prolong this war and turn it into a quagmire that drains Russia, similar to what happened in Afghanistan before. (c) the expansion of the conflict in Ukraine to include other countries, (d) reaching a political solution to the Ukrainian crisis after both sides realize the difficulty of achieving a decisive military victory over the other side, which would reflect positively on the situation in Syria.



On his part, Mr. Boris Dolgov indicated that the main causes of the Syrian crisis originated from external factors, by international and regional forces, and perhaps this mainly consists of terrorist organizations such as ISIS, which some forces attempt to recruit and revive in Syria. This is in addition to the occupation of Syrian territories by some foreign powers, such as Turkey in Idlib, as well as the United States, all of which would complicate the Syrian crisis and limit the chances of reaching a peaceful settlement regarding it. In a related context, Ambassador Badr El-Din Zayed indicated that it is necessary to consider the Syrian crisis and its complex paths before the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis and the start of its repercussions, as it can be described as being contested by two paths: the first is positive in the direction of settlements and overcoming the suffering of the Syrian people, and the second is negative that impedes these chances. As for the positive path, several factors can be monitored, most notably the signs of gradual openness between the Syrian government and a number of Arab parties, led by the UAE. As for the negative manifestations, they are topped by the entrenchment of a status quo of the Turkish occupation of vast areas in the northwest of the country and up to Idlib Governorate, and similar conditions to the presence of a US-Western military presence in the Syrian-Kurdish border belt adjacent to Turkey. But the most dangerous thing is the entrenchment of political authorities other than that of the Syrian government.

On his part, Mr. Vasily Kuznetsov indicated that the humanitarian situation in Syria is closely linked to that in Lebanon, where there is a shortage of food and energy resources and soaring prices...etc. This complex situation is linked in one way or another to the Ukrainian crisis, which severely affected Ukrainian wheat supplies to Lebanon, and whose events may escalate into a series of wars whose extent is unknown, and which would consequently affect both the humanitarian situation in Syria and the peace settlement that is hoped to be achieved in it.

## **Developments in Afghanistan following the return of the Taliban to power, the regional and international trends towards them, and suggested steps for Egypt to deal with them”**

On May 15, 2022, ECFA organized a symposium on "Developments in Afghanistan following the return of the Taliban to power, the regional and international trends towards them, and suggested steps for Egypt to deal with them," in which Ambassador Ahmed Ismail, Ambassador Ahmed Fadel Yaqoub, and Prof. Dr. Ahmed Fayez Farhat spoke. The symposium was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, and attended by Ambassadors Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, Hisham Al-Zimaity, Ahmed Al-Ghamrawy, and a number of researchers interested in Afghan affairs.

The participants indicated that the unorganized and rapid U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 represented an important turning point in the modern history of Afghanistan and the region, as it coincided with the rapid advance of the Taliban movement and the unexpected collapse of the Afghan security forces, with the Taliban taking the lead after the escape of President Ashraf Ghani, and 20 years after its forcible ousting in 2001 following the terrorist events of September 11 perpetrated by al-Qaeda, which was harbored by the Taliban government. In this context, the participants reviewed the agreement signed by the United States with the Taliban movement in Doha on February 29, 2020, as well as the joint statement issued between the United States and the Afghan government in the same month. On the other hand, the participants pointed out that the Taliban government is still suffering from the lack of clear de jure recognition by neighboring countries and regional powers, not even by its closest neighbor, Pakistan, which had strong historical relations with it, and was the main country that helped it in military control against the other Afghan Mujahideen factions, which enabled it to continue to rule in the first period from 1996 to 2001, and it currently carries the banner of defending the Taliban within international forums. However, there are several threats that cast a shadow over the relationship between the two sides, perhaps the most important of which is the issue of the border wall between the two countries and the issue of the Pashtun communities related to it.

On the other hand, the participants discussed the potential interactions of Afghanistan's Taliban with countries other than its immediate neighbors, such as China, India and the United States. They also asserted its importance as a regional energy transit between the countries of the region, and its importance to China in this context as an important country on the Belt and Road path, through which Beijing can achieve an advantage over the American opponent.

## **The Repercussions of Ukraine's War on Oil and Gas at the Symposium of Eng./**

### **Sameh Fahmy, Former Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources**

On May 17, 2022, ECFA hosted Eng. Sameh Fahmy, former Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, to talk about “the oil and gas sector and the repercussions of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine on it.” The symposium was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and Ambassadors: Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, Hisham El-Zimaity, Farouk Mabrouk, and Mohamed Mounir, as well as Dr. Yousry Abu Shady, Dr. Sadiq Abdel-Aal, and Mr. Abdel Ghaffar Heneish, and a number of members and researchers interested in the energy sector, following with interest the Ukrainian crisis and its synergies.

Ambassador Zahran first reviewed the historical background of the international interest in the energy sector, and the efforts made in this regard, then Minister Fahmy followed him with a detailed and comprehensive presentation of the global energy system, and the shares of the countries contributing to it in terms of exports, imports, etc., including oil, natural gas, liquefied gas, and petroleum products. The guest stressed that the repercussions of the Ukrainian crisis on the global energy sector may be unprecedented at the international level, as it led to a massive rise in energy prices, and is likely to increase in the future exponentially, if a solution to the existing crisis is not found. In addition, he noted that the dangers of this must be clearly realized for all countries without exception, and that its continuity is not in the interest of any of the countries involved in the crisis.

In this context, he called for the necessity of diversifying Egyptian energy options with more reliance on renewable energy, in parallel with the need to strengthen the Egyptian position, in connection with the liquefaction stations that give Egypt a great comparative advantage, in addition to the major gas discoveries in the past few years, which contributes to consolidating its position as a regional hub for energy trade and circulation in the Middle East.

## **Symposium by former Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy about his book "At the Heart of Events .. Egyptian Diplomacy in War, Peace and Years of Change"**

On May 25, 2022, ECFA hosted His Excellency Minister Nabil Fahmy, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, to talk about his recently published book by Dar Al-Shorouk, entitled "At the Heart of Events... Egyptian Diplomacy in War, Peace, and Years of Change." The meeting was inaugurated by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by many ECFA members and a number of former Egyptian ministers.

Minister Fahmy reviewed the content of his book, touching on glimpses of his personal life, and his views on many thorny issues that Egypt went through, such as the 1967 war and the October 1973 war, including the facts included in his official career at the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reviewing in that Egypt's relations with the region and international powers, issues of the Middle East and Africa, water, and others.

## **Meeting with Ambassador Ragui El Etreby on "The Partnership between Egypt and the World Bank Group and its Impact on Economic Reform and Development"**

On May 30, 2022, ECFA hosted Ambassador Ragui El Etreby, Alternate Executive Director and host for Egypt and the Arab Countries at the World Bank Group and a member of the Board of Directors, to talk about “The partnership between Egypt and the World Bank Group and its impact on economic reform and development.” The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by the two ambassadors, Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, and Dr. Hisham Al-Zimaity, and Dr. Sadeq Abdel-Aal, and Dr. Mohamed Hassouna, as well as a number of researchers. Ambassador El Etreby mentioned that the current international scene is very complex and volatile, and that the world has not witnessed, since World War II, three consecutive major crises, as it witnessed during the past few years; as the climate crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine, pointing out that the simultaneity of such crises makes their repercussions the norm on the international stage, rather than the exception, for at least 5 to 10 years, which requires the need to think about opportunities to adapt to them pending finding radical solutions to them. He added that China's ability to bridge the global economic vacuum resulting from all of these crises, given its enormous economic power, has become highly questionable, given its internal problems related to inflation in the prices of raw materials, real estate, health, technology and demography, in addition to the conflicts that still exist between China and the United States, and therefore it is not possible to rely on China alone to advance the global economy.

As for the World Bank, Ambassador El-Etreby stated that it is no secret that it is one of the models of multilateral banks, the most widespread, and the largest in terms of annual financing with an annual budget of \$1.1 trillion, and its membership now includes 190 countries, compared to 45 countries at the time of its establishment, in addition to the ability of its agenda to adapt with and cover new issues. With regard to the Egyptian side, the guest indicated that the strategic partnership agreement between Egypt and the World Bank 2015/2016 is an important tool for enhancing communication between the two sides. He added that the bank did not cut off its funding to Egypt for one day, despite the crises and events that the Egyptian state went through. It is noteworthy in his regard that the aforementioned state of strategic partnership has made Egypt expand in the development projects that the country has recently witnessed. In this regard, the two parties succeeded in setting a new five-year period for that partnership, starting this year, replacing the period between 2015 and 2019. In a related context, the guest stressed that it is necessary for the Egyptian economy to have the features of diversity, the ability to modernize, flexibility, resilience, and further integration in the global economy, all in conjunction with strengthening institutional structures to be more resilient, more efficient, and effective, including resource and debt management, while enhancing export policies and encouraging demand.

## **Seminar of Ambassador Ashraf Rashed on "The Egyptian Role in the Framework of the Governance Mechanism in the African Continent"**

On June 5, 2022, ECFA hosted Ambassador Ashraf Rashed, Head of the National Committee for Governance in the framework of Egypt's membership of the African Peer Review Mechanism, to talk about "Egypt's role in the framework of the governance mechanism in the African continent." The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by Ambassadors: Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, Ali Al-Hefny, Youssef Al-Sharqawi, Dr. Hazem Atiatallah, Dr. Sadiq Abdel-Al, First Secretary Mohamed Mohsen, and Mr. Fadi Khalil, as well as a number of researchers. Ambassador Rashed indicated that the African Peer Review Mechanism began its work on March 9, 2003, as a tool for exchanging experiences among African countries, to promote best practices, and support capacity-building for the countries of the continent, based on a self-monitoring and self-assessment process carried out voluntarily by the member states of the mechanism, pointing out that the number of countries that joined it has so far reached 42, out of a total of 55 African countries, and that Egypt joined in March 2004, while by 2016 it witnessed a strong political will for the country to carry out the review process, as the government, under the leadership of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, began preparing for that process, by establishing the necessary national structures, in accordance with Prime Ministerial Decrees No. 1896 of 2017 and 1524 of 2018, which included the appointment of a focal point, a secretariat, and a national committee, comprising 20 members, which includes the preparation of the national strategy to implement the requirements of the mechanism. Accordingly, Egypt submitted its first self-assessment report in November 2019, as the review mission dispatched by the mechanism, which included 19 African experts headed by Professor Ibrahim Gambari, visited Egypt in December 2019, and prepared the review report on Egypt, and the report was presented at the summit of the mechanism that was held on February 8, 2020, in the presence of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. The summit adopted the report during the delegation's visit to Cairo on February 20-23, 2022.

In this regard, it is noteworthy that the report dealt with Egypt's position on human rights in a comprehensive manner, socially, economically and politically, as well as combating corruption and terrorism, and economic, administrative and social structural reforms in Egypt, including issues of women, energy, social initiatives, infrastructure, education...etc. It also stipulated that one of the best practices that other African countries can benefit from and learn from Egypt is the term "transformational leadership", which indicates the existence of an inspiring leadership for the state, directing its subordinates to adopting better goals. These practices also include the National Training Academy, the Presidential Leadership Program, the "Benban" solar power station, and the promotion of religious harmony in the country, as well as the scientific and educational efforts that led to the inclusion of ten Egyptian universities in the World University Rankings, thus ranking

first in Africa. ECFA members expressed their appreciation for the role of the committee and the self-Assessment, while affirming the need to pay attention to the local development file and the importance of the governance of local administrations within the Egyptian state, as well as the need to highlight the work of the committee and promote it in the media on a regular and continuous basis, to introduce its tasks and achievements, and to enhance confidence in the efforts and achievements of the Egyptian state.

## **Symposium of former Foreign Minister Mohamed El-Orabi about the visit of the Egyptian civil society delegation to Sudan**

On June 14, 2022, ECFA organized a symposium in which it hosted His Excellency the former Minister of Foreign Affairs / Mohamed El-Orabi, ECFA member, to talk about the objectives, activities and results of the visit of the Egyptian civil society delegation, which he headed, to the sisterly Republic of Sudan, from May 10 to 12, 2022. The symposium was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by Ambassadors: Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, Ali El-Hefny, Rakha Hassan, Mohamed Mounir, Farouk Mabrouk, Dr. Hazem Attiatallah, Dr. Gamal Al-Shaer, Dr. Sadeq Abdel-Aal, and Ms. Laila Moussa, Mr. Ayman Adly, and a number of researchers and those interested in Sudanese affairs.

The guest indicated that this visit is the third, after two visits in 2015 and 2017, successively, in order to get acquainted closely with the situation in Sudan, including the positions of the political spectra present there, adding that the delegation consisted of a number of political, parliamentary, academic and media figures. Ambassador El-Orabi reviewed the delegation's agenda, and the role of the Egyptian embassy in Khartoum in carrying out its tasks, indicating that the delegation met with a Sudanese media and academic elite, elements of the Forces for Freedom and Change, and members of the Transitional Sovereign Council led by the Sudan Revolutionary Front, where they were received by Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, Chairperson of the Sovereign Council. The delegation also met with elements of the Popular Resistance Committees youth, meanwhile it held a meeting with a joint delegation from the Sudanese civil administrations and Sufi orders, and with a number of families of the citizens martyred in the events of October 2021, in addition to visiting the Coptic Orthodox Church in Sudan.

In this context, Ambassador El-Orabi indicated that there are several Sudanese entities, each having its own different organizational body, with many orientations, titles and designations, which involves more complications in the Sudanese scene, especially as these entities level accusations against each other; adding that despite the different Sudanese entities, they all settled on the fact that Cairo was expected to engage in the Sudanese scene a long time ago. Rather, Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan called for the importance of Egypt joining the tripartite mechanism consisting of the United Nations, the African Union and the IGAD, which is concerned with completing the necessary arrangements to facilitate the process of negotiations between the Sudanese stakeholders, in order to find consensual political solutions satisfactory to all parties.

The guest appreciated Egypt's very wise position on the Sudanese scene, especially since the Sudanese are very sensitive to any external attempts that involve dictating them their will, and they confront them violently. He added that Cairo should approach the Sudanese society and maintain continuous communication with it, by presenting various



development projects in the fields of electricity, health, education, arts and culture, and arranging exchange visits and workshops between Egyptian and Sudanese university professors, especially at the University of Khartoum, as well as restoring Egyptian media interest in Sudan, and its features are similar to the “Rukn al-Sudan” program, which was previously broadcast on Egyptian channels. It is also necessary to build on the Sufi trait and its strong emotional influence in Sudan, as this brings about a deep rapprochement and a revival of fraternity between Egyptians and Sudanese who are religious in nature.

## **Symposium by Mr. Atef Al-Ghamry about his book "The Secret State in America... An Alliance of Influential Persons Driving World Events"**

On September 15, 2022, ECFA hosted the writer, Atef Al-Ghamry, in a symposium, in which he presented his newly published book, entitled “The Secret State in America... An Alliance of Influential Persons Driving World Events,” in which he indicated the existence of a hidden party, outside the circle of the official institutions and positions of the American state, holding in its hands the reins of the political, economic and military events and orientations adopted by the United States of America.

ECFA members interacted with the author of the book, who answered their questions and inquiries.

## **Seminar on "The National Initiative for Green Smart Projects in Egypt"**

On October 27, 2022, ECFA held a seminar on the "National Initiative for Green Smart Projects in the Arab Republic of Egypt", in which it hosted Ambassador Hisham Badr, General Coordinator of International Conferences at the Ministry of Planning, the Initiative's General Coordinator and Head of its National Organizing Committee, to introduce the axes of the initiative and identify its latest developments. The meeting was opened by ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, and attended by a number of ambassadors, experts and businessmen from ECFA members. Ambassador Badr indicated that the National Initiative for Green Smart projects in the Egyptian governorates came within the framework of the current efforts to preside and host the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP27, and the efforts aimed at achieving sustainable development in the context of implementing Egypt's Vision 2030 and implementing the National Climate Change Strategy 2050, as it is being implemented as a pioneering initiative in the field of sustainable development and digital transformation and dealing with the environmental dimension and climate change effects, via developing a map at the governorates' level for smart green projects and linking them with financing agencies and attracting the necessary investments for them internally and externally.

The Initiative was launched by virtue of the decision issued on June 23, 2022 by the Supreme Committee of the preparation for Egypt's hosting of COP27. The Initiative's action mechanism is based on the selection by each of the governorates of the Republic of six "smart green" projects, in accordance with the criteria of selection of smart green projects set by the Initiative's National Organizing Committee, which would measure the impact and extent of productivity, digitization, economic sustainability, and reliance on renewable energy sources and digital transformation. These projects are divided into six categories, allowing all citizens to contribute to projects, namely: large-scale projects - medium-sized projects - small local projects (especially those related to the Hayah Karima Initiative) - projects submitted by startups - development projects related to women, climate change and sustainability - non-profit community initiatives and contributions.

Ambassador Badr indicated that 6,281 projects were submitted to this Initiative during the call period, and for the first time in Egypt's history there is a database for smart green projects, ready at any time to be implemented on the ground if the necessary funding is available. He also pointed out that all the Initiative's projects stem from local communities and not from central agencies, which made it the first of its kind globally, and that the competent authorities are seeking to register it under Egypt's name in the World Intellectual Property Organization, to be a constructive model for other countries to follow. The participants recommended developing a new category in addition to the categories included in the initiative, which is the category of "those under 15 years old", to encourage children to innovate and positively participate in building the future of their country, and to instill the value of comprehensive social responsibility towards their homeland. This was welcomed by the Coordinator of the Initiative, indicating that this will be taken into account in the Initiative's periodic announcements in the future.

## **Virtual meeting with Ambassador Maged Abdel Fattah, Permanent Representative of the League of Arab States to the United Nations in New York, on the United Nations' handling of the war in Ukraine file, and the Palestinian move to obtain full membership of the United Nations**

On November 15, 2022, ECFA held a virtual meeting with Ambassador Maged Abdel Fattah Abdel Aziz, Permanent Representative of the League of Arab States to the United Nations in New York, and member of ECFA, in which he spoke about two main issues: the United Nations' handling of the Ukraine war file, and the Palestinian movement to get full membership of the United Nations. Regarding the issue of the war in Ukraine, Ambassador Abdel-Fattah explained that the collective international security system within the framework of the United Nations has failed miserably in connection with the war, pointing to the following: the paralysis of the Security Council due to the use of the veto power; The United Nations Secretary-General has failed to play any role in the field of preventive diplomacy to prevent war, since the signing of the Minsk Agreements in 2014; Consequently, the burden fell on the United Nations General Assembly, which adopted five resolutions on the war, the latest of which was on November 14, regarding the establishment of a committee to assess the damages that Ukraine has endured as a result of the Russian aggression, which was passed by 94 votes in favor and 75 abstentions because it opens the way for compensation issues, and was issued as part of the West's attempts to seize Russian assets and property abroad.

Ambassador Abdel-Fattah added that there have been many transgressions by the United Nations agencies against Russia, for example, a UN Security Council resolution was passed on February 27, 2022 calling the General Assembly to convene a special session, despite Russia's objection, being a procedural matter. A resolution was also adopted to suspend Russia from the United Nations Human Rights Council, and all Russian nominations to international organizations were aborted. The Ambassador explained that Russia's defense of its position focused mainly on the U.S. policy in the Middle East, the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territories, and NATO's military operation in Libya, in which the concept of double standards arises.

In connection with the Palestinian file, Ambassador Abdel-Fattah stated that the statement of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas before the last annual session of the General Assembly was frustrating, and that the work of the international Quartet, whether at the level of senior officials or at the ministerial level, is frozen, due to pressures from the United States. It is likely that the United Nations General Assembly will adopt a resolution referring the legal issue of "the legal effects arising from the continuing violations of the Israeli occupation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories." And while 138 countries recognize Palestine as an independent and sovereign state, it is expected that the United States - and perhaps the United Kingdom - will object to Palestine's admission as a full member of the United Nations. Thus, the alternative is to resort to the General Assembly to pass a resolution by a large majority that could constitute a moral burden on the international community. Ambassador Abdel-Fattah concluded by stressing that the Palestinian people and the Arab countries are moving forward in sparing no effort to bring the matter to the International Court of Justice.

## **Roundtable dialogue on the results of the U.S. Congress midterm elections on the Biden Administration's orientations towards the Middle East and Egypt**

On November 21, 2022, ECFA organized a roundtable dialogue on the possible results of the midterm elections for the U.S. Congress that took place on November 8, 2022, on the Biden Administration's orientations towards the Middle East and Egypt, in which Ambassador Mohamed Tawfiq and Mr. Mohamed Qassem, ECFA members, spoke. Ambassadors: Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, Jilan Allam, Rakha Hassan, Youssef Al-Sharqawi, Alaa Al-Hadidy, Abdel Rahman Salah, Mohamed Mounir, Adel Al-Saloussi, Dr. Yousry Abo Shady, Dr. Ahmed Abdel-Hafez, and Mr. Ahmed Abo Shady.

The speakers stated that the party system in the United States is very balanced, and is dominated - however - by two large parties (the Democratic and the Republican), despite the presence of other parties, where the rules are formulated and the electoral districts are divided intentionally to prove the dominance and continuity of these two parties, and to prevent the entry or dominance of other parties. Accordingly, the American media machine plays a major role in this process, in what is known as "framing". While the Democrats lost the House of Representatives in these elections, their media gave the impression that they had made good gains, and that the Republicans had failed to achieve the red wave that they were promoting so heavily prior to the electoral process. Therefore, we can argue that the fact that most of the judges of the Federal Supreme Court are democrats, would achieve a kind of balance in the American interior, especially since the role of the court makes a big difference, particularly in social issues that occupy large segments of American society, such as the issue of abortion. The results of these elections can be summed up in two points: the first: that Trump was unable to extend his control over the Republican Party, given the Republican candidates that Trump supported in the electoral process, to the extent of saying that the upcoming presidential elections will witness a real struggle against Trump within the Republican Party. The second: that the Democratic and Republican parties will be strongly present in the upcoming presidential elections, and that its electoral campaign began since Trump announced his candidacy for it.

Regarding the Middle East, it is noted that the U.S. strategy revolves mainly around Iran, being the one that threatens Washington's interests in the region. As for Egypt, it can be said that the structure of Egypt-U.S. relations is currently suffering a problematique, as a result of the sharp changes in the international environment, in addition to the expansion of Egyptian circles of interest, to the extent that military cooperation, which is the basis of bilateral relations, has become limited to a completely different vision than in the past, as it cannot fully rely on its defense needs from the United States, especially since the type of weapons that Egypt needs today will not be provided by Washington. In a related context, and in connection with the new international order, the Egyptian state must formulate a future vision to maximize the benefit from the process of economic restructuring in a new form of globalization, similarly to the benefit that Egypt has achieved in the field of energy, through the strategy it has developed for this purpose over the past years.

## Chapter II

### Meetings & Visits to ECFA

## Delegations

### **Visit of a delegation from the Embassy of the Netherlands in Cairo to discuss the latest developments in the Middle East Peace Process**

On January 11, 2022, ECFA Director Dr. Ezzat Saad received Minister Plenipotentiary Wierish Ramsoekh, Deputy Head of the Netherlands Mission to Cairo, at his request, accompanied by Ms. Judith Adriaanse, First Secretary of the Embassy; He asked to get acquainted with the latest developments in the Middle East Peace Process, the potential chances for finding a sustainable solution, and Egypt's efforts in this regard.

At the request of the delegation, ECFA Director delivered a brief overview of the latter. On his part, the guest stated that they are following the developments of the Palestinian file and sense that there is nothing on the horizon, which suggests the imminent resumption or movement of the peace process, adding that there may be a need to "think outside the box", and that the EU Representative for the Middle East Peace Process Sven Koopmans, of Dutch nationality, has some ideas to be considered. The guest raised the possibility of receiving the aforementioned in ECFA when he visits Cairo in the future, which was welcomed by ECFA Director, who asked whether the EU Representative had served in any of the countries of the region, which was denied by the guest.

ECFA Director presented Egypt's efforts to achieve Palestinian national reconciliation and the process of reconstruction and stabilization of the truce. He also made clear that the asymmetric warfare in Gaza that took place last May, which is called by Israel Operation "Guardian of the Walls", has proven that the issue of the Israeli occupation of Palestine is still strongly present on the international agenda, and that any talk about the so-called economic peace and improving the standard of living of the population under occupation without a real political process that leads to an independent and sovereign Palestinian state in accordance with the international legitimacy resolutions, is a waste of time. He added that a crisis of this complexity and danger to international peace and security should not be left by the international community to Egypt and Jordan alone. In this context, it was emphasized that the recognition of Palestine by the European Union states, which did not recognize Palestine as an independent and sovereign state, could move the file and send a message to Israel that its evasion from the commitment to peace must have an end, including helping to stop the settlers' transgressions and continuing settlement policies in particular.

In response to the guest's inquiry about the possibility of establishing a regional system for collective security alike the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, ECFA Director commented that the Arab side fully expressed its good intentions in this regard when it became involved in the Madrid Peace Process in 1991/1992, whereby multilateral working groups were formed to discuss all the region's issues, and that his country hosted some meetings of these committees. However, the rise of the far right in Israel increased the latter's pressures to remove the Palestinian cause from the regional and international agenda. Then the "Deal of the Century" adopted by the previous U.S. Administration came to confirm the United States' lack of interest in finding a just settlement for the Cause, in the absence of any effective role by the European Union, while President Biden seems now preoccupied with his internal agenda and unable to move the situation. In this context, ECFA Director called for the importance of reviewing the recent decision taken by the Netherlands classifying a Palestinian civil society organization as "terrorist", similar to what Israel did in October 2021, given that this organization and others provide support to the Palestinians under occupation, while revealing many of the Israeli violations in the occupied territories.



## **ECFA Board meeting with the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives**

In the framework of the fruitful cooperation between ECFA and the Foreign Relations Committee of the Egyptian House of Representatives, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, headed a delegation of ECFA Board of Directors and members in a meeting with Mr. Karim Darwish, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, and members of the Foreign Relations Committee, on March 30, 2022 at the Parliament headquarters. The delegation of the Board of Directors included Ambassador Hisham El-Zimaity, ECFA Secretary-General, Dr. Hazem Attiatallah, Treasurer, and Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna, and Ambassador Sayed Abo Zayed, in addition to ambassadors Marwan Badr and Salah Halima, ECFA members.

Mr. Karim Darwish welcomed the cooperation and consultation between the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives and the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, congratulating the Egyptian diplomacy on the 100th anniversary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, expressing the Committee members' aspiration for continuous consultations between the two sides on various issues of Egypt's foreign relations. On his part, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, expressed his delight at cooperating with the Foreign Relations Committee, and reviewed the various fields and activities of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, referring to the extensive communication network established by the Council since its establishment in 1999, and many important figures in the diplomatic, military and media fields enjoying ECFA membership, as well as businessmen and Egyptian companies interested in cooperating with many countries in Africa and the Arab world. ECFA Chairman also affirmed the Council's keenness to continue consultation and cooperation with the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives in the next stage.

Moreover, the meeting discussed many regional and international issues, including Egypt-Africa relations, including Egypt's relations with Sudan in particular, as well as the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam file and the prospects for its settlement, in addition to Arab affairs, as it was indicated in this regard that the Russian-Ukrainian crisis might be a source of optimism for unifying Arab positions. The meeting also tackled ECFA relations with international organizations and its contributions as a non-governmental organization in some of its activities, and the increasing importance of multilateral diplomacy since the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the resort of the major parties to the United Nations General Assembly in several situations in which the Security Council has not been able to take resolutions on them, as well as the situation in Asia against the backdrop of Western attempts to besiege China as a rising power, such as targeting it with human rights files and rejecting the Belt and Road Initiative ... etc., besides addressing the direct impact of culture on bilateral relations, including Egyptology and the history of ancient Egypt, as important tools in strengthening Egypt's relations in the international arena.

## Visit to ECFA by an African media delegation

On May 15, 2022, ECFA hosted a delegation of about 40 African media anchors, in coordination with the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development, which hosted the delegation; to discuss developments in the comprehensive development process that Egypt has been promoting for years, and its implications for cooperation opportunities with the countries of the continent, as well as the challenges of terrorism and efforts to counter it, as well as the Egyptian vision for water policies in Africa. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by Ambassadors: Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, Marwan Badr, Ali El-Hefny, Hisham Al-Zimaity, and Gilan Allam.

Ambassador Marwan Badr focused on the issue of the Nile waters, and the fairness of the Egyptian position towards it, refuting the allegations of some that Egypt seeks to monopolize the Nile waters, and that it prevents others from achieving development, indicating that Egypt has sought since the sixties of the last century to find a formula for joint cooperation among the Nile Basin countries through many initiatives, such as the Nile Basin Initiative... etc., as it is a final downstream country, it cannot control the water flows to any other country, and it receives the least percentage of the rainwater from which the river is formed by about 1.3 billion m<sup>3</sup> only, and it supported the construction of many dams on the Nile River to achieve development for the relevant countries, and was even involved in the construction of some of them.

On his part, Ambassador Ali El-Hefny addressed the challenges of terrorism, means to counter it, and the development efforts that the Egyptian state witnessed for years, indicating that it waged a fierce war against terrorist organizations, adding that thanks to its victory in that war and the stability of the Egyptian interior, President El-Sisi called, during the Egyptian family breakfast ceremony on April 26, for holding a comprehensive political dialogue for all Egyptian political forces, without exception. This is in conjunction with the positive economic leaps that Egypt has achieved, which sought to address many of the imbalances in the administrative apparatus and the economic system of the state, which enabled it to confront and cope with the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the effects of the Ukrainian crisis to a greater extent than before taking the economic reform measures.

In response to an inquiry about the claims of Western human rights organizations regarding women's rights, work and persecution in Egypt, Ambassador El-Hefny replied that these organizations, which are Western in general, do not have today the arguments that existed in the past, but rather, Egyptian women have witnessed a golden age in the era of President El-Sisi, and obtained many privileges and rights, in addition, unemployment rates have decreased thanks to the mega-projects carried out by the state, in addition to the release of hundreds under the presidential amnesty mechanism, which has witnessed great activation over the past years.

On the other hand, the guests raised questions about the tasks and work of the Council, the extent of its communication with the Sudanese Council for Foreign Affairs, and the extent of its similarity with the work of the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development; while ECFA members answered their questions.

## Visit to ECFA by the UNTSO delegation

On May 16, 2022, ECFA received a delegation of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), at the request of the Organization's Liaison Office in Cairo. It was headed by General Patrick Gauchat, head of the UNTSO Office coming from Jerusalem, while ECFA side included ambassadors: Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, and Dr. Alaa Al-Hadidi, ECFA member. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Zahran, then he asked about the delegation's opinion regarding the killing of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh at the hands of the Israeli occupation army during her press coverage of the storming of these elements into the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank on May 11, 2022, as the head of the delegation expressed his deep regret about that horrific incident, noting that the Israelis themselves feel and acknowledge that something went wrong in this regard, adding that the mission of the delegation is to monitor the border line drawn by the United Nations, noting that the mission of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) includes covering such incidents and submitting relevant reports to the United Nations in New York.

In response to an inquiry about not publishing the UNTSO annual reports, the bodies authorized to consider them, and whether the UNTSO has a presence in Jordan, the head of the delegation explained that the organization has reports, but they are not necessarily periodic, and they are submitted to peacekeeping bodies, such as the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force in the Golan Heights (UNDOF), and even some officials from the concerned states. He also pointed out that the UNTSO reports are discussed in the Fifth Committee at the annual sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, not in the Security Council. In a related context, the head of the delegation explained that there is an office for the UNTSO in Amman, Jordan, but it is operated by civilians, not military personnel. In response to the delegation's inquiry about the Egypt-Lebanon agreement regarding gas, which is scheduled to pass through Syria, and its role in supporting the stability of the region, Ambassador Al-Hadidi replied that the Egyptian move in this context is mainly related to an attempt to enhance Egyptian national security, by achieving stability in the region, including Egypt's historical and crucial role towards its Arab brethren, to support them and enhance cooperation among them.

On the other hand, ECFA members stressed the need for the Ukrainian crisis not to affect the support that is hoped to be given to the Palestinian cause. Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad indicated in this regard that it is necessary for the West to realize the negative effects raised by its double standards, noting that European countries opened their borders to Ukrainian refugees, and condemned Russia, while the Palestinians have been extremely suffering for seven decades, while the West did not stop the Israeli violations in the occupied Palestinian territories. Ambassador Saad also affirmed that Arab public opinion has had enough of Western policies in this regard, and that if an end to these Israeli violations is not put, Iran and other organizations seen as terrorist, such as Hezbollah and Hamas, will always find a justification for their intransigent policies, on the pretext of resisting the Israeli aggression in Palestine, and the serious negative repercussions of that on security and stability in the region, adding that it is hoped that the Biden administration will take positive steps in this file.

## Visit by the delegation of the Group of Eight Developing Countries

### (D-8) Headed by Ambassador/ Isiaka Imam

On May 30, 2022, ECFA hosted a delegation of the Eight Developing Countries Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), which includes Egypt, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey, headed by the new Secretary-General of the Group, Ambassador Isiaka Imam, of Nigerian nationality; to talk about developments in economic cooperation among the D-8 countries, trade exchanges, and the Group's participation in decision-making at the international level. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by the two ambassadors Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, and Hisham Al-Zimaity, as well as Dr. Sadiq Abdel-Aal, Dr. Mohamed Hassouna, and businessman Mr. Mohamed Kassem. Ambassador Imam thanked ECFA for the hosting, indicating that it is the first time that a meeting takes place between the D-8 and ECFA, and that continuous interaction should be achieved among all concerned parties within the Member States of the Group, in order to try to benefit from the enormous capabilities enjoyed by the D-8 countries combined, as the Group, in terms of containing the equivalent of approximately 14% of the world's population, has a gross domestic product estimated at about 5% of the world's gross product, and a trade volume that represents approximately 4.5% of the world trade volume, as well as about 50% of the total trade volume within the framework of the Organization for Islamic cooperation.

In this context, the delegation reviewed the D-8 achievements at all agricultural, industrial, commercial, tourism and scientific levels, and its communication with various international organizations in order to enhance the Group's role at the international level and achieve well-being and prosperity for its citizens. The delegation members cited, for example, the Preferential Trade Agreement that entered into force in 2011, the Group's Center for Advanced Studies in Agriculture and Food Security in Faisalabad, Pakistan, and the D-8 Group Health and Social Protection programme. The Group also seeks to benefit from its communication with the World Tourism Forum Institute, in an effort to build capacities and promote the tourism industry. This is in addition to establishing a joint plant for agricultural fertilizers and a “seed bank” to diversify agricultural crops, as well as developing means of communication through pipelines and cyberspace. The D-8 is also working on closer communication with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to discuss ways to promote the digital economy and electronic governance, as well as cooperation with the World Customs Organization on crime related to electronic commerce, and ways to combat it. This is in addition to forming the “D-8 Network of Pioneers for Research and Innovation” initiative, to be a meeting platform for researchers from universities and governmental and semi-governmental research institutes, in order to encourage innovation and develop industries, in parallel with providing

financial grants to private and public institutions to conduct feasibility studies through the “Project Support Fund” initiative.

The D-8 also seeks to enhance the independence of the Group's payment systems, through the development of a comprehensive and integrated financial system, which includes, for example, the establishment of qualifying economic and industrial zones, independent clearing houses, and the issuance of a special payment card that will enable the countries of the Group to conclude their commercial transactions using their national currencies, as it is necessary to exploit the promising economic opportunities represented by the Group, as it will constitute the third largest global economic power by 2050, with a potential gross domestic product of \$ 38 trillion.

ECFA members also appreciated the efforts of the General Secretariat of the Group, and the achievements that were reviewed, pointing to the importance of moving forward in finding joint action areas among member states, without addressing political issues that may spoil this direction, hoping that this will lead to achieving a kind of convergence on the political level.

## Meeting with a group of Arab trainees

On June 1, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, received (23) Arab trainees (mostly from Yemen and some from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman), along with Mr. Ahmed Abdel Moneim Eleiba, researcher at Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies. The visit came at the Center's request, within the framework of continuous cooperation between ECFA and Egyptian think tanks, to explain some political analysis skills and current developments in the global order, as well as Egypt's foreign policy trends during the last eight years. In this regard, Ambassador Saad indicated that what President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi stresses, in connection with Egyptian foreign policy, is the intrinsic link between the internal stability of the state and the stability of the region in which it is located. The way to achieve a sustainable and secure peace in a region such as the Middle East does not lie in imported foreign solutions or associations with the global economy, or even the establishment of a system of regional collective security, as proposed by the major powers from time to time. In this context, the impressive successes achieved by the Egyptian foreign policy in a number of directions would not have been possible without a series of internal procedures and measures aimed at creating the necessary elements to enhance the country's economic situation, especially with regard to infrastructure, energy, transportation, and benefiting from Egypt's geographical location and the Suez Canal.

The main features of foreign policy during the era of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi are: equality, mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs, partnership and independent national decision, preserving the nation-state and respecting its sovereignty as the cornerstone of building the regional and international systems. Egyptian diplomacy is also characterized by deliberation, strategic restraint, avoidance of confrontation, careful reading of Egyptian priorities and interests, and recognition of the interests of other partners. This is clearly learned, for example, from the Egyptian approach of the Ethiopian Dam crisis and the Libyan crisis. In addition, priority always remains for the economic dimension and internal recovery as a necessary requirement for maintaining national security, of which foreign policy represents one of the important dimensions. This, of course, is in addition to the advanced rank that Cairo attaches to its Arab and African milieus by virtue of history and identity. Over the past eight years, Egypt's relations with African countries have witnessed a significant boom in various fields, especially economic, trade, technical cooperation, the health sector, epidemic control, and the implementation of medical projects such as the establishment of hospitals and health centers, and others in the field of irrigation, water resources, and many others.

On September 8 and 9, 2021, the Ministry of International Cooperation launched the first edition of the Egypt International Cooperation Forum "EGYPT- ICF" - under the slogan "Partnerships for Development and Sustainable Development Financing" - with high-level international and regional participation, under the auspices of President El-Sisi.

The Egyptian Prime Minister also recently announced that Egypt will host an expanded international summit on "infrastructure and sustainability" in 2022, with the aim of "discussing issues of comprehensive urban development and the quality of sustainable infrastructure in the African continent and the Arab region, and strengthening investment relations with brothers in African and Arab countries."

In a related context, Ambassador Saad briefly discussed the new Egyptian foreign policy trends, in particular: the Egypt-Greece-Cyprus tripartite cooperation mechanism; The Egyptian orientation towards the Arab Mashreq; The new orientation towards the Red Sea region and the Horn of Africa; Egypt's efforts to host refugees and asylum seekers on its territories; and reformulating the Egyptian role in the Middle East peace process.

## **European delegation visit to ECFA regarding the draft "Charter of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in the Middle East"**

On September 18, 2022, the Minister Plenipotentiary of the Swedish Embassy, Jörgen Persson, visited ECFA, accompanied by: Usama Butt (British of Pakistani origin), Director of the Institute for Islamic Strategic Affairs in the United Kingdom; Dr. Talip küçükcan, former member of the Turkish parliament and professor at Marmara University; Dr. Mohamed Abdul Rahman Baharoon, Director of the Dubai Public Policy Research Centre; Nora Rathje, member of the Swedish Embassy in Cairo. The visit came with a prior arrangement with the Swedish Embassy, with the aim of identifying the Council members' vision of the draft "Charter of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in the Middle East", which was prepared by a group of researchers, including the visiting team.

In his speech, the Minister Plenipotentiary of the Swedish Embassy indicated that his country has undertaken to support this project since 2016, due to its full conviction of the importance of security and stability in the Middle East region and the need to create a regional structure to coordinate security and cooperation between the countries of the region, including Israel, Türkiye and Iran, alike the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. He added that besides the fact that Swedish society includes many people from the Middle East, no one can argue with Sweden's sympathy for the cause of the Palestinian people, which was embodied in the recognition of the Palestinian state, and the provision of what it can to the Palestinian people in the field of development aid.

On its part, ECFA affirmed that it is difficult to find common denominators with the Israeli far right, and instead, we must work to involve moderate Israelis in this dialogue, including movements calling for peace and putting an end to the Israeli occupation of the occupied Palestinian territories and the Syrian and Lebanese territories.



## Visit by the United Nations Panel of Experts on Sudan

On October 10, 2022, ECFA hosted the delegation of the United Nations Panel of Experts on Sudan, at its request, consisting of Ms. Laura Bernal (from Colombia), head of delegation; Mr. Nikolai Dobronravin (from Russia); and Mr. Patrick Loots (from South Africa), to discuss developments in the situation in Sudan, especially in the Darfur region, and to discuss possible ways to settle this file. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by a number of members concerned with Sudanese and regional affairs.

The delegation indicated that it is keen to investigate the situation in Sudan, in order to try to find a solution to the existing problems there, by strengthening communication with all the actors in the neighboring countries of Sudan, including Egypt. However, the team did not succeed in visiting Libya, which is of particular importance, in connection with Sudan, and the Darfur region. The guests emphasized the extreme complexity of the situation in Sudan, especially in the chaotic Darfur region, with thorny issues such as the Darfurian rebel movements in Libya, and the illegal flows of weapons and migrants across the borders of the region's neighboring countries. In this context, the delegation explained that it is not able to monitor illegal operations emanating from the region. Therefore, enhancing communication with the neighboring countries of Sudan, such as Egypt, Uganda, Kenya and Chad, is a priority for the Panel.

On their part, ECFA members pointed out the difficulty of distinguishing between Darfurians, Libyans and Chadians, and that southern Libya has become an area for all illegal actions, as it has become a safe haven for terrorists and outlaws, and there is a criminal alliance between these groups despite the big differences between them.

They added that there is a fierce conflict between the Tubu and Tuareg tribes, in addition to another conflict between these two groups and the tribes of Awlad Suleiman, the Magharha, the Qaddadefa, and the rest of the Arab tribes that see themselves as a minority in their homeland, including the Tubu and Tuareg. This is while the conflict between African and Arab tribes represents an ethnic conflict similar to what happened in Darfur, and despite the development of this hidden conflict, no efforts have been made to contain it, and it will continue to develop until it explodes. In a related context, the Juba Peace Agreement in Sudan, signed in August 2020, still lacks implementation, mainly due to funding reasons, which in turn helps perpetuate and fuel unrest in Sudan. There is also a need to seriously deal with the dilemma of some Arab countries' financing of some rebel movements in Sudan and Chad, such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, in order to achieve tangible progress in settling the Darfur crisis.

## Interview with the European Union Envoy to the Horn of Africa

On December 4, 2022, Ambassador Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, and Ambassador Marwan Badr, ECFA Coordinator of African Affairs, received Dr. Annette Weber, the European Union's Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa, at the head of a delegation, which included Ms. Antonia Zafeiri, Head of the political and media department at the European Union Mission in Cairo, Mr. Fouad Hikmat, expert in crisis management and representative of the Office of the European Union Envoy to the Horn of Africa, and Ms. Isabelle Richard, Political Adviser at the Office of the Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa (Brussels Office).

Dr. Weber expressed her desire to get acquainted with ECFA's vision of how to resolve the current stalemate in the Renaissance Dam issue, noting that Ethiopia is a major country in the region, just like Egypt, and that the European Union is interested in preserving the stability of this country, and that the Renaissance Dam has become a fait accompli, adding that she understood from the Sudanese that Ethiopia is sharing with them information about the operation of the Renaissance Dam, wondering whether the issue of the Ethiopian side's sharing information with us could constitute a way out to resolve the Dam crisis, and that her contacts with the United Arab Emirates reflect "the Emiratis' understanding of the situation," and that they are "convinced that there is enormous economic potential from cooperating with the Ethiopian side."

On the other hand, the two ECFA members presented an overview of the Council and its activities, as well as the water situation of Egypt, as it is among the worst in the world, as the Nile River represents 97% of its water resources, all of which come from outside the Egyptian borders. The ECFA members added that the problem of the West, including the Europeans, is that it does not want to understand the problem in this way. It is difficult to imagine the dispute as a water dispute at a time when approximately 7,300 billion cubic meters of water falls on the Nile Basin countries annually, with about 3,600 billion on the Congo, 1,000 billion on Tanzania, 900 billion on Ethiopia, 800 billion on South Sudan, and 365 billion on Kenya, 285 billion on Uganda, 240 billion on Sudan, 45 billion on Eritrea, and 35 billion on Rwanda, while only 1.3 billion cubic meters of water falls on Egypt. Therefore, it is inconceivable that the dispute revolves around 55.5 billion cubic meters of water only, which is the share of Egypt. It is also inconceivable that depriving Egypt of this share and distributing it to the basin countries will lead to a solution to the water problem facing these countries. It is also difficult to imagine that the dispute is a developmental dispute.

ECFA members also explained to the visiting delegation that President El-Sisi has adopted - since he took office- a different approach towards Ethiopia, as he initiated a visit to Addis Ababa, and addressed the Ethiopian Parliament, affirming Ethiopia's right to development, and he also urged the business community in Egypt to invest in Ethiopia, which was what was actually realized, at significant rates, in the hope of building trust with

the Ethiopian regime, but all these efforts, with their clear good intentions, did not change anything of the Ethiopians' position. ECFA members also presented the outcomes of his visit to Ethiopia in November 2017, during which he discussed at length with his Ethiopian counterpart about bilateral relations and the various implications of the Renaissance Dam problem, stressing Egypt's interest in starting a new phase of joint cooperation with Ethiopia, based on common interests and mutual benefits.

The meeting concluded by emphasizing that the optimal solution is the need for the European Union to make efforts to persuade Ethiopia to accept a binding legal framework for filling and operating the Dam, taking into account the interests of the three concerned parties. In this context, it was also emphasized that the European Union and the West in general have the tools to pressure Ethiopia to accept this solution, but we sense the lack of political will on both sides to do so.

## Individuals

### **Meeting with Mr. Salah Abo Sharif Al-Ahwazi. speaking about the issue of the Ahwazi Arabs**

On January 9, 2022, Dr. Ragai Fayed, Head of the Egyptian Center for Kurdish Studies and Research, visited ECFA, at its request, accompanied by Mr. Salah Abo Sharif Al-Ahwazi, President of the National Council of the Ahwazi Revolution Forces, founder and Secretary-General of the Ahwazi Democratic Popular Front (ADPF); to get acquainted with the ADPF's work tasks and objectives.

Mr. Abo Sharif mentioned that he holds Canadian citizenship and that he visits Egypt from time to time, seeking to introduce the issue of the Ahwazi Arabs as a major genuine component in Iran, and the injustice and persecution they are subjected to from the Iranian regime. In this context, the guest stressed that they are interested in conveying their image to Egypt and introducing their cause in it, which prompted them to visit ECFA, being a civil society organization concerned with foreign affairs. He stated that the Ahwazi Front, which was founded in 1990, is a nationalist vanguard organization that struggles to restore the rights of the Ahwazi Arab people, who are under the domination of the Iranian occupation, on the basis of international laws and norms, or through a comprehensive and continuous struggle that results in wresting the Ahwazi Arab right to its land and wealth, and ultimately declaring its independence. The ADPF believes that the land and people of Ahwaz are an integral part of the Arab world, and that their cause is the cause of the Arab nation in general, and Iraq and the Arab Gulf states in particular.

The guest added that the ADPF has an organizational structure that includes: the General Conference in which all members of the Front participate; the Central Committee; the Political Office; the General Secretariat; The Council for Planning and Strategic Studies, and among the institutions affiliated with the Front, the Media Centre of the Ahwazi Revolution; Ahwazi Women's Union; Youth Union of Ahwaz, The Ahwazi Centre for Human Rights, and others, pointing out that the Front has offices and representatives in most European countries, the United States, Canada and some Arab countries, and that a number of its leaders have met with officials in these countries, as well as with the former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Amr Moussa and his assistants, and with the Grand Imam, the former Sheikh of Al-Azhar/ Mohamed Sayed Tantawi, and the current Grand Imam/ Ahmed El-Tayeb. He added that the Front has held many conferences since its establishment in 1990, and that it is a founding member of the "Non-Persian Peoples Front for the Right to Self-Determination" in Iran, and a founding member of the Arab Gulf Peoples Alliance, and the Arab Organization to Confront Iranian Aggression.

At the end of the meeting, the guest requested to consider the possibility of holding a meeting with ECFA members to explain the dimensions of the issue of the Ahwazi people and the efforts of the Democratic Front. He was informed that the matter will be discussed and that he will be contacted in case of a positive response.

## **ECFA Secretary-General meets with the Deputy Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone at the Institute of Diplomatic Studies**

In the framework of the existing cooperation between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and the Institute of Diplomatic Studies, Ambassador Hisham El-Zimaity, ECFA Secretary-General, held a meeting at the Institute of Diplomatic Studies on March 22, 2022 with the Deputy Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone, Ms. Mamadi Gobeh Kamara, and her accompanying delegation, at the invitation of Ambassador Walid Haggag, Director of the Institute, in the framework of the assistance provided by the Institute of Diplomatic Studies to the Sierra Leonean side to establish a similar academy in Freetown, and in his capacity as a former Director of the Institute of Diplomatic Studies (2004-2006).

The meeting included an exchange of views, as well as a review of training programs and the process of preparing them in favor of new diplomats or trainees from other government agencies, and how to build their capacities in the field of communication, negotiation, drafting correspondence and other tools of diplomatic work.

## **Prospects for developing Egypt-India relations. Visit of the Ambassador of India to ECFA**

On March 29, 2022, ECFA received the Ambassador of India to Cairo, Ajit Gupte, at his request; to discuss Egypt-India relations and the prospects for their development. The symposium was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and was attended by members of the Council, including experts, specialists and those interested in Indian affairs. Ambassador Gupte reviewed the history of Egyptia-India relations, indicating that they are close and important; as he referred to the contacts that took place between the two leaders Saad Zaghloul and Mahatma Gandhi during the British colonial era for both Egypt and India, as well as the participation of Indian soldiers in World War I and II, and the presence of tens of hundreds of Indian soldiers who died during that in Egypt, then the signing of a friendship agreement between Egypt India in April 1955, which was rooted in the orientations of the two leaders Gamal Abdel Nasser and Jawaharlal Nehru within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement, leading to the great momentum that these relations witnessed since 2015 specifically; with the exchange of high-level visits between the two sides, including the visit of former Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj to Egypt in August 2015, the visit of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi to India in October 2015 and September 2016, and the visit of Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry in March 2018, to hold the seventh session of the Joint Cooperation Commission.

In the same context, Ambassador Gupte indicated that India is Egypt's fifth largest trading partner and the sixth largest exporter to it between April 2021 and January 2022; as India's imports from Egypt were estimated at \$2.86 billion, while India's exports to Egypt amounted to more than \$3 billion, and bilateral trade is estimated to rise to about \$7 billion by the end of this year. On the other hand, in terms of scientific and technical cooperation, there are more than 1,500 grants guaranteed by the Indian government to Egyptians in various fields. Related activities have also witnessed great momentum since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, including what was done virtually, and others that included cultural and exhibition festivals in different regions inside and outside the two countries. Ambassador Gupte went on to talk about the Indian economy as an emerging economic power, referring to the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two sides to maximize the Egyptian benefits from that growing trend. He pointed out that India is the world's fastest growing economy, and is expected to be among the 3 largest economies in the world within 10 or 15 years. In a related context, India jumped 79 places in the Global Competitiveness Index between 2014 (142) and 2019 (63), while it hopes to reduce its carbon emissions by 1 billion tons by 2030, while hosting the second largest renewable energy project with a capacity of 30 megawatts of hybrid energy (solar-wind) in Gujarat region.

Regarding the opportunities that can be exploited to strengthen relations between the Egyptian and Indian sides, Ambassador Gupte indicated that there are vast areas to do so, including the field of information technology, chemical industries, cosmetics, renewable energy (especially green ammonia and green hydrogen) and machinery, as well as promoting cooperation in oil and gas exploration in the East Mediterranean and the Red Sea by Indian companies. It is worth mentioning that four Indian companies contacted Egyptian companies about investments of approximately 9 billion dollars in the field of green ammonia. ECFA Chairman thanked the Indian Ambassador, expressing his aspiration to complete the next round of consultations between the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and its Indian counterpart, as the last round was held in 2017 in Cairo.

## **Visit to ECFA by the Ambassador of the Russian Federation in Cairo Mr. Georgiy Borisenko**

On April 13, 2022, ECFA received Mr. Georgiy Borisenko, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Cairo; to talk about the "special military operation" launched by his country in Ukraine since February 24, and its political, security, economic and humanitarian repercussions on the situation in Europe and the world, and the chances of achieving a settlement to the war there. The meeting was opened and moderated by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, and a number of ECFA members including ambassadors, academics and researchers, participated in it.

The guest indicated that the military operation was in defense of the right to self-determination and the protection of the population in eastern Ukraine, who were subjected to persecution and various racist practices by the Kiev government, most of whom are of Russian origin. The operation also aimed at protecting Russian national security, and confronting the threats resulting from the support of NATO and the West in general to Ukraine since 2014, from strengthening the latter's armament, and pushing it to demand joining the Alliance, thus posing an "existential threat" to Russia's national security.

Regarding the chances of reaching a peaceful solution to the crisis, the Russian ambassador indicated that his country is ready to settle the crisis peacefully, but the Ukrainian side is not serious in this regard, and that the West is pushing Kiev to continue the war, and then prolong it. He added that the Russian forces are very careful in their military operations, to reduce the cost of human losses inside Ukraine, and have received many civilians from different parts of Ukraine to Russia, while providing medical services, food and shelter for them.

On the other hand, the guest mentioned that many countries - including Egypt - condemn the West attempts to exclude Russia and the counter approach to it in the international arena, adding that the era of unipolarity has ended, and that Russia seeks - with other like-minded countries - to establish a world characterized by justice, responsibility, and constructive cooperation based on respect, equality, and mutual trust, without excluding any party, in contrast to what Western countries desire. Meanwhile, he indicated that there are already ongoing negotiations between officials of the Russian Central Bank and its Egyptian counterpart on the application of the innovative Russian system for settling payments for trade exchanges, as well as an agreement on the continuation of the flow of Russian wheat shipments to Egypt, which is what President Putin pledged in a recent phone call with President Sisi.

## **Visit by Mr. Ruslan Nechai Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Ukraine in Cairo**

On April 26, 2022, ECFA received Mr. Ruslan Nechai, Chargé d'Affaires of the Ukrainian Embassy in Cairo, at his request, with the aim of informing ECFA members of his country's position on what is happening on the Ukrainian territories. In this regard, the Chargé d'Affaires presented his country's well-known position on the crisis, speaking in Arabic, indicating several points, including that Russia had been planning to invade his country for a long time, given Ukraine's endeavor to adopt an independent foreign policy that takes into account the interests of the Ukrainian people, and respects its choices, while he stated that Russia believed that its military operation would be for a few days, with which the regime in Kiev would fall, and the Ukrainian state would collapse, and it would accept the Russian conditions, but Putin's strategic calculations were wrong, as the war entered its third month, and there are many volunteers who are fighting along with the Ukrainian people. He also noted that his country appreciates the support it receives from NATO states, which will help it to stand firm and achieve gains on the ground that would strengthen its negotiating position, when the time comes for that, and that he believes that the support currently provided is satisfactory.

In a related context, and in response to an inquiry by a member of the Council about Ukraine's neutrality, the Chargé d'Affaires indicated that they would not accept this neutrality unless it was imposed on them within a comprehensive settlement, adding that his country's choice is to join NATO as stipulated in the Ukrainian constitution. The guest also noted the Budapest Memorandum signed in 1994, explaining that it is nothing more than a non-binding document that has not been ratified by the parliaments of the concerned states, and that Russia, as one of the guarantors of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, has violated its obligations under the memorandum, and therefore Kiev does not find it useful to respect the obligations under this memorandum.

On the other hand, the guest praised the cooperation between Egypt and Ukraine regarding the evacuation of Ukrainians after the declaration of war on February 24, while stressing that Russia has already become a "pariah" state, and that it will be difficult for Egypt to deal with this country now, and that they expect a "stronger Egyptian position officially condemning Russia," especially since the sanctions against it have a great impact on Egypt, whether in terms of tourism or its wheat imports. In this context, the elements of the Egyptian position were clarified, as reflected in the statement explaining the voting pattern of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on March 2, regarding the condemnation of the Russian military intervention in Ukraine, especially the emphasis on the principle of respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of all states. It was also stressed the necessity of abandoning the double standards approach, in terms of providing Western political and military support to Ukraine, while completely ignoring the fact that there is no longer racist settler colonialism in today's world except in our region in Palestine, in the absence of any Western American position giving the impression that there is a kind of equality and consistency in treatment.



## **Visit to ECFA by former Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Mohammed Al-Dairi to explain expectations about the situation in Libya**

On May 10, 2022, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) hosted Mr. Mohammed Al-Dairi, former Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, to talk about developments in the internal situation in Libya and opportunities to reach consensus on contentious issues, the positions of various regional and international powers, and the potential impacts of the Russian-Western conflict over Ukraine on the chances of settling the crisis. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and attended by a number of ECFA members including ambassadors, academics and researchers interested in the Libyan issue and its developments.

The guest reviewed the developments of the Libyan scene since the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum was held in February 2021, in which 75 Libyan members representing the Libyan political and social spectrum participated, which resulted, through an electoral mechanism approved by the UN mission led by Stephanie Williams on Libya, in the selection of Mohamed al-Menfi as the head of the Presidential Council, and both Abdullah Hussein Al-Lafi and Musa Al-Koni as his deputies, and Abdul Hamid al-Dbeibeh as head of the interim transitional national unity government, as the task of the new entities was to achieve national reconciliation, manage the transitional period, and ensure the provision of services until the presidential elections on December 24, 2021. There was international, and even a strong Libyan, consensus regarding these developments, while the government won the confidence of the Libyan parliament on the tenth of March 2021. However, the Libyan scene since then involved many measures that prevented the holding of these elections on the planned date, and in turn contributed to the complication of the crisis, given the inability of al-Dbeibeh government to assume its responsibilities as desired, and its failure to provide services to the Libyan people, even in Tripoli itself. This resulted in the selection of Fathi Bashagha as prime minister by the Libyan Parliament at the beginning of March 2022, which led to an increase in tensions in the Libyan arena between the east and west of the country.

Al-Dairi also indicated that just as Turkey and Russia have a presence in Syria, they have a similar presence in Libya, taking into account that while Russia has the upper hand in Syria, Turkey has the upper hand in Libya, without underestimating the Russian Wagner forces that accompanied Saif al-Islam Gaddafi while submitting his candidature documents for the failed presidential elections. On the other hand, it is hoped that the efforts made by Egypt, and its hosting of the initiative announced by the UN mission in Libya, on March 4, to form a joint committee from the House of Representatives in Tobruk and the Supreme Council of State, will be realized, in order to establish a constitutional basis that leads the country towards elections - to achieve success in converging views between the Libyan factions, in a manner that spares the Libyan territories further bloodshed.

## **Interview with the head of the Office for the Protection of the Interests of Iran in Cairo**

On May 16, 2022, Ambassador Nasser Kanaani, Head of the Office for the Protection of the Interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Cairo, visited ECFA along with a member of the office, at his request to bid farewell, on the occasion of the end of his tenure in Cairo, as he was received by the two ambassadors, Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, and Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director. The meeting was attended by Ambassador Dr. Alaa Al-Hadidi, ECFA member.

The guest indicated that despite his several meetings with officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the past four years, it did not produce the outputs that he hoped to spread warmth in the relations between the two countries. He added that he had done his best to discuss the various aspects of his country's relations with Egypt in a comprehensive and strategic manner, but his meetings with Egyptian officials did not go beyond dealing with some problems and issues that occur from time to time. He also stressed that there is an unwavering Iranian desire to enhance cooperation with the Egyptian side, noting that the Iranian people, as well as the Iranian leaders at all levels, support and affirm this approach, and that it is necessary to restore the official relations between the two countries to their previous state, to provide a comprehensive cooperative climate between them, as well as to find solutions to the region's crises, based on their cultural and historical role in the region.

The guest also noted that as a result of a stagnation in bilateral political exchanges, a similar stagnation has emerged in economic relations, as the rate of trade exchange between the two countries declined, dropping from \$600 million years ago to \$10 million recently. He added that this does not make sense in light of the keenness of both the Iranian and Egyptian leaderships to support the economic aspects of their peoples, which requires the need to strengthen cooperation on both sides to achieve more progress in this regard. On his part, ECFA Chairman indicated that the decline in the trade exchange rate is mainly due to the stagnation of visits by businessmen from both countries, and that it is hoped that track II will succeed in restoring Egypt-Iran relations to their previous state, just as similar efforts culminated in overcoming obstacles between Iran and Saudi Arabia with Iraqi mediation.

In a related context, the guest indicated that he submitted his proposals regarding opening track II, but he did not receive an Egyptian response in this regard, explaining that they are still valid and existing despite that.

## **Visit to ECFA by the New Ambassador of Japan Mr. Oka Hiroshi**

At the invitation of ECFA, Mr. Oka Hiroshi, the new Ambassador of Japan in Cairo, visited the Council, where he was welcomed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, who praised the existing cooperation between Japan and Egypt in various fields, including cultural cooperation, which is embodied in the Cairo Opera House, the Grand Egyptian Museum, and the Japanese University in Egypt. On his part, the ambassador commended Egypt's achievements in the fields of infrastructure and public services provided by the state, including electricity, noting the state of stability and security that Egypt currently enjoys, compared to other countries in the region. He also pointed out that the Japanese Foreign Minister, who recently visited Egypt, is very enthusiastic about expanding relations of cooperation between the two countries. He added that this interest on the part of Japan is matched by a clear interest from the Egyptian side, as President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi visited Japan three times; the first in 2016 and two visits in 2019 during his chairmanship of the African Union. In this context, the ambassador indicated that their relations with Egypt are based on peace, mutual trust and friendship, and that their interest in relations with Egypt is mainly focused on human development, economic development and the development process in its comprehensive sense.

The guest also expressed his country's appreciation for naming one of Cairo's traffic axes after former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in a unique step in Egypt. He also reviewed the support provided by Japan to some projects in Egypt through soft loans and the purchase of bonds, such as health insurance policies, agriculture, water and fish farming, in addition to the increase in Japanese investments during recent years by 60% (2021) compared to previous years.

On the other hand, the ambassador discussed some aspects of cooperation between his country and some countries in the region, referring to the tripartite Japanese-Jordanian-Israeli cooperation in favor of the Palestinian people (the Agro-Industrial Park project near Jericho), and the Japanese-Jordanian-Iraqi cooperation in the fields of electricity and energy, noting that their goal of supporting Iraq is to frustrate the attempts of Iran and reduce its influence in Iraq. In addition, he presented his country's well-known foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region, its stance on the Russian-Ukrainian war, and their relationship with China, alluding to what he called the Chinese dangers and threats to neighboring countries.

## **Meeting with the U.S. Embassy Minister Plenipotentiary for Political Affairs Mr. Nathaniel Turner**

On June 23, 2022, and at their request, Mr. Nathaniel Turner, Deputy Minister Counsellor for Political Affairs, and Mr. Julian Hadas, Head of the Foreign Affairs Unit of the Political Section of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, visited ECFA, where they were received by Ambassadors Ezzat Saad and Hisham Al-Zimaity, ECFA Director and Secretary-General, respectively. In the framework of the two guests' desire to get acquainted with our vision of developments in the region, especially since President Biden will visit it in mid-July 2022, the two ECFA members indicated that the observer of the developments of the United States' relations with the region must reach the conclusion that the U.S. interest in the region is in a continuous decline, as it is focusing on China, and on supporting Ukraine in its war with Russia since February 2022. And that regardless of the ongoing normalization processes between Israel and other countries in the region, which must be taking place with American blessing and support, the Arab public opinion notes the stark contrast between the continuous Western military support to Kiev, and what is happening in the occupied Palestinian territories of non-stop settlement and racist practices, without any significant reaction from the United States and its allies.

The two ECFA members also stressed the need for the United States to implement the bare minimum of the promises that President Biden made during the electoral campaign, including the reopening of the U.S. consulate in occupied Jerusalem, the PLO Office in Washington, and the launch of a serious political process that leads to a settlement of the conflict. In response to the inquiry by the head of the Foreign Affairs Unit regarding the ECFA's opinion on attempts to integrate Israel into the region, through the Negev Forum that was held in March 2022, during which a framework for regional cooperation was approved, as well as the summit to be held on June 27, 2022, the two ECFA members indicated that it was wrong believing that this means the decline of the Palestinian cause, and that it can be ignored; since this involves a great miscalculation of the reality of the situation in the region in general, and in the occupied Palestinian territories in particular, as the situation is likely to explode at any time.

Accordingly, the two guests put forward the idea of establishing an Arab alliance against Iran, which also includes Israel (which is being circulated in the media as an "Arab NATO"). The two ECFA members explained that, in practice, there is nothing to support or lend any credibility to this idea, for a number of reasons, most notably: that the Gulf states are engaged in dialogue, economic relations, and large trade exchanges with Iran, not to mention that some of them maintain good historical relations with Tehran, and none of these states will join any alliance that aims to enmity a neighboring country like Iran. Also, the main problem in the region does not lie in Iran, but in Israel, whose leaders have become convinced that it has achieved strategic breakthroughs from the normalization processes, and that the Palestinian cause is no longer on the Arab agenda.

On the other hand, and in response to the two guests' inquiries regarding the chances of Syria's participation in the upcoming Arab summit in Algeria, ECFA answered that there is no clear information in this regard, and that the issue of its participation may still be subject to consultations, and that in any case, President al-Assad must reach consensual solutions with the opposition, and stop acting as the victor in the protracted war in Syria. In response to a question about the U.S. position regarding the developments of the Renaissance Dam issue, and the intransigence of the Ethiopian position which rejects any binding agreement in this regard, Mr. Julian Hadas stated that the Dam file is a political issue, and that it is clear that there is no political will yet to solve it, adding that they have appointed a U.S. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa (Mike Hammer) and that he will visit Egypt soon.

**Visit of the Saudi researcher / Misfer bin Ali Al-Qahtani, Researcher at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom, as a visiting researcher, during the month of July 2022**

Based on a request submitted by the Department of Political Science at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University, to host the researcher/ Misfer bin Ali Al-Qahtani (Saudi national), researcher at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom, as a visiting researcher, during the month of July 2022, to collect scientific material In the framework of his doctoral dissertation, entitled "How do Middle Eastern countries deal with Chinese economic diplomacy? A comparative analysis of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as two models."

## Meeting with Mr. Jörgen Persson, Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Ambassador of Sweden in Cairo

On September 8, 2022, ECFA Director Ambassador Ezzat Saad received Mr. Jörgen Persson, Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Ambassador of Sweden in Cairo - at his request - who began his speech by noting that they pay special attention to the Climate Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh in November 2022, and that due to the elections taking place in Sweden on September 11, it is not clear who is the prime minister who is supposed to participate in the Summit. He added that in the context of their interest in the issue of climate change and its repercussions, they have recently appointed a Special Envoy on the issue of "Climate Change and Security", in addition to a Special Envoy for Climate who has been working for a long time. He also indicated that they have been involved for several years in efforts to find a mechanism for collective security in the Middle East region, alike the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as a framework for dialogue and interaction between the neighboring regional countries, Turkey, Iran and Israel, and the Arab League member states with the aim of crystallizing interests and common denominators in order to enhance regional stability, prevent conflicts and address common challenges.

Accordingly, the guest mentioned that his country is supporting a regional dialogue that includes some interested personalities from a number of countries in the region, including Egypt, adding that the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports some think tanks, specifically the "Institute for Islamic Strategic Affairs in Sweden and the German Berghof Foundation, to crystallize that mechanism, and that a draft charter for a regional mechanism for security and cooperation in the Middle East (MESAC) has already been drafted. In this context, a delegation of those who participated in the preparation of this project will visit Cairo, and some other capitals in the region, to consult on its content, which will be the basis for discussion. He added that the delegation - consisting of three members from Iraq, the UAE and Turkey - will visit Cairo on the 18th and 19th of September, and that they hope that the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs will receive the delegation and hold a consultative session with it on this project, which was welcomed by the ECFA director.

On his part, Ambassador Saad explained that other European embassies in Cairo - the latest of which was the Embassy of the Netherlands - raised this issue a short time ago, adding that within the framework of ECFA's handling of regional security issues, initiatives for collective security in the region are being discussed, including the idea of "Arab Neighborhood", which was put forward by Mr. Amr Moussa years ago, and is based on calling non-Arab regional countries for dialogue with Arab countries. He indicated in this regard that the Arab side had already shown good intentions and full cooperation in this regard when it got involved in the Madrid Peace Process in 1991/1992, when multilateral working groups were formed to discuss all regional issues such as arms

control, regional security, the environment, economic cooperation, water and others. Unfortunately, with the rise of the extreme right in Israel and the reluctance of the United States and Europe to play any positive role in the peace process, Israel's pressures to remove the Palestinian cause from the international agenda has increased. The "deal of the century" adopted by the previous U.S. Administration came to confirm the US's lack of interest in reviving a political process through which a just settlement to the Palestinian cause could be found. The current administration follows the path of its predecessor, whether in terms of encouraging more normalization or only talking about what is called economic peace, which was evident from President Biden's visit to the region last July. Accordingly, it is difficult to talk about a mechanism for security and cooperation in the region, especially in the absence of the minimum level of trust that should be available in non-Arab parties, particularly Israel.

The guest commented by saying that they appreciate that there is a change in the current regional conditions, and that there is greater acceptance of Israel and cooperation with it by the countries of the region, as embodied in the Negev Summit with the participation of Foreign Ministers of Israel, the United States, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco, which was held after the summit of last March in Sharm El-Sheikh, with the participation of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the UAE Mohamed bin Zayed, and Naftali Bennett, former Israeli Prime Minister. Ambassador Saad indicated that the political elite in Israel has been seeking for some time to present the process of normalization with some Arab countries, whether to the Israeli interior or to supporters of Israel abroad, as there is no longer such a thing as the Palestinian cause and that it is the Arab countries that seek Israel on the basis of common interests. He also drew the guest's attention to the extreme enthusiasm of the West in supporting Ukraine to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and at the same time its reluctance to make any effort to end the Israeli occupation of the territories of other countries in accordance with the decisions of the UN resolutions.



## **Visit by the New Ambassador of Nepal to Cairo Mr. Sushil K. Lamsal**

On September 13, 2022, and at his request, Ambassador Sushil K Lamsal, the new Ambassador of Nepal in Cairo, visited ECFA, accompanied by the Second Secretary of the Embassy, Mr. Deepak Ghimire. He was received from the Council by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, and Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Chairman and ECFA Director, respectively. In particular, the meeting discussed the following:

- 1- ECFA Chairman presented the Council's activities, its organizational structure, and its partnerships with similar think tanks around the world. In this context, the guest conveyed the desire of the Nepalese Council for Foreign Affairs to conclude a partnership with the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs. It was agreed to provide the embassy with a draft memorandum of understanding in this regard.
- 2- The guest confirmed their keenness to participate with a high-level delegation in the climate summit to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh in November.
- 3- The guest presented his country's actual relations with Egypt in various fields, indicating his intention to activate the political consultations mechanism between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries, which were held only once in 2005, and in which the Ministry was represented then by Ambassador Ezzat Saad.

The ambassador added that they signed an agreement with the Egyptian side for economic, scientific and technical cooperation in 2007, and that he intends to activate this agreement, including the possibility of holding the joint commission between the two countries, noting that there are promising prospects for cooperation with Egypt, especially in the fields of trade and tourism.

- 4- The Nepalese guest also affirmed the importance of communication and coordination with the Asian sector of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whether with regard to the political aspect of relations or the economic and technical aspects.

## **Visit by the Ambassador of Belarus Mr. Terentiev Sergey Leonidovich to ECFA**

On October 20, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, hosted Mr. Terentiev Sergey Leonidovich, Ambassador of the State of Belarus to Cairo, and his assistant, on a courtesy visit, whereby they exchanged views on Egypt- Belarus relations, and means to enhance them. The guest affirmed that his country's current relations with Egypt are going well, and that they are making more efforts to promote them, noting that trade relations had exceeded \$100 million during the last period, while it is less than that now. At the same time, he pointed out that the share of advanced technology in the bilateral trade between the two countries is very weak, and that they hope to enhance cooperation in this field, exchange private investment projects at the bilateral level, and get rid of the hesitation that many Egyptian investors feel about investing in Belarus.

The guest mentioned that there is a joint committee on bilateral trade relations, established in September 2019, and that the embassy is now preparing to hold a session of talks on trade in the services sector, noting that the session of the committee has been repeatedly postponed since its inception, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He also explained that they had communicated with the Ministry of Military Production, as cooperation in this regard witnessed a remarkable development, but its level decreased following the death of Lieutenant General Al-Assar in 2020. He also praised what he described as the continuous and constructive cooperation with officials of the Arab Authority for Industrialization.

In a related context, the ambassador expressed his country's keenness to invest in the Suez Canal Economic Zone and to cooperate in advanced technology sectors. He added that the Russians invite Belarus and other members of the Eurasian Economic Union (Kazakhstan - Armenia - Kyrgyzstan) to enter with them in the same industrial zone allocated to them, but they do not prefer that, especially since they have a comparative advantage in some industries. He added that they are very excited to invest in a zone of their own in the economic zone, to benefit from the multiple regional trade agreements that Egypt is a member of, including the African Free Trade Agreement.

The guest raised the need to address issues related to assembling some products inside Egypt, and their high cost compared to the cost of the fully manufactured product if imported from Belarus. He added that the last rounds of negotiation on the agreement to establish a free trade zone between Egypt and the Eurasian Economic Union were held recently in Cairo, and that they hope to conclude the negotiations soon, to strengthen bilateral relations, adding that Egypt is a candidate to join after Vietnam.

The guest also inquired about the nature of the Council's activity and its working mechanisms, pointing out that the Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies (BISS), which was established three years ago as a think tank affiliated with the Presidency of the Republic, desires a partnership with the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs. The ambassador was briefed on ECFA activities and partnerships around the world, and prospects for cooperation with similar think tanks, including the drafting of joint research on specific issues. The embassy was provided with a draft MOU for cooperation between ECFA and the Belarusian Institute to study it.

## **Meeting of the German Ambassador to Cairo Mr. Frank Hartmann with ECFA members**

On November 30, 2022, ECFA hosted the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Cairo, Mr. Frank Hartmann, to talk about Egypt-Germany relations, means to enhance them, his country's vision of the situation in the Middle East and the world, especially the Ukrainian crisis, the current dispute between Russia and the West, and the chances of finding a settlement for it. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, moderated by Ambassador Mohamed El-Orabi, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and attended by many ECFA members.

Ambassador Ezzat Saad briefed the guest on ECFA, its activities, and its partnerships inside and outside Egypt, indicating that it is an independent civil society organization. On his part, the guest expressed his gratitude to the Council for hosting him, stressing his deep belief in the importance of strengthening communication with think tanks and civil society organizations in Egypt, and not only with the concerned official authorities, in order to strengthen ties between Egypt and Germany. He added that the bilateral relations between the two countries are deep and extended, and that 2022 marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Germany in 1952, as well as the 80th anniversary of the tragic Battle of El Alamein, in addition to the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the German University in Egypt. In addition, this year coincides Egypt's hosting of COP27 summit, which was attended by a number of German ministers and parliamentarians, as well as more than 200 individuals from various German entities.

The guest affirmed the specificity of the cultural aspects in bilateral relations, despite the considerable investments they cost, noting that there are currently about half a million Egyptians who speak German, and that the German University in Egypt graduated more students than any similar educational institution at the world level, which makes it a distinct and unrivaled cultural weight for Germany outside Europe.

The guest also mentioned that there are Egyptian partnerships with prominent German companies in many fields and projects, most notably the "Siemens" company, with which Egypt signed in May 2022 the largest deal in its history, to build a new high-speed railway network, with a length of 2000 km, at a cost of more than 8 billion Euros, in addition to the cooperation that already exists in the fields of energy and infrastructure, as in the "Benban" solar energy mega-project, which contributed to strengthening the position of the Egyptian state to be an energy hub, self-sufficient in electricity, and even exporting it to neighboring countries and regions, such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan, and later Europe. In addition to the new cooperation in the field of green hydrogen, according to the MOU that was signed last July, during President El-Sisi's visit to Germany.

Regarding the Russia-Ukraine war, the guest indicated that Europe did not believe the possibility of war until it occurred, stressing the difficulty of predicting Putin's behavior. He added that Russia did not achieve its desired goals in Ukraine. However, the repercussions that resulted from the war since its inception are very grave, whether in supply chains, energy, food, financial markets... etc., indicating that his country was determined to diversify its sources of oil and gas to provide its energy resources, instead of its huge reliance previously on Russia (about 55%), by resorting to Qatar, Norway, Algeria and others, and even allocated about 200 billion euros in compensation to industries and individuals inside the country, with the likelihood of an increase in prices in the future, which cannot be avoided. However, the current government formation in Germany makes it difficult to strike a balance in the decisions that can be taken on issues of climate change and reliance on traditional energy sources, as a result of the involvement of the Green Party, which enjoys a significant presence within the government, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which strongly defends environmental issues.

As for the Middle East, the guest affirmed his country's full support for the two-state solution, and its support for the Egyptian position on the Palestinian cause, adding that Germany is trying to bring this solution back to the negotiating table again, despite the difficulty it faces in light of the return of Benjamin Netanyahu at the head of the Israeli government again, including far-right religious parties. On the other hand, Germany sought to find a solution to the Libyan crisis by holding the two Berlin conferences, stressing his country's full support for various endeavors that would put an end the crisis in Libya. Some ECFA members raised the German position, and the European one in general, regarding the Palestinian cause, proposing that Berlin, and the rest of the European countries that did not recognize the State of Palestine, to recognize it, and explicitly reject the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, similar to the outright European rejection of any Russian occupation of the Ukrainian territories. In this context, the guest stressed that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is the central and very sensitive issue of the Middle East, noting that his country, as well as the European Union, have repeatedly demanded the necessity of implementing the 1967 borders, and condemned the Israeli settlement expansion operations in the occupied territories, and they did not recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, unlike the United States, while the German embassy is still in Tel Aviv. In the same context, he pointed out that the radical and extremist organizations in the Palestinian territories make it difficult to resume the negotiation process between the two sides. The ambassador also noted that the Palestinian file is the subject of sharp internal division in Germany, and that there are already voices calling for adopting a stronger stance towards Israel.

## **Chapter III**

### Members' Participations

## **ECFA Participation in the Seminar of "Egyptian Ministry Foreign Affairs: 100 Years of Diplomacy" organized by the Kemet Boutros-Ghali Foundation for Peace and Knowledge**

On February 28, 2022, the Kemet Boutros-Ghali Foundation for Peace and Knowledge organized a webinar to celebrate the centenary of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the title "Egyptian Foreign Affairs: 100 Years Of Diplomacy". It was inaugurated by His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sameh Shoukry, and the Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, Mr. Mamdouh Abbas, while it was moderated by Executive Director of the Foundation, Ambassador Laila Bahaa El-Din. A number of ECFA members participated in the event, including Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Hussein Hassouna, member of the United Nations International Law Commission, and Ambassador Hisham El-Zimaity, ECFA Secretary General.

This is in addition to the participation of Mr. Amre Moussa, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Ambassador Maged Abdel Fattah, Head of the Arab League Mission to the United Nations in New York, Ambassador Wafaa Basim, member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Ambassador Dr. Mostafa El-Feki, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Dr. Abdel Moneim Said, former Chairman of Al-Ahram Foundation and current Chairman of Al-Masry Al-Youm newspaper, and Dr. Mohamed Afifi, Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at Cairo University and former Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Culture.

The participants reviewed luminous glimpses of the history of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its diplomatic figures over its long and prestigious diplomatic path, seeking to secure its interests at all levels and in all corridors, since the beginning of the 19th century during the era of Muhammad Ali, passing through the period of British protection over Egypt since 1914, until the issuance of the Declaration of February 28, 1922, which granted Egypt independence, and as a result, the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs resumed its work on March 15, 1922, making that date a glorious day for Egyptian diplomacy. The participants also addressed the challenges facing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the current period, emphasizing its long experience and distinguished diplomatic tools that enable it to deal with them wisely.

## **ECFA Director participates virtually in the 5<sup>th</sup> West Asia Conference, with a paper on “The Egyptian Perspective on Egypt–India Bilateral Relations”**

ECFA Director Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in the fifth edition of the West Asia Conference, organized by the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDS), on March 29-30, 2022, on “India’s Approach to West Asia: Trends, Challenges and Possibilities”, with a paper on the “Egyptian Perspective on India – Egypt Bilateral Relations,” as he indicated in this regard that Egypt-India relations are gaining a special importance in light of the evolving international environment, since the two countries share a common political understanding, based on a long history of regular contacts and cooperation on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. Under the leadership of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Egypt has realized the importance of building deep-rooted bridges of cooperation with India, as it is one of the key emerging powers and one of the economic poles in the world order that is being currently shaped, and based on a solid ground of interaction between the two countries starting with the era of their struggle against colonialism, passing through the stage of their formulation of non-alignment policies, and reaching the actual stage in which the development agendas of both countries are similar, especially since President El-Sisi took office in 2014 and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the same year.

As for the economic aspect, it is obvious that our main approach to relations with India depends on promoting trade and investment opportunities between the two countries, which actually means leaving relations in the hands of the private sector, as it is the main engine of trade and investment issues. During 2022, 8 trade delegations from India visited Egypt, and many Indian companies participated enthusiastically in many exhibitions held in Egypt including Paper, Pharma, Textile and Food Processing Exhibitions. Thanks to technology, many meetings between exporters and importers were held this year virtually. In addition, Indian investments in Egypt currently amount to more than 3.5 billion dollars in multiple sectors including: health, information and communication technology, new and renewable energy, defense, and higher education, with the presence of 52 Indian companies in Egypt. It is also worth noting in this context that the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries reached 6 billion US dollars in 2021 (with a deficit on Egypt's side of 0.2 billion dollars approximately), with an annual increase of 80% with an increase in Egyptian exports to India by 63% during the same period. India became top in our liquefied natural gas export markets, while India came in seventh place on the list of Egypt’s main export markets during 2021.

On the other hand, bilateral cooperation in the defense sector also received great interest, through holding several meetings between the military leaders of the two countries, as well as the visit of the Indian Naval Ship "INS Tabar" to Alexandria port in September 2021, and conducting joint exercises and operations with the Egyptian Navy. In

November 2021, more than 10 Indian companies participated in the Egyptian defense expo "EDEX-2021", where they displayed their latest defense systems.

As for the cultural level, the International Day of Yoga was celebrated on June 21st, as prominent figures from Egypt practiced yoga on the banks of the Nile, a gesture that echoes the two great civilizations that embraced each other's culture. On December 2021, the Cairo Film Festival was honored with the presence of the famous Indian singer and composer A.R. Rahman who is considered the pioneer of Sufi music in cinema. On December 6th, at the Baron Palace, the Embassy also celebrated India-Bangladesh Friendship Day with invitees from across the various political and cultural spectra in Egypt as well as the diplomatic community.

In addition to cooperation in the technological field, as the Pan African e-Network project between India and all African countries, which is located at Alexandria University, provides tele-medicine and tele-education. Also, the Indian professorship at Ain Shams University - currently specialized in the field of bioinformatics – has contributed to strengthening and deepening the roots of academic exchange.

Finally, in a world marked by intense strategic competition between the United States of America and other major powers, it is important to strengthen Egypt-India political cooperation, and promote economic cooperation in new areas such as public health, pharmaceutical industries, manufacturing in general, advanced technology, energy, textile industries, and technical cooperation. The rich partnership existing between the two countries provides a broad framework for new ties and further cooperation in various fields. Over the years, the two countries have demonstrated strong political will to expand cooperation frameworks in various fields on the basis of common interests and mutual benefits.



## **Ambassador Hisham El-Zimaity participates in a virtual symposium organized by the Chinese Institute for Financial Studies in Beijing**

On May 6, 2022, Ambassador Hisham Al-Zimaity, ECFA Secretary General, participated in a virtual symposium, organized by the Chinese Institute for Financial Studies, in cooperation with the China Public Diplomacy Association in Beijing, entitled: “Seeking Peace and Promoting Development: An Online Dialogue of Global Think Tanks of 20 Countries”, which aimed to address the effects of regional conflicts, technological developments, and the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, which entail the necessity of redeveloping the system, with a focus on the importance of unity rather than division, dialogue rather than confrontation, mutual respect and support for multilateral organizations rather than selectivity and supremacy over others, and encouraging the peace-loving and development-seekers to positive collective action.

Twenty Chinese political and academic figures participated in the symposium, and from a number of countries, including Egypt, Slovenia, Russia, Malaysia, Britain, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Chile, Canada, Iran, Brazil, Indonesia, Thailand, South Africa and France, as well as the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The symposium was opened by the Chinese Vice Foreign Minister. The Chinese speakers focused on the elements of the comprehensive stability initiative put forward by the Chinese President on April 21, 2022; elements capable of reducing tension, confrontation, and useless military alliances, including the defense of the "one China" policy. They also referred to the bankruptcy of the regimes that claim Democracy in achieving stability in the world, but rather it has become a source of danger to international peace and stability. On their part, Western speakers addressed the great importance that NATO has gained since the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis, and what this requires in terms of structural reforms in all international organizations and existing security arrangements, as well as dealing more seriously with climate change.

On the other hand, speakers from third world countries focused on the importance of the comprehensive stability initiative put forward by the Chinese President, being complementary to the Belt and Road Initiative and necessary to restore the required balance for world stability. A number of speakers criticized the bad state of U.S.-China relations, blaming the U.S. for its insistence on imposing its will on the world despite its diminishing global role. In addition, some have demanded that the intensification of cooperation between the countries of Europe and Asia, EURASIA, must be the normal response to the expansion of the Atlantic Alliance, and to the sanctions and boycott of Russia in the manner that we have witnessed since February 24, 2022, and the related fabrication of successive crises in the economic field, and in the field of energy, natural resources and basic commodities, and even the use of the International Monetary Fund to obstruct the interests of a number of developing countries, including Sri Lanka and Pakistan, for example, not to mention unrealistically bringing sports, culture and youth exchange into the conflict, and manipulating international law instead of adhering to it as a guarantee of world stability.

## **Participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad in a Symposium on "Africa–China Cooperation in the Framework of the Belt and Road and Global Development Initiatives"**

On May 12, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, participated in the virtual event organized by the Non-Governmental Organizations Network of the Belt and Road countries on "Ways to enhance Africa-China cooperation in the framework of the Chinese Global Development Initiative (GDI)." He indicated the fact that Africa has learned from China's development experience; that structural adjustment processes, in order to be achieved successfully, must depend on a combination of development aid, trade and investment, in conjunction with development processes; affirming at the same time that the current global international environment, which is based on competition between major powers, constitutes a major obstacle to any sustainable growth that would allow combating poverty in many regions. He also pointed out that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this competition and doubled protectionist pressures in the global economy, at the expense of global and regional economic integration, at a time when trade barriers, agreements and partnerships from which the United States withdrew during the previous administration were still intact.

Rapid economic growth in countries such as China has lifted millions out of poverty, but progress has been limited in other regions, such as South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, which together account for 80% of those living in extreme poverty. In fact, "Building a China-Africa Community with a Shared Future in the New Era" is one of the great achievements, thanks to China-Africa cooperation over many years, through a gradual process that began decades ago, and gained momentum with the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation more than two decades ago.

The various aspects of China-Africa relations have been founded on common concepts and ideas based at their core on equal sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs, and the right of each country to choose its own development model according to its cultural heritage and value model. In this context, it is necessary to recall the principles governing China-Africa politics, which President Xi Jinping affirmed, which are based on sincerity, real results, amity, good faith, and common interests.

With regard to the exploitation and management of natural resources, environmental goals and the protection of public health, China has a successful experience, and it is hoped that Africans will benefit from it and learn from it through the mechanisms of joint cooperation between the two sides, in order to achieve prosperity. Through the Belt and Road Initiative, Chinese companies have carried out much-needed large-scale projects in Africa, as well as in Asia and Eastern Europe. In many cases, these projects have helped countries build indispensable infrastructure, which is essential to the development of African countries.

## **Participation of Ambassador Ezzat Saad in in the Thirteenth Summit of ethe Economic Cooperation between Islamic Countries and Russia, and the Official Meeting of the Group of Strategic Vision**

On May 19 to 22, 2022, at the invitation of H.E. Rustam Minnikhanov, President of the Republic of Tatarstan, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in the XIII International Economic Summit "Russia - Islamic World: KazanSummit 2022. Commercial delegations from the concerned countries participated in the summit, as well as representatives from the capitals and ambassadors of these countries accredited in Moscow, including Ambassador Nazih al-Najjari, Egypt's ambassador to the Russian Federation, as well as a number of current and former ministers from some Islamic countries, including the Arab Gulf states, Iran, and Turkey.

Dr. Saad participated in two seminars that were held on the sidelines of the summit, one on the digital economy, and the other on ways to develop and enhance trade exchanges and tourism cooperation between Islamic countries and the Russian Federation. He also participated in the annual meeting of the Strategic Vision Group "Russia-Islamic World", which was held on May 20, 2022, with the participation of experts from 42 Islamic countries, along with representatives of the Orthodox Church in Russia and relevant ministries.

Dr. Saad delivered his speech at the opening session chaired by the President of the Republic of Tatarstan, which discussed the theme of "Russian experience of preserving ethno-cultural diversity, inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony - a guarantee of strengthening the common civic identity", a pre-determined topic by the organizing committee.

## **Participation of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran in the Centenary Conference of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Ain Shams University**

On May 31, 2022, the Center for Middle East Research and Future Studies at Ain Shams University organized a scientific conference to celebrate the centenary of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, entitled "The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a hundred years (1922-2022)". A number of former foreign ministers as well as diplomats, academics and researchers participated in the conference. Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, participated as a keynote speaker in the first session of the conference, as he thanked His Excellency Dr. Mahmoud El-Metini, President of Ain Shams University, for his kind invitation, and Dr. Ashraf Moanes, Director of the Center for Middle East Research and Future Studies, for organizing this conference. In his speech, he introduced the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and its role in promoting Egyptian foreign policy, addressing ECFA's relationship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, think tanks and research centers at the internal and external levels, and the United Nations and its agencies, especially since it enjoys consultative status with the Economic and Social Council ECOSOC, and its participation in NPT review conferences.

Ambassador Zahran also presented in his speech the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in establishing the United Nations, and its participation in the San Francisco Conference of delegates in 1945 to formulate the charter of the new organization. As well as the role of the ministry in establishing regional organizations and communities, such as the establishment of the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, which later became the African Union, the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation OIC, and the Group of 77, referring to Egypt's membership in the United Nations regional Commissions ESCWA/ECA, Egypt's participation in peacekeeping operations. He also tackled Egypt's role in arms control and disarmament, especially weapons of mass destruction, its participation in promoting the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, and its efforts to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030.

In a related context, Ambassador Zahran gave glimpses of Egypt's struggle for independence and ending colonialism, and its efforts to defend its independence and regional sovereignty against the tripartite aggression in 1956, as well as the wars of attrition and the October 1973 War, until its territories were completely liberated, within the framework of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in 1979, then the liberation of Taba through international arbitration.

## **ECFA's Participation in the Launch of the Third Edition of the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development**

On June 21, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, representing it, attended the launch event of the third edition of the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development - at the Marriott Hotel Zamalek - as one of the important initiatives launched by Egypt during its chairmanship of the African Union in 2019, to discuss the challenges facing African continent, and put forward comprehensive responses that strengthen the relationship between peace, security and sustainable development. The conference was inaugurated by Mr. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the President of the Republic, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi addressed the Forum, noting that the forum this year is taking place at a very critical timing, in which the international community suffers from increasing tensions, which have far-reaching consequences for the various political, economic and developmental levels, and which effects are also reflected on African countries, especially on food and energy security, to be added to the total health, social and economic repercussions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, which the countries of the continent are still suffering from its negative effects. Hence, President El-Sisi called for the necessity of enhancing joint efforts in order to confront these challenges, thus to achieve peace, security and sustainable development across the continent.

In addition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Senegal, the current Chairperson of the African Union, the Minister of Agriculture of South Sudan, the Minister of Agriculture of Ivory Coast, and Ms. Ghada Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, participated in the Forum. The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addressed a message to the Forum, in which he referred to the tense international conditions due to the war in Ukraine and its devastating repercussions on food security and climate throughout the world, praising the Aswan Forum as a high-level platform that produces useful conclusions that can be used in tackling the crises and challenges facing the African continent.

In a related context, it should be noted that the agenda of the Aswan Forum includes the repercussions of climate change on peace, security and development. It also included, for the first time during this Forum, organizing a youth dialogue with the aim of discussing ways to activate the participation of African youth to advance resilient societies able to achieve sustainable peace and development, especially against climate change. In the framework of Egypt's leadership in post-conflict reconstruction and development in Africa, it is expected that the rich discussions during the Forum will have a positive impact on the work of the relevant African Union Center, which was launched in December 2021 in Cairo.

## **Participation of Ambassador Ahmed Haggag, Chairman of the Egyptian Pugwash, in the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Forum**

During June 18 and 23, 2022, Ambassador Ahmed Haggag, ECFA member, and Chairman of the Egyptian Pugwash Society for Science and International Affairs, participated in the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Forum (June 18-19) and in the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) (20 -23 June), Vienna. In his relevant report, he indicated that the movement's periodic meeting was postponed in 2021 to 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and that it participated in the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and was selected along with the International Red Cross as a permanent observer member in the Treaty, adding that it receives generous donations from various parts throughout the world, and its center is currently in the American city of Los Angeles, and it has branches in Turkey, Singapore, Belgium, China, Switzerland, Kenya and Washington. In a related context, Ambassador Haggag urged the need for the movement to pay greater attention to the geographical regions that already exist or whose formation is postponed, free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, including the Middle East region, on which the Egyptian initiative faltered due to the opposition of one of the countries in the region that has already managed to possess atomic bombs with the support of one of the major powers.

On the other hand, and in connection with the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Ambassador Haggag indicated that this treaty came after its adoption by the United Nations after difficult labor, and it entered into force in January 2021, with the opposition of the nine nuclear countries, and some of their other supporting countries, especially those affiliated with NATO, adding that that this meeting was opposed by the United States for a long time, noting that it was attended by, in addition to the official parties to the treaty, a large number of civil society organizations, especially the "ICAN" movement and the International Red Cross, as well as private Japanese organizations working in the field of defending the rights of those harmed by the atomic bombs detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The meeting witnessed a presentation of reports on assistance to victims of nuclear tests and the measures that must be used on the national scale, and the complementarity of the Treaty with the existing system of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, especially what the of the United Nations Member States are carrying out in Geneva. The list of procedures and the committee for examining the delegations' mandates were also approved, as delegations from 34 states party to the treaty attended along with 34 countries as observer members, including Algeria, Australia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Iraq, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, the Netherlands, Norway, Qatar and Yemen.

## **Participation of Dr. Yousry Abo Shady, on behalf of ECFA, in the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, in Vienna**

- **Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons “HINW”**

This initiative is about the gravity of the use of nuclear weapons and their impact on humanity. It is an initiative that began in Oslo in 2013 and then in Vienna 2014, as Austria led a group of states calling for a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons as a tool that could lead to the annihilation of humanity. This initiative, in cooperation with many people’s and non-governmental organizations, was able to reach the conclusion of a treaty banning nuclear weapons and submitting it to the United Nations General Assembly in 2016. Austrian Minister Alexander Schallenberg, Federal Minister for European and International Affairs, inaugurated this conference at the Austria Center Vienna, which was attended by large numbers of states and people’s organizations. Its main activities included the various seminars on the impact of the use of nuclear weapons, whether tactical with limited capacity or hydrogen, under the of mass destruction effect. A humorous question was presented about the reasons for the increase of the effects of radiation on women and children compared to men. The conference recommended supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and attempting to convince the states that own these weapons to abandon them through the peoples of these countries and spread awareness on the dangers to humanity in the event of their use.

- **First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons “TPNW”**

The meeting was opened in Vienna on June 21, 2022, in the presence of representatives from 83 states representing 49 signatories and ratifiers of the treaty, including the State of Palestine (out of 65), as well as 34 states as observers, including 14 states that have signed the treaty but have not yet ratified it (out of 24 states that have not yet ratified) and 24 non-signatory states, including states in NATO (Germany - Norway - Netherlands - Belgium) and others. Eight Arab countries participated in the conference (State of Palestine - Algeria - Libya - Qatar - Morocco - Iraq - Yemen - Mauritania). Dozens of international organizations and non-governmental organizations also participated in the conference. Although Egypt participated in 2017 in approving the adoption of this treaty in the United Nations General Assembly (among 122 countries), it did not sign the treaty due to the lack of agreement on the Egyptian international initiative regarding a Middle East free of all nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and Israel’s rejection to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Egypt did not participate in this conference.

The main decisions and recommendations reached by the conference include the following:

1. Forming a working group of a number of states and international organizations to set deadlines for the removal and destruction of all nuclear weapons and removing them from the territories of states that do not possess them.
2. Setting a period of 10 years for dismantling and destroying the nuclear weapons of the states that ratified the treaty, with an additional grace period of 5 years with the approval of the members of the treaty, and a maximum period of 90 days for states that have nuclear weapons owned by another state on their territory to transfer them outside their territory.
3. Establishing a professional international organization with technical capabilities that enable it to ensure compliance by the treaty member states with its provisions, especially through technical means of ensuring, similarly to international organizations responsible for the implementation of other treaties such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA-NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Brazil and Mexico submitted a draft proposal for the establishment, functioning and financing of this organization. The conference recommended the establishment of a scientific advisory group of 8 to 15 member states of the treaty as a step to propose a practical method for its application and verification.

4. Solidarity and support for the victims of nuclear tests of weapons and explosions and the elimination of their impact on the environment.
5. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone for getting rid of nuclear weapons (Article VI), and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is its complement.
6. Nominating Thailand and New Zealand as facilitators.
7. Nominating Mexico to chair the second conference of the treaty to be held at the United Nations headquarters in New York from November 27 to December 1, 2023. Mexico's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York, Ambassador Juan Ramirez, was nominated as the chair of this conference. Kazakhstan was also nominated to chair the third conference.
8. The conference issued a declaration and a plan of action dubbed Vienna.

In fact, out of the follow-up of the activities of the conference and the speeches of the speaker states, we can conclude that the gap between the treaty member states and the important nuclear states, especially the nuclear weapon states, or those on whose territory nuclear weapons belonging to other states, or states engaged in military alliances with major nuclear states, or states that suffer from nuclear power imbalance in some regions, especially the Middle East region - is a very big gap, and it may continue for decades until a nuclear catastrophe occurs using these weapons, whether intentionally or not. Therefore, it can be said that despite the formal success of the start of the implementation of this treaty, it will not add much to the process of getting rid of nuclear weapons, but it can have an important role in mobilizing a strong popular opinion against these weapons.



## **Lecture by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran on "Contemporary International Variables and Their Impacts on the International Order"**

On June 22, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, delivered a lecture entitled "Contemporary International Variables and Their Impact on the International Order" before the "Egyptian Association for Political Economy, Statistics and Legislation", within the framework of the latter's cultural season. His speech focused on the international order that was established after World War II, and the challenges that afflicted it throughout its history, leading to the Covid-19 pandemic and its repercussions, as well as the acute Ukrainian crisis that witnessed an armed conflict since February 24, 2022, touching on the opportunities for reforming the current international order and the extent of its ability to maintain international peace and security, as he addressed the issue of the veto right of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and the issue of amending the Charter, in addition to the danger posed by the permanent member states, in connection with their retention of nuclear arsenals, and working to develop them, thus threatening all mankind.

In this context, Ambassador Zahran indicated that the Security Council has proven its failure in the decisive positions that it experienced, from the Korean War to the Ukraine War, and even amid the Covid-19 crisis, indicating that the United Nations Charter was born with flaws, and it currently contains articles that are outdated, such as the articles of International Trusteeship System, and the Trusteeship and Decolonization Council, but its amendment is almost impossible, indicating that it was amended only twice to expand the Security Council; Although the Charter opened the way for the possibility of amending it in accordance with Articles 108 and 109 thereof, it has become impossible to amend the Charter since the establishment of the organization due to the necessity for any amendment to obtain a two-thirds majority, including the votes of each of the permanent members of the Security Council, and the ratification of the amendment by its legislative bodies, which is practically impossible to implement.

He also pointed out in this regard that the U.S. violated the United Nations Charter very shortly after the Charter was drawn up when it struck Hiroshima and Nagasaki with two atomic bombs, which is considered a crime of genocide that must not be forgotten. It also violated several times the non-expansion of NATO to the east, and in the last time; i.e. prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it refused to provide written guarantees to Russian President Putin in this regard, and so it was war. In this context, Ambassador Zahran affirmed that the multilateral global order, which began with the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, will not change except through war, as it originally appeared. Therefore, the possibility of an expansion of the Russia-Ukraine war is possible.

## **Participation by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the China-Africa Think Tanks Forum – held under the slogan "Promoting the Spirit of China-Africa Friendship and Cooperation with Joint Action on the Global Development Initiative"**

ECFA Director, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, participated in the 11th edition of the China-Africa Think Tanks Forum - held under the slogan "Promoting the Spirit of China-Africa Friendship and Cooperation with Joint Action on the Global Development Initiative", on July 20 and 21, 2022. He first expressed his appreciation to the China-Africa Institute (CAI), and to its Executive President Dr. Li Xinfeng, for his kind invitation to participate in this important meeting of the China-Africa Think Tanks Forum. In this regard, he indicated that Africa has learned from China's experience in the field of development; That structural adjustment processes, in order to be successfully achieved, must rely on a mixture of development aid, trade and investment, in conjunction with development financing and other forms of cooperation aimed at promoting growth, to start these processes. Stressing at the same time that the current global environment, which is based on competition between major powers, constitutes a major obstacle to any sustainable growth that would allow combating poverty in many regions. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated this competition and multiplied protectionist pressures in the global economy, at the expense of global and regional economic integration, at a time when trade barriers, agreements and partnerships from which the United States withdrew during the previous administration are still intact.

Ambassador Saad added that Africa is a major destination for China's expansion of South-South cooperation and the implementation of the new concept of international development cooperation, identified in the white paper issued at the beginning of 2021 entitled "China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era." Noting in this context that, in April 2018, China established the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), which represents a new phase of Chinese foreign aid.

This is at a time when China has taken a responsible and leading position in development aid and development financing, as evidenced by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and most recently President Jinping's New Global Development Initiative (GDI) on September 21, 2021. Successive U.S. administrations have sought to thwart these initiatives through campaigns and intense pressure initiated by the Obama Administration, which failed to persuade its allies and partners to boycott the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. And when Trump came along, a week after entering the White House, he abandoned the agreement drafted by his predecessor's administration, called the "Trans-Pacific Partnership."

In a related context, it can be argued that the West has criticized China without offering anything on its part or even acceptable alternatives to developing countries. Perhaps it is useful to refer here to the plan of the G7, at its summit held on June 26, 2022, to mobilize \$600 billion in private and public infrastructure investments in low- and middle-income countries over the next five years, which was called the “Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII)”, in the framework of which President Biden pledged a financing of up to \$200 billion. While some Western officials have indicated that the Chinese program is primarily concerned with loans from state-controlled banks, the Western plan will use limited government resources to attract large private investment. But the focal point here is whether profit-seeking private players will lend or invest when the risk factor is too high. On the other hand, the G7 plan overlaps with the "Global Gateway" strategy launched by the European Union in December 2021 to mobilize 300 billion euros in infrastructure investments by 2027, in addition to another British initiative, the "Clean Green Initiative", which London revealed in November 2021, worth \$4.1 billion for sustainable infrastructure in developing countries.

While Western officials indicate that these initiatives complement each other, Western experts point out that inflation and domestic politics in major Western countries will limit the financing that governments will provide, and the private sector in these countries will be very reluctant to invest under instability, unlike China, which considers the issue differently, believing that the solution to all the challenges facing Africa is development, and that insecurity is due to insufficient sustainable development. Thus, some Western experts, such as Matt Ferchen of the Asia Center at Leiden University in the Netherlands, who points out that the above-mentioned Western initiatives are "too little, too late".

Indeed, Western initiatives cannot be considered reliable alternatives to the Belt and Road Initiative and other similar Chinese initiatives. There may be some obstacles facing the Belt and Road Initiative in light of the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic and the current international situation regarding what is happening in Europe, but there is confidence in China's ability to control matters and overcome these obstacles as always.

## **Participation by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in the Evgeniy Primakov Center event on "The Current Status of Egypt–Russia Relations and Prospects for Enhancing them amidst the Changing World Order"**

On July 28, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in the event organized by the Evgeniy Primakov Center on "The Current Status of Egypt-Russia Relations and Prospects for Enhancing them amidst the Changing World Order," as he extended gratitude to the Center for its kind invitation, expressing his deep appreciation for the great statesman and academic Yevgeny Primakov, who had always defended many foreign policy values and principles, especially the principles of sovereignty, equal sovereignty and democracy in international relations, and the sanctity of the principle of multilateralism. In this context, Ambassador Saad indicated that the next year 2023 marks the 80th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Russia, and that the June 30, 2013 Revolution in Egypt ushered in a new phase in the two countries' relations, as both sides had the strong political will to restore warmth to these relations. In the midst of the chaos that strikes the global order and the West's attempts to attract the largest number of countries to serve its geopolitical goals, Egypt and Russia launched, on July 21, 2022, the construction works for the first unit of Al-Dabaa nuclear plant, a project that is an important element in Egypt's sustainable development strategy, Vision 2030, as it provides many benefits to Egypt, among which is the diversity of energy sources in Egypt in a reliable and sustainable manner.

On July 24, 2022, Egypt warmly welcomed Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, on a successful visit, during which President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi received him, and he held an intensive round of talks with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry, during which various issues of bilateral relations and regional and international situations of common interest were addressed, including developments related to what is happening in Europe and its repercussions. According to a statement issued by the Egyptian presidency, Minister Lavrov briefed President El-Sisi on the latest developments in the situation regarding the Ukrainian crisis, and developments in Russian moves in this context at the international level. The Egyptian President confirmed this in his speech before the St. Petersburg Economic Forum in June 2022, and during the visit of Minister Lavrov, affirming the historical and strategic relationship between Egypt and the Russian Federation, and keenness to develop it in all fields, especially since Egypt is Russia's top economic and trade partner in the Arab region and the African continent. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database, Russian arms exports to Egypt increased over the past five years (2017-2021) by 73 percent.

Emphasizing that the current international conditions also hold opportunities for strengthening Russia's relations with the Arab world, whether in the bilateral framework or in the multilateral frameworks, i.e. within the framework of the Arab-Russian Cooperation

Forum, which was launched following the visit of the Russian President to the Arab League in September 2009, and which has held five sessions till present. In this regard, it should be noted that Egypt's initiative to form a ministerial liaison committee within the framework of the League of Arab States to settle the Ukrainian crisis was appreciated by Russian President Putin, an initiative that reflects Cairo's strong desire to enhance international peace and security by upholding the language of dialogue and diplomacy. It should also be noted that the Ukrainian crisis has revealed the extent of Russia's influence in the African continent, most of which leaders have rejected Western pressures to condemn Russia or join the sanctions regime, and which maintains its communication with Russia, despite the enormous Western pressures against it.

It is also worth noting that President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi participated on June 24, 2022 via videoconference, in a high-level dialogue session for global development within the framework of “BRICS +”, and in December 2021, Egypt joined the membership of the New Development Bank, which was established under “BRICS” in order to increase Interaction between the BRICS countries, including Russia, and other developing countries that are not members of the bloc, through the financial tools provided by the Bank. Egypt is also looking forward to obtaining the status of a dialogue partner in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

## **Participation of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, in the press conference of the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China concerning Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan**

On August 11, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, participated in the press conference of the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China on the visit of Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan on August 2, 2022. He expressed his gratitude to the Ambassador for the kind invitation, adding some key points in connection with the crisis which arose due to that unjustified visit:

- 1- There is agreement that the visit was not justified at all, and it is believed that many Western analysts agree with this vision, and some of them described the visit as “ridiculous” or “stupid”, and that her statements about providing support for the freedom and independence of Taiwan represent a flagrant violation and a direct affront to the principles of the U.S. "One China" policy enshrined in the Shanghai Communiqué of 1972.
- 2- The Egyptian position - official and media - was clear and supportive of China's position based on facts, history and rules of international law.
- 3- The U.S. foreign policy towards China since the Trump administration lacks wisdom and logic and is characterized by recklessness. It is also based on false assumptions that are not in the interest of the world, especially developing countries, including Egypt, which considers it to be in their interest that the U.S. and China have good and calm relations.

Although the presidents of the two countries have spoken to each other five times so far, the best that the two countries have managed to reach in the past few years, which is the so-called “phase one” trade deal, has failed to reduce the trade deficit of the United States, which is the losing party anyways, which makes it adhere to the pursuit of "endless confrontations" with China, in the words of Kissinger.

- 4- Accordingly, it is hoped that the two countries will find a way out of the crisis, and thus resume communication between them. China has the right to take whatever measures and actions it sees to assert its sovereignty over Taiwan, including suspending military and security talks with Washington, as well as suspending cooperation with the United States on combating drugs regarding illegal immigration and the maritime safety mechanism.

**Participation of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in the symposium of the Egypt–China Friendship Association, in cooperation with the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, on "The Future of China–U.S. Relations in Light of the Recent Developments in the Taiwan Strait"**

On August 20, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, participated with a paper on "The Crisis and the Future of Major Powers Rivalry", in the symposium organized by the Egypt-China Friendship Association, in cooperation with the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, in Cairo, on "The Future of China-U.S. Relations in light of recent developments in the Taiwan Strait", in which he indicated that the shock of the Covid-19 pandemic did not affect the hierarchy of global power; The United States remains the world's largest power, still in command of the world's monetary and financial system and retaining a global ability to demonstrate power, be it hard or soft. As for China, it continues to rise without hindrance under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, which confirms its position as a peer competitor to the United States, especially since the global financial crisis of 2007-2008, which had a deeper impact than the pandemic on the hierarchy of states, and its manifestations were: The American strategic turning towards Asia during the Obama era, debt management and the issue of combating poverty, the recognition of the need for flexibility in dealing with the two crises, the rise of China to become the second largest global economy, the return of Russia as a global strategic player, and the beginning of the European Union staggering and suffering from one existential crisis after another until pre-Covid-19. The same observations apply to varying degrees for the other major players: India is no closer to catching up with China, and Brazil is still dependent on raw material markets.

Contrary to the precedent of the Great Depression, Washington and Beijing worked together as "tenable stakeholders" with the common goal of emerging from the global depression. Conversely, the United States under Trump showed no interest, nor did China, in wearing the mantle of global leadership, either separately or jointly, when the pandemic hit the world. In contrast to Washington, which turned in on itself, China provided the vaccine to many countries in the developing world, especially Africa, at a time when the positions of Western countries were characterized - at least initially - by selfishness. At the strategic level, the gap has deepened between the alliance system that the United States focused on in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, and a rising China. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan came to embody a decade of U.S. decline. This has fueled skepticism of allies and rivals alike regarding America's willingness and ability to advance its worldview with the kind of determination that prevailed during the first Cold War.

Regardless of the intense provocations raised by the visits of high-ranking U.S. officials to Taiwan from time to time recently, however, according to some American writers, besieging Russia and defeating Putin in the Ukrainian crisis may require China's

cooperation and persuasion to work with the United States to confront Russia, especially that its economy is deeply intertwined with the U.S. and global economy and its holding of more than a trillion dollars worth of U.S. debt in the form of U.S. Treasury bonds. It also benefits from the cumulative effect of U.S. investment in China, and it needs access to foreign markets. This is at a time when these facts participate in shaping China's behavior and the determinants of any future confrontation with the United States. In this context, some argue that the United States has never, nor should it, found its entire foreign policy on human rights, and that if it is true that the Communist Party views the United States as an adversary, it has always been willing to engage diplomatically. It has also repeatedly advocated for the sanctity of state borders and acceptance of compromise on issues such as trade and climate change. Even China's rhetoric on Taiwan may be more restrained compared to how the United States has historically dealt with Latin America. In this context, they suggest that Washington take specific steps such as: softening the rhetoric, removing the tariffs that were imposed during Trump's era on Chinese goods in return for reducing Beijing's support for Putin...etc.



**Participation of Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, in the graduation ceremony of the diplomat students nominated to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Military College**

On August 31, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, ECFA Chairman, at the invitation of the Director of the Military College, Major General Ashraf Salem Zaher, attended the graduation ceremony of diplomat students nominated to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, session (54), at the headquarters of the Military College, in addition to a defense of a research entitled "A Future Vision for the Structure of the World Order in Light of Contemporary Variables".

## **Participation by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran in a meeting at Nasser Higher Military Academy to discuss launching a periodical for the Academy**

On September 3, 2022, at the invitation of Major General Hisham Al-Halabi, ECFA member and Advisor to the Director of the Nasser Higher Military Academy for Postgraduate Studies. ECFA Chairman, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran, participated in a meeting at the Academy's headquarters devoted to discussing means to launch a periodical for the Academy:

- 1- In his speech, Ambassador Zahran emphasized the following in particular:
  - The importance for the Academy to introduce its activities throughout the year in the proposed periodical, noting the annual report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the Organization's activities. ECFA Chairman also handed over a copy of the annual report of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs to the officials of the Academy, as a guide.
  - The importance for the proposed periodical to give priority to two topics: peacekeeping and Egypt's active role in this regard, and combating terrorism and related issues.
- 2- Among the participants in the meeting: Other than Major General Ashraf Fares, Director of the Academy, Dr. Mostafa Al-Feqi- Mr. Ahmed Al-Muslimany - Dr. Fakhry Al-Fiqi, Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Al-Saeed, Major General Prof. Dr. Wael Rabie, Prof. Dr. Mohamed Kamal, Prof. Dr. Sami Abdelaziz, Dr. Sayed Fleifel, Major General Dr. Ahmed Youssef and others.
- 3- The participants' opinions ranged between the possibility for the periodical to include articles on sensitive political topics that might embarrass the Egyptian government and the means to avoid that, and the possibility for the periodical to include collective research, which was supported by a number of deans of faculties of various universities, and whether the periodical is issued twice a year or is it quarterly or monthly.

## **Participation by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, in the "International Day of Peace 2022" event**

On September 21, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, participated, on behalf of ECFA, in the event held by the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD) on the occasion of the International Day of Peace 2022, which was held under the slogan "Towards a global security initiative to preserve world peace and stability." Ambassador Saad expressed his gratitude to the organizers of the event, pointing out that since the early fifties of the last century, the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China was based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence, which include mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. This was the position confirmed by Beijing during its participation in the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference in 1955.

China has been defending these principles with enthusiasm and faith, whether before the United Nations organs, or in the frameworks that bring China together with regional and international gatherings and organizations around the world, such as the China-Africa Cooperation Forum or the China-Arab Cooperation Forum. China's Arab Policy Paper issued by the Chinese government on January 13, 2016, and announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the headquarters of the Arab League in Cairo, indicates that China upholds the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, namely, mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence. In this context, the paragraph adds: China supports the Middle East peace process and the establishment of an independent state of Palestine with full sovereignty, based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Ambassador Saad added that it is important to shed light on the nature of "peace" and what it means in Chinese political thought. It is not only limited to renouncing war and not resorting to the use of force in international relations, but rather it acquires a significant developmental dimension. Instead of the failed Western recipe for exporting democracy to the countries of the Greater Middle East and marketing for it, which resulted in the transformation of some countries into "failed states", China believes that economic and technical assistance are necessary tools to achieve stability, security, societal peace and good governance in the countries of the region. Based on this Chinese concept, we should not be surprised that China supports many developing countries that live in situations of political and security instability, on the grounds that this support, including investments in mega-projects, in infrastructure for example, will bring stability, peace, and security. Western countries adopt a different point of view, as they require stability first before offering investments, given that most of them come from the private sector, which is not ready to invest in crisis areas.

With the rise of China as the second world economic power and the first trading power, with the increasing external pressures and competition against it, and within the framework of its active diplomacy, China is defending a new form of international relations based on the aforementioned five principles represented in mutual respect, equality, justice and cooperation on the basis of equal benefits and promotion of building a society that shares the future of mankind, and strives for an open, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, global security and common prosperity. Some Chinese writers rightly estimate that the key to building a new type of international relations lies in balancing relations with the major powers and with developing countries and creating a separate model of mutual reinforcement and interaction. In order for China to achieve this, it must first coordinate its relations with other major countries, bearing in mind that in the transitional phase that the global order is currently going through, relations among the major powers are undergoing gradual and profound changes.

## **Participation of Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna, member of ECFA Board, in the United Nations International Law Commission's last session for 2022**

On September 25, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Hussein Hassouna, member of ECFA Board of Directors, and Egypt's representative in the United Nations International Law Commission, participated in the last session of the Commission for 2022, during which he announced Egypt's invitation to all members of the Commission to participate in the Climate Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh COP27 in November 2022, to contribute to reaching effective measures to address the effects of climate change, explaining that sea level rise and all legal aspects related to climate change will be presented before this important conference.

Ambassador Hassouna said that, in its last session, the Commission made significant achievements in the field of developing and codifying international law, as it reached the formulation of legal rules on important and contemporary international issues in preparation for submitting them to the United Nations General Assembly for approval, revealing that Egypt contributed with its vision in crystallizing those rules in line with the interests and aspirations of developing countries for establishing an international order based on the rule of law and international justice. He added that the Commission focused, during that session, on issues related to sea level rise as a result of climate change, as well as international cooperation in combating epidemics and protecting the environment in armed conflicts, preemptory globally-binding norms, immunity of state officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction, and international inheritance in terms of international responsibility.

He referred to the Commission's assertion that sea level rise as a result of climate change, from the perspective of international law, is a global phenomenon that poses serious threats to all countries, and that the threat with regard to low-lying nations and small Island developing states is an existential threat, pointing to the Commission's reliance on scientific evidence that the Sea level rise is a fact that has already been proven by science and has huge implications for a large number of countries.

He added that the Commission had proposed drafting a framework convention on issues related to sea level rise, which could be used as a foundation for further negotiations within the United Nations system along the lines of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification. With regard to the separation wall built by Israel, he noted that the Commission mentioned during its meetings the decisions of the International Court of Justice that refer to preemptory norms that Israel must adhere to, in addition to the fact that the construction of this separation wall in the occupied Palestinian territories is a violation of those rules, stressing the obligation to cooperate in order to put an end to violations and respect the Palestinian right to self-determination under the rules of international humanitarian law.

Moreover, Ambassador Hassouna indicated that the Commission also held a meeting with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies on the issue of developing international humanitarian law to meet the challenges facing its application in contemporary international conflicts, in addition to organizing a training course for jurists belonging to thirty countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon, with the aim of educating and qualifying them in the field of international law due to the importance of its application in international relations.

Ambassador Hassouna also proposed the idea of establishing an Arab association for international law, alike other regions such as the African Society of International Law and the European Society. The idea was met with approval by members of the International Law Commission from Arab countries, as well as by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.

## **Dr. Yousry Abu Shady's participation in the 66<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, on 26–30 September 2022**

During the period from 26-30 September 2022, Dr. Yousry Abu Shady, ECFA member, participated in the 66th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, as the 176 members of the Agency were invited to attend the Conference, 152 of whom actually attended. The Conference was attended by high-level delegations, including the Vice President of the Republic of Iran, Mohammad Eslami, and more than 50 ministers of Energy, Science, Foreign Affairs, or Environment. Representatives of 138 countries and representatives of 7 international organizations spoke at the Conference. No Egyptian delegations (other than the Foreign Ministry) attended, for the first time in the history of this Conference. Minister of Electricity, Mohamed Shaker, delivered Egypt's statement via a recorded speech. The delegation was headed by the Egyptian Ambassador to Vienna, Mohamed El-Molla.

The Agency's agenda was approved in the second session, not the first, unlike the previous conferences, due to the presence of some differences regarding the agenda, especially on the part of Israel, but it was approved without discussion or voting, including the item on Israeli nuclear capabilities, which was presented by Lebanon as a representative of the Arab countries, despite Israel's objection.

Dr. Ghada Waly, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, delivered the speech of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, hailing the Agency's role and its international importance, especially its role in confronting climate change and its mission in Ukraine. In his opening speech, IAEA Director Rafael Grossi referred to the situation in Ukraine and his proposal to establish a safe zone around the Zaporizhzhya reactors. He pointed out that there are 438 nuclear reactors operating now in 32 countries, and there are 57 reactors under construction. He called for countries to cooperate with the Agency in its humanitarian project called Rays of Hope for the treatment of cancer, especially in African countries. At the end of his speech, he referred to the Agency's significant participation in the Sharm El-Sheikh Climate Conference COP27 in November 2022 in Egypt, the country in which it decided to build the nuclear plants.

The Agency's regular budget for the coming year has been approved and amounted to 347 million euros, in addition to 91 million dollars as voluntary contributions. China came in second place in the Agency's budget contributions at 14.7%, while the United States accounted for 25% - Japan 7.7% - Germany 5.9% - the United Kingdom 4.2% - France 4.1% - Russia 1.8% and Egypt 0.134%. Like every year, Egypt submitted a resolution proposal on the applications of the Agency's safeguards system and the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. This is the draft resolution that Egypt used to submit annually and present it to a direct vote since 2006, and it always gets approval without any mechanism

for its implementation. Perhaps the main reason for obtaining approval is not mentioning Israel's name obviously in the resolution. Israel objected, as usual, to the second item of the resolution, which is related to the need for all countries in the region to join the NPT, and requested a special vote on this item, which prompted Egypt to demand voting twice on this item and on the resolution as a whole.

Egypt, a number of Arab countries, and Iran announced their support for the third negotiating conference for all concerned parties with the three sponsoring countries (the United States, Russia and the United Kingdom) to be held next November in New York under the supervision of the United Nations and chaired by Lebanon in accordance with the decisions of the 1995 Conference on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and 2010 with the application of consensus based decision-making, not by majority, to encourage Israel and the United States to participate this time in the conference (the first conference was also held in New York in November 2019 under the chairmanship of Jordan, and the second in November 2021 also in New York, while Israel and the United States did not attend either of them).



**Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad's participation in the China Social Sciences Forum on "Innovation-Driven Development: Towards Building a China-Arab states community with a shared future", organized by the Institute of West Asian and African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)**

On September 27, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in a virtual international symposium, organized by the Institute of West Asian and African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), under the slogan "Innovation-Driven Development: Towards Building a China-Arab states community with a shared future"; Ambassador Saad indicated that China has proven its ability to comprehensively develop with fewer resources in general compared to other major powers. This includes not only Chinese military spending as a percentage of GDP, but also other economic tracks, including innovation, which was one of the most important factors that shaped China's economic path and its great developmental rise. In this context, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, China spent about \$515 billion on research and development in 2019. Despite accusations from the West, China has become a leading innovator, already catching up with the rest of the developed countries in key areas such as 5G telecommunications and energy storage. Many Western estimates indicate that China is keen on technological parity with the United States in some important advanced technological fields.

In fact, "Innovation-Driven Development: Towards Building a China-Arab states community with a shared future" is one of the successes achieved thanks to China-Arab cooperation and other cooperation frameworks that govern the People's Republic of China's relations with regional groupings and organizations around the world, including the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the Forum of China and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). It goes without saying that China's relations with the Arab countries were founded on common concepts and ideas based in essence on equal sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs, and the right of each country to choose its own model of development, according to its cultural heritage and its own value model. In 2010, during the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of China-Arab Cooperation Forum, which was held in Tianjin, it was agreed to increase China-Arab cooperation and strengthen strategic relations. President Xi Jinping emphasized three issues during the Sixth Ministerial Conference: nuclear energy, space cooperation and alternative energy sources - as the three pillars of the pattern of cooperation with the Arab side.

In July 2018, the China-Arab future-oriented Strategic Partnership of Comprehensive Cooperation and Common Development was agreed upon by the two sides. From September 5 to 8, 2019, the third session of the China-Arab States Technology Transfer and Innovation Cooperation Conference was held. The executive program of the forum, which covers the period from 2020 to 2022, also allocated a chapter for cooperation in the field of science and technology. According to it, the two sides welcomed the holding of the fourth session of the Conference in 2021 in China, stressing the strengthening of cooperation and scientific and technological communication between the two sides and the continued support of the "China-Arab Technology

Transfer Center" and the subsidiary centers for technology transfer at the bilateral level, and establishing an integrated technology transfer network covering China and all Arab states.

Accordingly, the principles governing China's Arab policy, which were expressed in China's Arab Policy Paper issued by the Chinese government on January 13, 2016, which is the first official document of its kind to be issued in this regard, must be invoked. Clause 3.3 of the third section of the document refers to "Cooperation on Science and Technology", accelerating cooperation in this regard, including technology innovation and establishing the necessary mechanisms for such cooperation. The Paper also emphasized the exploitation of the "China-Arab Technology Transfer Center" to establish an integrated network covering China and all Arab countries for coordination and collaboration in technology transfer, implementing the "Outstanding Young Scientist Coming to China Project" program to include Arab countries, and encouraging the exchanges between young scientific talents of China and Arab states. The two sides will also jointly establish a batch of joint national laboratories, joint research centers, and specialized science parks, set up platforms for enterprises to go global and encourage hi-tech Chinese enterprises to innovate, start businesses and establish R&D centers in Arab States. According to the Paper, China pledged to invite Arab technicians to participate in technology training courses for developing countries organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology of China, and actively promote the application and spread of technological achievements and advanced applied technologies of China and Arab states in each other's countries.

It is important to note that the Ministerial Council of the League of Arab States issued Resolution No. 8757 at its Ordinary session No. 157 on March 9, 2022 regarding "Arab relations with the People's Republic of China", which included expressing the keenness of member states to strengthen their relations with the People's Republic of China in various fields, and under the Belt and Road Initiative, reaffirming the support of Arab states to find peaceful solutions to the existing crises in the region, in a manner that enhances peace and security at the regional and international levels.

The bottom line is that the Chinese leadership believes - rightly - that promoting comprehensive development is the best approach to overcoming obstacles, in the sense that growth based on knowledge and innovation is vital to the welfare and dignity of peoples, and thus putting an end to conflicts. It is understood that the Belt and Road Initiative and the regional frameworks for cooperation with China, including comprehensive development plans, are tantamount to decisive mechanisms for comprehensive development cooperation between China and Arab countries. Developing countries, including the Arab countries, have been able to promote growth and modernization and increase their intra-trade exchanges thanks to China's efforts and leadership in the field of global economic and trade governance.

## **Participation of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in a seminar on "Egypt and China in Ten Years... Progress Continues" and "A Reading in President Jinping's Thoughts on Governance and Administration" Salon**

On October 18, 2022, at the invitation of the Embassy of China, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in a seminar on "Egypt and China in Ten Years... Progress Continues" and a salon "A Reading in President Jinping's Thoughts on Governance and Administration", at the Marriott Hotel Zamalek, whereby he expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation to the sponsors and organizers of this important event, while extending his congratulations to the Communist Party of China, the patron of China's renaissance and progress - on the occasion of the 20th National Congress of the Party, and expressed his confidence that the Party Congress will reach positive results that would enhance the prosperity and welfare of the Chinese people, and the consolidation of its socialist system with Chinese characteristics under the leadership and wisdom of its General Secretary, President Xi Jinping.

Ambassador Saad added that the past ten years witnessed unprecedented momentum in Egypt-China relations. In December 2014, the two countries established a comprehensive strategic partnership, and in January 2016, the two countries signed an executive plan for five years to strengthen this strategic partnership, on the sidelines of President Xi Jinping's historic visit to Cairo. On his part, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi visited China six times, with a visit every year from December 2014 till April 2019, which reflects the deep-rooted and strong ties between the two countries and the mutual trust between their leaders. Ambassador Saad also referred to the phone call that took place between the two Presidents in February 2021, in which they praised the progress and prosperity achieved at the level of the relations between the two countries on the 65th anniversary of their establishment. The Chinese President affirmed that his country has always attached great interest to relations with Egypt, and that it is ready to cooperate with it to consolidate mutual political trust, enhance coordination and cooperation in international and regional issues, and work together to protect multilateralism and the principles of equality and justice within international relations. President Xi Jinping also affirmed China's cooperation with Egypt to combat the "Covid-19" pandemic, and to enhance cooperation in the field of vaccine in the framework of the actual cooperation between the two countries in this regard. He also called for additional efforts to support development strategies and build the Belt and Road together.

On his part, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi offered his warm congratulations on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. In this regard, the President recalled the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, stressing Egypt's full support for the Chinese position on issues related to Chinese Hong Kong, Xinjiang and the Chinese province of Taiwan, and Egypt's full support for China's efforts to preserve its national sovereignty, security and unity, and opposing interference in its internal affairs under the pretext of "human rights". President El-Sisi also expressed his gratitude to China for its support to the African continent and developing countries in their battle against the "Covid-19" pandemic, adding that Egypt will further its cooperation with China in the field of vaccines. Indeed, the two countries signed an agreement in 2021 with an Egyptian pharmaceutical company (Vacsera) to produce the "Sinopharm" vaccine in Egypt.

In addition, there are many cooperation programs existing between the two countries and the new Executive Program for the years 2021-2026, including Chinese industrial investments in the Suez Canal Economic Zone, the Business District project and the surrounding area in the New Administrative Capital, the design and implementation of five residential towers in the New Alamein City, and the electric train project which connects the cities of Al-Salam and the 10th of Ramadan and the New Administrative Capital, as one of the most important infrastructure projects in which the two sides cooperate to link the Egyptian governorates, and many other projects in various fields.

Ambassador Saad also affirmed that the two countries count on joint cooperation in connection with the Belt and Road Initiative, and the Egyptian side's keenness to confirm its interest in strengthening existing and new partnerships within the framework of the Initiative, as indicated by President El-Sisi during his participation in the Belt and Road Initiative summit held in April 2019, especially since the Initiative is in line with the development strategy adopted by Egypt, including Vision 2030. China has also shown great interest in inviting Egypt to engage in BRICS activities within the framework of (BRICS +), as Egypt - with a very limited number of countries - has become a member of the New Development Bank established under the grouping, thanks to the political support of friendly China.

With regard to political cooperation, there are common denominators between the Chinese vision of global governance and the general trends of Egyptian foreign policy, including the concept of building "a community with a shared future for mankind", a concept within which China advocates promoting a new concept of international relations based on mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs and cooperation on the basis of mutual benefits and common security, which is the responsibility of all countries of the world, especially with the multiple dangers looming nowadays, as there is not a single country, no matter how powerful it is, that can face global problems on its own, and therefore all countries must work together, as one force, to reach an international order based on peace and justice, and achieving development and prosperity for all.

Accordingly, there is an Egypt-China consensus on the necessity of preserving the United Nations and its specialized agencies, as the best option to provide effective guarantees for global governance, including coexistence and cooperation based on diverse and multipolar powers. In this regard, there is a consensus between the two countries that attempts by some to frame the current international situation and present it as including a club of "democracies" led by the United States of America, competing against the "authoritarian" club, which would put other countries before a choice between two rival powers, thus increasing chances of clash and confrontation, should be addressed.

## **ECFA participation in the second meeting of the technical secretariat of the International Egyptian bilateral Youth Councils**

At the invitation of the Assistant Minister of Youth and Sports for Youth Policies and Development, Mr. Mostafa Magdy, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in the second meeting of the Technical Secretariat of the International Egyptian Bilateral Youth Councils on October 9, 2022, representing the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, in which H.E. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports, was keen to join the membership of the Secretariat.

- 1- The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Youth and Sports, and representatives of all competent agencies (Administrative Control Authority-General Intelligence-Military Intelligence-Ministry of Defense-National Security) and representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (Ambassador Hala Al-Bishlawy, Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cultural Relations) and International Cooperation, as well as representatives of some other government agencies, participated in it.
- 2- At the request of the Minister of Youth and Sports, Ambassador Saad presented the ideas and proposals of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs regarding the establishment of youth councils, their role, and ways to prepare young people to participate in them...etc, as contained in the Council's paper sent to the Assistant Minister of Youth and Sports for Policies and Youth Development in August 2022.
- 3- In another intervention, Ambassador Saad stressed the importance of China being among the group of priority countries, as it was noted that the list is limited to only three countries: Russia, Greece and the United States of America.

Ambassador Saad explained the reasons behind this, including the volume of trade exchanges and economic relations, and the fact that the Communist Party of China is interested in youth, and thus the ease with which Egyptian youth would engage in youth cooperation with their Chinese counterparts.

The Minister and his Assistants praised the Council's paper and the proposals it contained, which were adopted in the final program, which was already approved.

**Participation by Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran in the Moscow State Institute (MGIMO) Conference in cooperation with the Vienna International Institute for Middle East Studies (VIIMES), on "The Nuclear Element in the Context of the New Reality in Russia's Relations with the West"**

During the period from 19-21 October 2022, Ambassador Dr. Mounir Zahran participated in the conference held by the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University), affiliated to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Vienna Institute for Middle East Studies (VIIMES), under the title "The Nuclear Element in the context of the new reality in Russia's relations with the West", with a paper entitled "Lessons Learned from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conferences". It was attended by a number of ambassadors, parliamentarians, experts and researchers in the fields of disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, international relations and mediation from the countries of the Middle East, Russia, the European Union and the United States (who participated virtually and physically).

During his intervention, Ambassador Zahran mentioned the following in particular:

- A- The wording of the treaty since its conclusion in 1968 included vague and evasive phrases, such as negotiating "in good faith" in Article 6, which talks about reaching a treaty on nuclear disarmament at an "early date." This date has not been achieved more than fifty years after the Treaty entered into force in 1970.
- B- The Treaty distinguished between the five nuclear-weapon states that are members of the Security Council, which are entitled to possess nuclear weapons, and the rest of the member states that are considered non-nuclear weapon states, in violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter contained in Article 2 thereof.
- C- The Treaty provisions are being violated on a daily basis by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, when a nuclear country (the United States) places nuclear weapons on the territory of another member state of NATO, violating the provisions of Articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty, in what is called "Nuclear Sharing."
- D- The Treaty and the final documents of the review conferences did not stipulate specific deadlines and dates for the commitments related to nuclear disarmament, whether in Article VI or in the obligations of the nuclear-weapon states to implement the thirteen steps that were stipulated in the final document of the 2000 Review Conference, and did not specify time horizons for the implementation of the six additional commitments which came in the 2010 Review Conference document.
- E- Even the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, which was agreed upon at the 2010 Review Conference, to be held at a date no later than the end of 2012. The United States requested that it be postponed in December 2012, and it has not been held yet. And when the United Nations General Assembly decided to hold a conference on

the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, and it was actually held in New York twice in 2019 and 2021, the United States and Israel boycotted it.

F- The ultimate purpose of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is nuclear disarmament, as stated in the preamble to the treaty and Article 6 thereof, which would lead to a world free of nuclear weapons, which has not yet been achieved after more than half a century since the conclusion of the Treaty, which is what led to 130 countries to call for a conference on nuclear disarmament, the results of which were approved by 122 countries, and boycotted by the nuclear-weapon states and their allies. Its results were announced by the conclusion of a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons on July 7, 2017, which is (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and 91 countries signed that treaty, after it entered into force in 2021, and 68 countries joined it, while nuclear-weapon states and their allies boycotted it. I take this opportunity to call on these states to join that treaty and achieve what the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty failed to achieve: freeing the world from nuclear weapons.

G- Until the world is freed from nuclear weapons and humanity is spared the scourge of this most lethal and destructive weapon, the United Nations General Assembly called on the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate the conclusion of two treaties, namely:

**The first:** Reaching a treaty providing for negative security assurances, according to which nuclear-weapon states refrain from using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states.

**Second:** non-use of nuclear weapons.

However, negotiations over them did not take place, despite the repeated issuance of similar resolutions by the General Assembly, due to the paralysis that afflicted the Conference on Disarmament as a result of the objection of the nuclear-weapon states and their allies to agreeing on the Conference's program of action.

H- That is why we demand the accession of all countries that have not yet acceded to that treaty, including the nuclear-weapon states and countries that have not joined the Treaty or the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, especially Israel, India, Pakistan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

I- With regard to nuclear non-proliferation, it is noted that the nuclear-weapon states did not abide by it, taking advantage of the text of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which has not yet entered into force, despite its conclusion since 1996 due to the incomplete ratification of the treaty by 44 countries in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty, including nuclear countries, namely the United States, China, India, and Pakistan, and Egypt did not ratify it, given that Israel did not join it, as well as its non-accession to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; in addition, Article (1) of that treaty "Test Explosion" allows for non-explosive tests, including tests through the laboratories. During the negotiations, Egypt demanded the deletion of the term "Explosions" from Article (1), but the nuclear-weapon states refused to do so. This

allowed the nuclear-weapon states to develop and modernize their nuclear weapons through vertical proliferation.

In response to what was raised by the former Austrian Defense Minister in connection with The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, which has already entered into force, expressing regret that Egypt did not join it, Ambassador Zahran indicated that Egypt's non-ratification of the treaty is due to two reasons: First: there is an overlap between the scope of the Pelindaba Treaty and the Middle East region, and Egypt belongs to the two regions, as there has been no progress in establishing the Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons. Second: The scope of the Pelindaba Treaty did not include the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, belonging to the African state of Mauritius, due to the objection of Britain, which continued to occupy it, and even leased it to the United States, which stored nuclear weapons in it, and this island was used in the U.S.-British aggression against Iraq in 2003, and Egypt supports the independence and territorial integrity of Mauritius.

On the other hand, with regard to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with Article (4) of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, all states, including all nuclear-weapon states, must abide by it and also accede to the Additional Protocol.

In addition, it is necessary to point out that the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) does not have a verification system in its provisions, as is the case in the two Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaties, where there is a comprehensive safeguards system for the International Atomic Energy Agency to carry out this task, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as this task is carried out by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague, therefore, the verification protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention, which was negotiated in the 1990s, but objected to by the United States, must be activated.



## **Participation by Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in the Symposium of the Chinese Embassy in Cairo – on "The Impact of the Twentieth National Congress of the Communist Party of China on China's Future and World Peace and Development"**

On November 10, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, on behalf of ECFA, and at the invitation of Ambassador Liao Liqiang, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Cairo, participated in a symposium held by the Embassy at The Nile Ritz Carlton Hotel, on "The Impact of the Twentieth National Congress of the Communist Party of China on China's Future and World Peace and Development", in which he expressed his gratitude to Ambassador Liao Liqiang, for his kind invitation, while extending his sincere congratulations to the Communist Party of China, the sponsor of the renaissance and progress of China, on the occasion of the success of the CPC Twentieth National Congress, expressing confidence that the Party will consolidate further positive and decisive results that would enhance the position of the People's Republic of China globally, and its plans to build a modern socialist state with unique Chinese characteristics, under the leadership and wisdom of its General Secretary, President Xi Jinping.

Ambassador Saad added that the Twentieth National Congress of the Communist Party of China was of particular importance, as it was the Party's first in its second centenary, after the year 2021 celebrated its 100th anniversary. Despite the escalating pace of global developments under which the Congress was held, it was remarkable that the opening speech of Chinese President "Xi Jinping", which lasted for about 100 minutes, did not focus on these developments, as much as it focused on the future. In addition to his emphasis on China standing firmly against all forms of hegemony, power politics, and the mentality of the Cold War, the speech dealt extensively with domestic policies and how to move China into the future, after the Communist Party succeeded during the first century in achieving its main strategic goals, especially those related to the eradication of extreme poverty, raising the standard of living and leading China to become the second largest economy in the world, and a major trading partner for more than 140 countries and regions. In its vision for the future, the Chinese leadership set its second centenary goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects, and the necessity for innovation to remain at the heart of China's modernization campaign. It also pledged to achieve shared prosperity for all, promote material, cultural and moral progress, significantly enhance national soft power, and comprehensively enhance the national security system and capabilities.

In a related context, China has successfully achieved more openness by establishing a network of free trade zones oriented to the world that are characterized by high standards of efficiency and growth, including pilot free trade zones and the Hainan Free Trade Port. Participating in building the "Belt and Road" is an international public good and a platform for international cooperation, and it enjoys the support of many countries of the world, in addition to other great Chinese development initiatives that have earned the appreciation and admiration of peoples. These are initiatives that would enhance international peace and security, and peoples' welfare, especially in light of what the Party's general secretary put forward that "Chinese modernization is a kind of modernization that promotes harmonious coexistence of man and nature" and that "peaceful development is a fully accessible path to modernization."

## **Participation of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in the Military Diplomatic Representation Course held by the Military Attaches Service of the Military Intelligence Authority**

On November 13, 2022, at the invitation of the Military Attaches Service of the Military Intelligence Authority, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad, ECFA Director, participated in a program of lectures for members of the Military Diplomatic Representation Course (Defense Attaches in Egyptian embassies abroad). Ambassador Saad gave a lecture on Egypt's foreign policy trends, determinants, and features, as well as Egypt's relations with the European continent in general and the European Union in particular, whereby he referred to the following:

- 1- The Egypt-EU Association Agreement, signed in 2001 and entered into force in 2004, as the contractual framework governing bilateral relations between Egypt and the European Union. The agreement regulates aspects of bilateral cooperation in the economic, trade, political, social, financial and technical fields. It is part of the European Neighborhood Policy aimed at strengthening the European Union's relations with its southern and eastern neighboring countries.
- 2- Mechanisms of the Egypt-EU Association Agreement (Association Council - Association Committee - Subcommittees and their three groups and their meetings).
- 3- The Association priorities document for the period from 2021 to 2027, in which the priority areas of cooperation for both sides were identified, in addition to cooperation projects between Egypt and the European Union during that period, after the European Union introduced a new path for cooperation with Egypt during that period under the name of "Flagship Projects." It includes strategic areas such as green hydrogen, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, transportation, local development, circular economy and water resources. These issues are among the main priorities for the European Union, and they largely converge with the Egyptian priorities included in the 2030 Development Agenda. There are also traditional priority cooperation projects during the same period (more than a hundred projects), divided into clusters in various fields, most notably agriculture, education, governance and the environment.
- 4- Development aid to Egypt from the European Union, which is estimated at about \$1.7 billion during 2021, and the total volume of European support to Egypt, including the member states of the Union, is more than 11 billion euros in the form of grants, loans and debt exchanges, which made the European Union Egypt's first partner. The European Union's commitments to Egypt in the form of a grant amount to 1.3 billion euros. The EU has financed projects in Egypt in the form of grants worth 500 million euros during the period from 2017 to 2021 in many sectors within the framework of the partnership that binds the two sides.
- 5- The European Commission's initiatives to enhance its cooperation with Egypt, such as the Green Deal – digital transformation and artificial intelligence, and the place of this cooperation in the "Global Gateway" initiative, especially with regard to infrastructure projects.

**Participation of Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad in the virtual event of the China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE), in cooperation with the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (SIRONET) on "Enhancing International Cooperation and Solidarity among Civil Society Organizations to Build a Better World for All"**

On November 15, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated, on behalf of ECFA, in the virtual event of the China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE), in cooperation with the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (SIRONET) on "Enhancing International Cooperation and Solidarity among Civil Society Organizations to Build a Better World for All". Ambassador Saad indicated that there is no doubt that an active civil society is necessary in all countries of the world, as it plays an important role in enriching the policy-making process, by creating a balance between the various actors of the political system, including presenting proposals and recommendations aimed at achieving development and progress. Also, countries that have strong civil societies are more integrated in international societies and forums, and more able to express the diversity and wealth of their civilization and people through the strategic role that civil society plays in this context.

Believing in the role of civil society, the United Nations has sought to strengthen ties with non-governmental organizations and encourage the latter to establish mutual ties with them, in order to achieve the objective of establishing an international community that enjoys security and peace, and in which the values of freedom, justice and equality prevail. For example: the possibility of these organizations obtaining consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as cooperation with the civil society unit of the United Nations Department of Global Communications, which links the United Nations with nearly 1,500 non-governmental organizations.

In his report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, President Xi Jinping outlined a number of important points that provide a favorable environment for civil society to flourish and play its desired role in the development process. President Jinping stressed the importance of enhancing self-confidence and self-strengthening, and stoking the spirit of hard work and enthusiasm, solidarity and striving for nation-building. In his report, President Jinping considered that consultative democracy is an important form of implementing full people's democracy. He also stressed the importance of raising the levels of consultation and interaction in an in-depth manner, expressing opinions sufficiently, and crystallizing consensus on a large scale. He also reaffirmed China's commitment to its foreign policy goal of safeguarding world peace, promoting shared development, striving to advance the building of a human community with a shared future, and developing friendship and cooperation with all countries. The

report also highlighted China's adherence to the concepts of "sincerity, honesty, fraternity and frankness". The CPC also expressed willingness to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with political parties and organizations in various countries on the basis of the principles of "independence, full equality and mutual respect," and encourage local governments and the non-governmental sector to make external contacts with other countries.

In this regard, it is hoped that SIRONET, which was announced by the Chinese President in May 2017, will be a blessed building block in this context, especially as it opens the door for the participation of civil society organizations in more than 60 countries located along the Silk Road. This was evident in the participation of more than 300 non-governmental organizations in the first forum of the Network in November 2017, when it was endorsed by both the Communist Party of China and the United Nations, while the members of the non-governmental organizations established the General Secretariat of the Network and adopted its Constitution. Perhaps one of the most important features of this distinguished network is its adherence to the principles of openness, inclusiveness, equality and mutual respect, with the aim of enhancing cooperation and coexistence among countries and achieving mutual benefits and sustainable development goals, in a manner that supports development and peace efforts that various international organizations, led by the United Nations, seek to establish and consolidate.

## **Participation of Dr. Ezzat Saad in “China’s New Development and World’s New Opportunities – The First Eyes on China and Ears to the World Forum” With a paper entitled "The Outcomes of the 20<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the Communist Party of China on China and the World"**

On November 28, 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in the “China's New Development and World's New Opportunities – The First Eyes on China and Ears to the World Forum” organized by the China Center for Contemporary Global Studies (IDCPC) and the Secretariat of the Silk Road Think Tanks Association (SRTA), with a paper entitled "The Outcomes of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China on China and the World", which closing was on October 22, 2022. Ambassador Saad expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation to the organizers, for the invitation to participate in this important event, on behalf of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Saad indicated that there is no doubt that China plays an important role in the international order, given its position as the second largest global economic power and the largest trading country in the world. It was only normal that the whole world watched with great interest the work of the CPC's 20th National Congress, and its outcomes and repercussions locally, regionally and globally. In this context, he referred to a number of geopolitical and geo-economic messages conveyed by the 20th Congress to the world, represented in China's determination to strengthen its global position as a responsible power, along with other emerging markets, since these markets contributed, according to the International Monetary Fund, with more than 80% of the new global economic growth since the financial crisis in 2008, which contributed strongly to the alleviation of global poverty. This requires that China, in addition to these markets, has the right to play a much larger role in global economic and political governance in a comprehensive, responsible and effective manner.

In this context, Chinese President Xi Jinping affirmed that China fulfills its responsibilities as a major global power within the framework of the principles of governance, which the Chinese President frequently affirms on various occasions. In his report to the 20th Congress, Jinping stressed China's firm rejection of all forms of hegemony and policies based on it, its opposition to the Cold War mentality and interference in the internal affairs of other countries, its rejection of double standards, and its firm defense of pluralism in international political and economic relations. Jinping also stressed that China avoids the path of unfair competition, shuns enmity and conflict, and forges ahead with a comprehensive and positive vision for the future that measures China's success by its achievements, rather than belittling or hindering its capabilities and initiatives. On the eve of the Congress, during a meeting with foreign and local press, President Jinping pledged to work with the peoples of all other countries to promote common human values such as peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy and freedom; to protect world peace and advance its development.

Besides, the proceedings of the Congress affirmed China's steadfast position on the Taiwan region, and sent a firm message to countries that hope to change their stance on the "One China" principle as well as the current ruling authorities in the Taiwan region, and the forces that seek to

empower the so-called "Taiwan independence." Amendments to the Constitution of the Communist Party of China also emphasized, for the first time, "resolutely oppose and curb Taiwan independence", preventing any attempt by the territory of Taiwan to secede from the motherland.

This is while taking into account what Jinping stressed that China "will continue to strive for peaceful reunification with the greatest sincerity and the utmost effort." Perhaps this balanced position enhances the credibility of the well-known position of the Chinese leadership towards Taiwan, in light of China's maintenance of peace for decades. This position is also an apparent response to the misguided assumptions of many U.S. commentators, writers, and even some U.S. officials, who have described the war in Ukraine as a "warm-up" for a more significant and longer-term conflict with China. They maintained that war with China over Taiwan was inevitable, and others even set a deadline for China to use force to retake Taiwan within the next two to five years. The conclusion here is that China's modernization of its military capabilities as a superpower is a natural matter, and does not in any way mean the use of force or setting a timetable for it. President Jinping's speech to the 20th Congress was clear and frank regarding this issue.

In addition, the Congress affirmed China's continued openness to the outside world, given that the reform and opening up of the economy by the Chinese leadership has been crucial to the tremendous economic success witnessed over the past four decades, including the last decade, which saw charting a new path for growth and ending poverty in China, which also provided a new field for success, which has been considered as a constructive model for emerging markets and developing countries to learn and build, within their local context.

The outcomes of the 20th Congress confirmed Beijing's determination to continue reform and opening up, and its pursuit of high-quality development. President Jinping asserted the necessity of "fully and comprehensively implementing new development thinking, adhering to the reform trend of the communist market economy, and high-level opening up to the outside world, which is characterized by mutually reinforcing domestic and international economic cycles," adding that his country cannot develop without the world, and that the world also needs China.

Moreover, the geopolitical and geo-economic messages that the CPC's 20th National Congress was keen to send to the world, have highlighted many issues that will have a direct impact on shaping the map of the next stage, politically and economically, on the international arena. The main scene of the 20th Congress reflected the fact that the new China cannot be bypassed when re-reading the geostrategic calculations in the light of what the People's Republic of China has achieved as an inspiring economic, social, political and military model for many countries.

## **Participation of ECFA delegation in a press conference of the Chinese ambassador to Cairo on "Chinese / Arab Cooperation"**

On December 11, 2022, at the invitation of the Chinese Embassy in Cairo, a delegation from ECFA participated in the press conference held by the Chinese Ambassador to Cairo, Mr. Liao Liqiang, at the Nile Ritz-Carlton Hotel, on "Chinese / Arab Cooperation", in which he presented the conclusions of the three summits of Riyadh: the bilateral summit between Saudi Arabia and China, summit between China and the Gulf Cooperation Council States, and summit between China and Arab States, from 7 to 9 December 2022. ECFA delegation included Mr. Ayman Adly, Dr. Ahmed Abdel Hafez, Dr. Sayed Hany, Mr. Ahmed Abdel-Baqi Ayoub.

## **Participation of Dr. Ezzat Saad in discussing a number of scientific theses in 2022**

During the year 2022, Ambassador Dr. Ezzat Saad participated in discussing several academic theses, which are:

- Master's thesis on Chinese / Russian relations, Faculty of Economics and Political Science - Cairo University.
- Determinants of the relationship between the forces of political Islam in Central Asia and the political system (PhD thesis - Faculty of Economics and Political Science - Cairo University).
- The role of organizational culture in organizational education: an applied study on the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PhD thesis - Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration - Helwan University).
- Russian decision-making to intervene in Syria (PhD thesis - Faculty of Economics and Political Science - Cairo University).



# **Chapter IV**

## Press Statements

## **ECFA's Obituary Statement to Mourn Mrs./ Anisa Essam El-Din Hassouna, Vice Chairman of ECFA**

On March 13, 2022, ECFA issued a statement mourning, with greater sorrow and grief, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of ECFA. The Council expressed its deep sadness at her death, as it lost one of the distinguished and active personalities in the fields of public service and civil work, and in supporting the activity and message of the Council.

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## **ECFA's Obituary Statement to Mourn the Martyrs of the Homeland and the Valiant Armed Forces Who Were Attacked by Takfiri Terrorist Elements on May 7, 2022**

In May 2022, the Council issued a statement mourning with great sadness the martyrs of the homeland and the valiant armed forces who were attacked by takfiri terrorist elements on Saturday, May 7, 2022, east of the Suez Canal while carrying out their national duty.

ECFA expressed its deepest sympathy to the families of our righteous martyrs, and to those injured for a speedy recovery, while reaffirming its strong condemnation of terrorism and to all those who stand behind terrorist organizations with financing and support.

ECFA trusts the ability of the Egyptian state to defeat terrorism and eradicate its roots, supported by the great people of Egypt, that spares no effort in intensive and close cooperation with other countries, at the regional and international levels, to besiege and eliminate this phenomenon, in a way that supports the stability and security necessary to continue development efforts economically and socially.

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## **ECFA's Obituary Statement to Mourn Dr. Engineer Ismail Othman, Former Chairman of the Board of the Arab Contractors Company and Former member of ECFA Board**

ECFA issued a statement in July 2022, mourning with great sorrow, the late Dr. Engineer Ismail Othman, former Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Arab Contractors Company and Former member of ECFA Board, who passed away on July 11, 2022. On this sad occasion, ECFA recalls the great support and continuous efforts of the

deceased in establishing the Council and transforming it from an idea into a practical reality. The contributions of the deceased, during his years as a member of the Board of Directors, played a major role in consolidating the Board's activity and launching its activities to broader horizons.

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### **ECFA's Obituary Statement to Mourn Ambassador Sayed Abu Zeid Member of ECFA Board**

On November 27, 2022, ECFA issued a statement mourning Ambassador Sayed Abu Zeid, a member of the Council's Board of Directors, who passed away on November 26, expressing deep regret and sadness, as the Council thus lost one of the distinguished and active personalities in many fields, especially in the affairs Arab and Middle East issues, and in supporting the Council's activity and mission in many activities that serve civil society.

## Chapter V

### ECFA'S Congratulatory Letters

## **ECFA's congratulatory note concerning the re-election of H. E. Xi Jinping as a Secretary General of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC)**

**October 2022**

The Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) has the pleasure to re-present its sincere congratulations to the people of China and its esteemed Leaders, on the conclusion of the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) on 22nd October 2022.

On this occasion, ECFA would like to express its deep confidence in H. E. Xi Jinping to be re-elected as a Secretary General of the CPC.

We are fully confident in Mr. Jinping's good behavior and wisdom which contributed to achieving progress and prosperity within China, as well as in its relations at the global arena, with our sincere wishes for further success.

## **Chapter VI**

# **ECFA's Memoranda of Understanding & Cooperation with New Partners**

ECFA has Memoranda of Understanding & Cooperation with about 40 Partners, of which 25 are from abroad. In 2021, a memorandum of cooperation was signed with the Kemet Boutros-Ghali Foundation for Peace and Knowledge (April 11, 2021), and a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Center for Chinese/Arab Reform Studies, affiliated to Shanghai International Studies University (November 15, 2021).

Additionally, coordination is underway to sign a memorandum of understanding with each of the following: the Pakistani Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR); Middle East and Africa Center of the Institute for Strategic Studies in Islamabad; Islamabad Institute of Ribs (IPRI); Council of Albanian Ambassadors (CAA); Helsinki Crisis Management Initiative (CMI); Association of Ex-Nepal Ambassadors (AFCAN); Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies (BISS); and the Hungarian Institute of Foreign Relations.

**Chapter VII**  
ECFA's Publications in 2022



## Books

1. ECFA's Annual Report (2021).
2. ECFA's Annual Conference (2021).

## Papers

1. Egyptian Foreign Policy: New Directions (No. 31).
2. On Its Sixtieth Anniversary .. The Non-Aligned Movement in a Changing World (No. 32).
3. The Impact of Global Changes On the International Security System (No. 33).
4. The Ukrainian Crisis and the Recall of History (No. 34).
5. Governance Initiatives In the African Union and Egypt and the Peer Review Mechanism (No. 35).
6. The Repercussions of the War in Ukraine On the Oil and Gas Sectors Globally and in Egypt .. An Analytical Vision (No. 36).