

## Report

### On National Efforts to Enhance Religious Freedoms in Egypt during 2022

#### Introduction:

Egypt places great importance on promoting coexistence and citizenship, rejecting all forms of violence, hatred and extremism, and promoting stability. Egypt's commitment to these values is reflected in its support of the rights of all citizens without discrimination, in a way that enhances social cohesion and fraternity among all groups of society. The State's support of the rights of citizens without discrimination ensures equality in rights and duties; and reflects the cohesion of the Egyptian people, Muslims and Christians. In addition, this importance that Egypt places on promoting the rights of all citizens reflects the country's cultural and civilizational heritage. These qualities contribute to forming a strong national front capable of facing current and future challenges, directing all energies towards development of the nation in the New Republic, and preserving the national identity, security and stability of the State.

The President of the Republic emphasizes the contribution of citizenship to deepening the sense of belonging not only at the national level, but also at the regional and global levels, based on humanity. The New Republic, in its unique approach, emphasizes human development as a cornerstone in building the state, which also results in the human becoming an active actor in building a peaceful world.

Within the framework of the President of the Republic's directives towards enhancing the concept of citizenship and renewing religious discourse, the ministries and various State agencies exerted many efforts, which were complemented by the efforts of civil society and non-governmental organizations to disseminate and promote a culture of citizenship and contribute to the renewal of religious discourse.

In this context, the Technical Secretariat issues its report for the second year in a row on the significant national efforts to promote religious freedoms in Egypt during 2022.

### **First: The Significant Achievements in the Legislative Framework:**

A number of legislations have been approved, including:

1. Amending the Civil Service Law promulgated by Law No. 81 of 2016: The amendment aimed to add a new case to the cases that allow the dismissal of the employee (who is subject to the provisions of these two laws) without a disciplinary action, which is the case of “serious evidence that the worker has committed what affects the country’s national security and safety”. This is while taking into account all the constitutional and legal guarantees regulating the conditions for dismissing a worker without a disciplinary action.
2. Law No. 2 of 2021 issuing the internal regulations of the Senate: Article 3 stipulates the competence of the Senate to study and propose what it deems capable of achieving a number of essential matters, including “supporting social peace, from a broader perspective, especially when it comes to upholding the principle of citizenship, social justice, freedom of expression, and combating discrimination and large organized crimes such as terrorism”.
3. The President of the Republic issued Decree No. 51 of 2022 appointing Counselor Boulos Fahmy as President of the Supreme Constitutional Court, becoming the first Christian to preside over this court.

### **Second: Efforts to Promote Freedom of Religion and Belief in the National Human Rights Strategy:**

Egyptian constitutions, starting from the Constitution of 1923 to the Constitution of 2014, confirmed and guaranteed the principles of freedom of belief, freedom to practice religious rites, and the establishment of places of worship, as well as the principle of citizenship and the rule of law as the pillars of the democratic and republican system of the Egyptian State. During the first year of the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, programs related to raising community awareness coexistence varied between carrying out awareness campaigns, holding seminars and conferences, and other awareness programs. The following efforts that have been implemented by various ministries and agencies are linked to target results within the Strategy’s focus area of freedom of religion and belief:

4. The Egyptian legislator divides lawsuits on a qualitative, value, or local basis. The judicial authorities and bodies exercise their judicial functions within the framework of existing constitutional principles and established legal rules without discriminating between litigants based on their beliefs. The Egyptian Judicial system does not discriminate based on religion, except with regard to matters of personal status; where the religious law of the two parties to the dispute is applied, pursuant to the provisions of Articles No. 2 and 3 of the Constitution. This is while all courts, with their civil and criminal branches, play their role in adjudicating all civil and criminal disputes, based on the constitutional principles and in accordance with the rules and procedures established in the Civil Procedures Law that is applied in civil courts or the Criminal Procedures Law that is applied in criminal courts.
5. The Ministry of Justice participated with the Coptic Evangelical Organization in holding a number of seminars and conferences in a number of governorates, targeting various social groups, on citizenship, rejecting hatred, and promoting coexistence and non-discrimination.
6. The Ministry of Justice held workshops in cooperation with the National Council for Women and the Ministry’s Specialized Courts Sector within the framework of promoting citizenship and activating the role

of the “Mawadda” committee, which was formed to preserve the Egyptian family unit, to train specialists in dispute settlement offices in courts to achieve reconciliation between litigants in family disputes, without discrimination on the basis of religion or belief, and without having the dispute reaching the court.

7. Throughout 2022, the Ministry of Justice, through the National Center for Judicial Studies and the Ministry’s Human, Women and Child Rights Sector, organized training courses for new judges on human rights, religious freedoms and non-discrimination. The Ministry also held four courses in this regard for 73 officers of the Military Justice, including 15 expatriates from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the Sultanate of Oman.

8. The Ministry of Justice, in partnership with the Ministry of Awqaf (religious endowments), held educational courses for imams and female preachers on family, demographic, and societal issues, which included promotion of citizenship and religious freedom.

9. The Ministry of Youth and Sports launched a number of youth and sports initiatives and programs aimed at promoting citizenship, sense of belonging and social responsibility, in cooperation with Al-Azhar, the Ministry of Awqaf (endowments), and civil society organizations. Among these programs were: the program “Towards a Youthful Vision to Confront Extremism and Terrorism” in cooperation with Al-Azhar Observatory for Combating Extremism. The program aimed to educate and inform young people about the latest ways through which they are targeted by terrorist organizations and extremists, and about how to confront extremism and terrorism with constructive moderate thinking and positive behavior.

10. The Ministry of Local Development and a group of civil society organizations like: “Misr El Kheir” and “Agyal Masr for Youth Development” foundations cooperated in the implementation of the “Values and Life” project with the aim of raising awareness of human and social values in a number of governorates. The implementation of the project will extend to a number of other governorates, especially those of Upper Egypt, with the aim of instilling human values, such as the values of love, peace, sense of belonging, integrity, responsibility, and respect. In addition, the project aims to build youth capacities, increase care for children, raise value and moral awareness, and establish “Values and Life” volunteer centers in the governorates.

11. The Ministry of Justice participated with the Coptic Evangelical Organization in many activities related to the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, with the participation of a number of ministers and thought leaders in various fields, Islamic and Christian religious leaders, academics, media professionals, representatives of civil society organizations and members of parliament. Among these activities were:

A conference on youth and change-making during the period of May 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2022; a conference on tolerance and confronting violence: from principle to implementation, during the period of August 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022; a conference on the role of civil society in societal peace, development and human rights on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022; a conference on mechanisms for promoting cultural diversity, and the relationship between citizenship and cultural diversity on December 19, 2022; and a conference on mechanisms to protect society against crises and enhance social cohesion on November 7, 2022.

12. The Ministry of Social Solidarity implemented the “Awareness for Social and Cultural Development” program, which aims to establish positive social values, attitudes and behaviors leading to a cohesive society that maximizes investment in human development; contributing to rational thought, rationalizing

resources, and enhancing State and society's efforts for sustainable development. In addition, the Ministry of Social Solidarity launched the "True and Positive Awareness for Development and Decent Life" initiative that aims to adopt a unified and integrated religious, cultural and social discourse. It also aims to strengthen cooperation between Muslim and Christian religious scholars to enhance community awareness through unifying awareness raising messages about positive concepts and social behaviors.

13. The Ministry of Awqaf (religious endowments) coordinated with several Ministries to hold a number of training programs and educational seminars, including the Ministry of Education and Technical Education. The coordination aimed to implement about 12 training courses on topics of promoting religious freedoms to 1173 male and female teachers in the governorates of Dakahlia, Sharkeya, Assiut. The goal of these courses was to raise awareness of teachers on these issues. Given the importance of raising awareness of tolerance and coexistence among the youth, as they are the largest group in the Egyptian society, the Minister of Awqaf (religious endowments), in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the Supreme Council for Media Regulation, organized educational seminars and awareness raising campaigns on citizenship and rejection of violence and extremism. In addition, the Ministry held the thirty-second International Conference of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of February, 2022, titled "The Social Contract and its Impact on Achieving Community and Global Peace". The Conference's focus areas were: controls of the citizenship contract; the citizenship contract, between rights and duties; the citizenship contract and social protection; the citizenship contract and its impact on achieving societal security; the commitment of the citizenship contract and its impact on achieving global peace; religious tolerance; and the status of women in the nation state.

A number of research papers were presented to the conference, including: Islam and citizenship; pluralism; education and establishment of religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence; religious tolerance and its impact on international relations; religious tolerance between correct understanding and misunderstanding; education on tolerance, citizenship contract and its practical applications to establish coexistence and community protection.

14. The Minister of Awqaf received Dr Jehangir Khan, Director of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center, on Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at the Ministry's premises, within the framework of the Director's commitment to learn about the efforts of the Ministry of Awqaf in combating extremism and its role in consolidating tolerance and coexistence.

15. The Minister of Awqaf participated in the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions from September 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the city of Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, to discuss the role of leaders of world and traditional religions in the spiritual and social development of humanity. His Excellency emphasized during his speech that religions agree on tolerance, and that leaders' mission is to work together to spread noble spiritual, social and human values, in a way that achieves the good of all humanity and contributes to achieving world peace.

16. Within the framework of continuous cooperation and coordination between the Ministries of Awqaf and Education towards developing the skills of teachers, promoting religious freedoms, and spreading tolerance and coexistence, the twenty-sixth course was held on developing the skills of teachers of religious education and promoting religious freedoms (Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq camp in Alexandria) on March 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 2022, with the participation of (100) male and female teachers from the governorates of Alexandria and Beheira.

17. Within the framework of “Building Awareness” campaign, which was launched in cooperation between the Ministry of Awqaf and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, with the aim of confronting religious, intellectual or sports fanaticism, a number of educational convoys were carried out under the slogan (The New Republic and the Road to the Future); which included discussions on religious and social tolerance.
18. Within the framework of cooperation between the Ministry of Awqaf and the Ministry of Culture through the “Ro’ia” (Vision) series for enlightened thought, several books were published in Arabic on the issue of promoting religious freedoms, including: (Citizenship Contract, Tolerance is a Way of Life, Humanity of Islamic Civilization, and The Healing Brief on Sufficient Faith).
19. (41) training courses on citizenship rights were held in the regional directorates, from 1/1/2022 to 12/18/2022. (2050) imams and preachers attended these courses.
20. The international training course was held for (70) imams from Kazakhstan, on 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> of May, 2022, through (ZOOM) program, and a number of professors from Al-Azhar University lectured in these courses. The lectures included discussions on the following books: (Rules of Jurisprudence, Controls of Fatwa, Concepts That Must Be Corrected, and the Basics of the Arabic Language).
21. A specialized international training course was held for imams and female preachers from Burkina Faso, from (28<sup>th</sup> of May to 7<sup>th</sup> of June, 2022), at the International Endowments Academy, that is specialized for training imams and female preachers and the preparation of trainers.
22. The joint training course between imams and scholars of Egypt and India was held for (18) senior scholars from India, deans of its (India) colleges, professors of its universities, and heads of its religious and cultural institutions. The course was held from 16<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of July, 2022 at the International Endowments Academy in the Sixth of October City. The specialized scientific course covered important issues and focus areas that call for spreading tolerance, moderation and coexistence among societies.
23. A course on peaceful coexistence (the Second Islamic Broadcasting Union) was held for (29) participants representing (18) countries, accompanied by (15) imams, from 24<sup>th</sup> of September to 4<sup>th</sup> of October, 2022.
24. (5) courses were held in cooperation with the National Center for Social and Criminological Research, under the title of preparing Islamic and Christian clerics in developing community awareness and forming positive trends in the governorates and villages of Decent Life initiative.
25. A course was held for 19 imams and religious endowments undersecretaries of Algeria’s Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments, with the participation of a number of distinguished imams from Egypt, during 8<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of December, 2022.
26. The Ministry of Awqaf holds several competitions dealing with the topic of (religious freedoms), including: a competition for writers, authors, and major educational scientific sources; Ramadan is the Month of Qur’an; the Awqaf and Republic competition “Building Awareness”; the Prophet of Guidance; a Book and a Cause; and Female Believers).
27. Many joint activities are held between female preachers and nuns within the framework of their great role in raising awareness of the importance of religious freedoms. Among these activities were: the participation of several female preachers in training workshops among people of different religions and cultures at King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue

(KAICIID) in Jordan from March 25<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. This is in cooperation between the dialogue platform and religious and Arab leaders and institutions in the Kingdom of Jordan, with the aim of strengthening the role of women in public life and enhancing their ability to dialogue in every matter and issue related to them and the community. Several female preachers participated in the third workshop of the (She) Dialogue Program - one of the programs of King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center between people of different religions and cultures- during 12<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> of November, 2022 in Lisbon - Portugal.

### **Third: The Evolution of Constructing Places of Worship and Reviving Religious Heritage:**

28. The President of the Republic inaugurated Al-Hussein Mosque after the comprehensive renovation of the mosque in the presence of Sultan Mufaddal Saifuddin, the spiritual leader of the Bohra sect in India. This comes within the framework of His Excellency's directives to restore and renew the shrines of Aal al-Bayt, especially al-Hussain, Sayyidah Nafisa, and Sayyidah Zainab, in a manner consistent with the historical and spiritual nature of the shrines.

29. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities continued to develop restoration and maintenance projects for mosques, churches and synagogues in various governorates, at a cost of about 1.5 billion pounds. The Ministry is also cooperating with a number of civil society institutions in the restoration and development of mosques located in different areas in Cairo and a number of other governorates.

30. The new Luxor Evangelical Church was inaugurated, in place of the old church building that was located on the developed Al-Kabbash Road. It was also approved to allocate a 4,000-square-meter plot of land in the New Administrative Capital to build a church and a headquarters for the evangelical community.

31. The Jewish tombs of "Lisha and Mansha" were inaugurated after their restoration, which are the only remaining parts of the tombs of the Karaite Jews or the Bassatine tombs, which are among the oldest Jewish cemeteries in the world.

32. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) included the popular celebrations associated with the journey of the Holy Family in Egypt on its list of intangible cultural heritage. In regards to reviving the path of the Holy Family and listing the holy points and the points that the Holy Family passed through during its journey to Egypt, seven sites, out of fourteen, were inaugurated.

33. Work continued on the implementation of the "The Greatest Transfiguration over the Land of Peace" project in the vicinity of Mount Moses and St. Catherine in the Sinai Peninsula. The President of the Republic directed that great attention is to be paid to this project in line with the special status of that sacred spot in the land of Egypt, which God honored by transfiguring on it; and to present it to humanity and peoples around the world in a manner befitting it in appreciation of its unique spiritual value that stems from its being the incubator of the three monotheistic religions.

34. State's efforts continued to renew and restore mosques and churches. The State worked to replace, renovate, maintain and restore 1,277 mosques; including 1,100 new mosques, in addition to maintenance and restoration of 177 mosques. As for churches, the committee concerned with regularizing the conditions of churches continued its work, as the number of churches and ancillary buildings whose conditions were regularized increased from 2401 churches and buildings in April 2022, to 2526 churches and buildings in November 2022 out of a total of 5415 churches and ancillary buildings that submitted requests to regularize their conditions in accordance to the law. In addition, lands were allocated to build five new churches in four cities: New Obour, New Administrative Capital, New Cairo, and New Damietta.

#### **Fourth: Renewing Religious Discourse, Combating Extremism, and Promoting Citizenship:**

35. In May 2022, the President of the Republic received the participating members of the “General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches”, which was held for the first time in Egypt since the founding of the Council in 1974. His Excellency emphasized that citizenship and equal rights for all are firm values that represent the Egyptian State’s approach towards all citizens. This conviction has been established by the State through actual practices in all aspects of life in Egypt to maximize those human values of peace, love and non-discrimination on any basis and to spread the culture of pluralism and freedom of belief; and in return fight fanaticism and extremism.

36. The President of the Republic directed the development of training and qualification programs for imams, in view of their important role in spreading enlightened religious discourse, which aims to uphold reason in understanding the developments of life in accordance with the true understanding of religion and the constants of the noble Sharia, and to fill any Da’wah (religious teaching) void.

37. His Eminence, the Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar, emphasized that religious fraternity is the source and creator of global human fraternity, pointing out that the correct beginning is the resurrection of this fraternity among religious scholars and followers, considering that they are the most capable people in diagnosing moral and social ailments and diseases and how religions treat them. The statement was during the participation of His Eminence in the Seventh Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, in Kazakhstan in September 2022.

38. His Eminence made an appeal to Shiite scholars to hold an Islamic-Islamic dialogue with the aim of renouncing sedition and sectarian conflict, at a time when several countries in the region and around the world are witnessing tensions on sectarian grounds, during his participation in the Bahrain Forum for Dialogue “East and West for Human Coexistence” in November 2022.

39. Al-Azhar Observatory published four academic studies, addressing issues like combating extremism, in addition to, for example, “Islamic concepts that have been corrupted by extremist interpretations”. The Observatory continues to issue a quarterly magazine in Arabic, dealing with the most important topics related to combating terrorism, extremism, and Islamophobia. Since the beginning of 2022, it has also started issuing a quarterly magazine in English, titled “Step Forward”, and another in French, titled “Un Pas En Avant”.

40. Al-Azhar participated in a number of activities that discussed the topic of religious freedoms, including: the international conference held by the Library of Alexandria titled “Coexistence, tolerance and acceptance of the other ... towards a better future” and a meeting titled “Love Never Fails” which was held by the Evangelical Church; the conference “Tolerance, Peace and Sustainable Development in the Arab World” organized by the League of Arab States; and the conference “Building Human Fraternity through Empowering Youth” at Georgetown University in the United States, where representatives of Al-Azhar emphasized in these events that Islam drew the basis for a new life in society as a whole; as Islam renounces sectarianism and eliminated racism, and also that Islam taught diversity among people as a legitimate right, with acceptance, love, and coexistence with others. Al-Azhar also emphasized that Islam views religious pluralism as an inevitable necessity, and that it is a universal reality, as Islam recognizes the other, whatever his or her belief. In Islam, the other is seen as a fellow brother in humanity, and Islam endorsed the principle of interreligious dialogue, which aims at unity and rejection of disagreement, and

the need to instill a culture of acceptance of the other, peaceful coexistence, positive integration, and a culture of dialogue in the hearts of children, as intellectual pluralism does not mean hostility.

41. Al-Azhar organized a workshop titled “The Role of the Moderate Approach in Preserving Security and Stability”, where the participants emphasized that Islamic religious scholars have the duty to fight extremist groups and misguided thought, and that among the matters that characterize Islamic law is respect for opinion and intellectual diversity.

42. The Salam Center for Extremism Studies, affiliated with the Egyptian Dar Al Iftaa, held the first international conference titled “Religious Extremism: Intellectual Starting Points...and Confrontational Strategies”. The conference discussed the phenomenon of extremist thought, past and present, and ways to refute the ideas on which it is based, and formulate integrated policies to confront the phenomenon of extremism. On the sidelines of the conference, Dar al-Iftaa and Salam Center organized the first mobile martyr exhibition, which is an art exhibition that operates in universities, schools, commercial and religious centers, and reviews the significant extremist misunderstandings and responding to them using modern technologies, graphics, short videos and interactive electronic screens that communicate the correct concepts in a simplified and creative way, and establishes a culture of coexistence and rejection of extremism. The exhibition aimed to support the Egyptian State's strategy in the intellectual confrontation of extremism, as well as drying up the sources of extremism, spreading moderate discourse, and consolidating coexistence, peace, and rejecting extremism.

43. During the year 2022, the Salam Center published three books and 15 reports related to extremism. It also produced video clips to raise awareness of the dangers of extremism.

44. His Eminence, the Grand Mufti, participated in a number of activities inside and outside Egypt, including: the Forum on Common Values Among Religious Followers in Riyadh; a seminar titled “Spreading a Culture of Tolerance and Peaceful Coexistence” organized by Al-Azhar University; and the thirty-second international conference of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs titled “the citizenship contract and its impact on achieving societal and international peace”. His Eminence emphasized during these events that Islam has called for peaceful coexistence with every person who differs in religion and belief, and for respecting and supporting the common values that all religions call for, and that the roots of tolerance are rooted in Islam. The Grand Mufti also emphasized on the comprehensive fraternity among believers, and that this fraternity calls for believers’ enjoyment of tolerance and good treatment of others, so that the spirit of love prevails among them; so the strong is kind to the weak and the old to the young; so that the spirit of fraternity prevails among them as individuals and groups. His Eminence also emphasized that the concept of citizenship is one of the concepts that we must care about, conceptually and practically, on the jurisprudential and intellectual levels. The lack of clarity of this concept in the minds of some people has caused confusion and chaos in many countries, under false pretenses. It was promoted, by those extremist groups, that there is conflict between the concept of citizenship and the true Islamic faith.

45. His Eminence visited the United States at the invitation of the Council on Foreign Relations to present Dar Al-Ifta’s experience in combating extremism. He also visited Britain and delivered a lecture at Oxford University titled “Who has the right to speak in the name of Islam?”. He also presented Dar Al-Ifta’s experience in confronting extremism and consolidating coexistence.

46. Dar Al Iftaa also participated in the 14<sup>th</sup> Doha Conference for Interfaith Dialogue under the title “Religions and Hate Speech between Practice and Texts”, which addressed the following focus areas: hate



speech in terms of concept, causes and motives, patterns and forms, in addition to the desired role of religious leaders, media institutions and others in confronting hate speech, and the laws and international agreements criminalizing hate speech.

47. Dar Al Iftaa published three volumes of the Egyptian reference in the study of extremism and confronting it, which is a scientific encyclopedia that aims to define extremism, its development, its repercussions, and ways to confront it.

48. Dar Al Iftaa's Global Fatwa Index (GFI) has presented more than (75) various publications, including observational or analytical versions of the index, including short reports, data, or expanded studies. The index also presented (20) analytical reports published in various media channels to respond to incorrect fatwas and issues of extremism, terrorism and atheism.

49. Dar Al Iftaa's Observatory of Takfiri Fatwas and Extremist Opinions launched the "Observational Memory" program with the aim of strengthening the Egyptian pioneering role and leadership in combating extremism and terrorism, in addition to presenting Egyptian experiences in this regard for the benefit of societies.

50. Dar Al Iftaa's training center added a course titled "Combating Extremist Ideology" during the training year (2022/2023), in the three academic years for newcomers being trained at the training center, where (100) trainees from (23) foreign countries are being trained. In addition, intensive training courses were held titled "The Methodology of Fatwa Making and Combating Extremism"; held for five consecutive groups of students from Thailand, where (150) newcomers were trained. In this course, they were taught the principles of moderate thought, in addition to refuting the principles of extremist thought, and discussing the resulting anomalies in opinions and deviation in behavior, as well as training them on how to make a fatwa according to scientific methodological rules, and to define criteria for criticizing a fatwa and accepting or rejecting it. This contributes greatly to spreading security and peace, and preserving societies from abnormal and extremist fatwas.

51. A protocol of cooperation was signed between Dar Al Iftaa and Benha University, with the aim of holding seminars, conferences and workshops to discuss common issues, foremost of which are issues of renewing religious discourse, combating extremism, promoting a culture of difference and tolerance, spreading correct religious awareness among young people, and consolidating a culture of cooperation and dialogue between male and female students.

52. Within the framework of the Coptic Orthodox Church's endeavor to spread a culture of peace and tolerance, the Bishopric of Public, Ecumenical and Social Services, in cooperation with the National Council for Women, organized a seminar titled "The Role of Egyptian Women in Building Community Peace and Renouncing Violence", as well as a seminar titled "Citizenship" in cooperation with Al-Azhar and the National Council for Women; which emphasized the importance of raising societal awareness of the correct concept of citizenship, and that the basic principles of citizenship, including cooperation, participation, integration and human fraternity, must be emphasized.

53. The Church also participated in the "Awareness for Development and Decent Life" initiative, which aims to develop awareness and support positive societal trends related to development and national integration of citizens, and relies on training religious (Islamic and Christian), community and media cadres; and enabling them to communicate with the public with scientific, cultural, religious and legal

messages that are integrated and unified. In addition, the Church participated in the 14<sup>th</sup> Doha Conference for Interfaith Dialogue, which was held under the slogan “Religions and Hate Speech between Practice and Texts”.

54. The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services continued to play its role in contributing to building a pluralistic and democratic society based on the values of citizenship and principles of human rights, and respecting diversity and difference within a constitutional, legal and fair framework. This is achieved by spreading a culture of dialogue and empowering active groups, especially young people working in cultural, religious, media, academic institutions and civil society organizations.

55. The Organization designed and implemented a package of interventions for the specific groups it targets, which have the ability to influence various sectors of society; groups such as religious leaders, media professionals, academics and civil society institutions. (10) capacity-building workshops were held for (5) groups targeting (250) religious leaders in (9) governorates, on issues of citizenship, human rights, tolerance, conflict management and resolution skills, and cultural diversity. (4) workshops were held for representatives of civil society organizations in (9) governorates on issues of citizenship between concept and practice, civil society and the dissemination of citizenship values.

56. The Coptic Evangelical Organization launched a number of initiatives aimed at spreading tolerance, sense of belonging, and rejection of violence and intolerance at the level of local communities, through young people (religious leaders / academics / media professionals / civil society) who are trained to plan and implement cultural, social, sports and artistic activities, directed to the target groups (children / youth / women ... etc.). Through these activities, they educate target groups about the aforementioned values in ways that are appropriate to their educational and cultural level. Among these initiatives: The “Family Gathering” initiative in Beni Suef Governorate, which aims to promote a culture of family dialogue and raise family members' awareness of basic values (tolerance - acceptance of the other - respect - peaceful coexistence) by integrating all family members, and integrating families with their diverse religious, cultural and geographical backgrounds; through sports, artistic and literary activities and the use of various types of dialogue to promote citizenship, acceptance of the other, rejection of violence, spreading the spirit of tolerance and dealing with family problems. The Organization also launched the “Dialogue of Ahalina (Our People)” initiative in Alexandria, which aims to enhance communication and dialogue between youth from non-governmental organizations in Alexandria through various mechanisms and activities, including football and educational seminars. In addition, the Organization launched the “With Dialogue, We Get Along” initiative in Imbaba, which aims to promote a culture of family dialogue and raise family members' awareness of tolerance and non-violence; targeting 30 families in Imbaba. The Coptic Evangelical Organization launched “Our Environment is Our Responsibility” initiative in Imbaba, which aims to raise awareness of issues of tolerance and environmental citizenship to ensure a better future; strengthen the role of (30) religious leaders and raise their awareness of issues of tolerance and environmental citizenship; build a culture of teamwork for (30) young persons to spread tolerance and citizenship; and raise awareness of (40) children about the importance of tolerance and protection of the environment. Lastly, the Organization launched the “Dialogue is Life” initiative, which contributed to raising the awareness of (115) school students, from several villages in the Qusiya town in Assiut, of the value of coexistence and respect for difference through activities that included purposeful games and educational seminars.

57. The Organization launched the program “Supporting Cohesion and Peace in Egyptian Society”, which aims to promote tolerance, coexistence, acceptance of the other, and the exercise of true citizenship in society. The program targets youth leaders, including Islamic and Christian clerics, civil society representatives, academics, and media professionals.

58. The Coptic Evangelical Organization launched “Promoting Intercultural Dialogue” project in the governorates of Luxor and Giza, based on the importance of discussion and exchange of dialogue between individuals, and their (discussion and dialogue) role in creating constructive cooperation, which ultimately reflects positively on the level of development in all fields. The project aims to consolidate the culture of cooperation between the different spectrums and segments of society, through consulting specialists who presented scientific material that address the concept of participation, cooperation, acceptance of the other and the role of socialization institutions in building the human being; in addition to shedding light on the concepts of sustainable development, citizenship, negotiation and conflict management.

59. The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services held a number of events that discussed the issue of religious freedoms, including: a meeting titled “Youth and Tolerance: Opportunities and Application”, with the participation of a group of clerics, academics, media professionals, and representatives of civil society organizations from the governorates of Beni Suef and Giza. The importance of the role of civil society in activating tolerance in society was discussed, and from the perspective of the role of all participating groups, and how to confront: the cultural stress factors that impede the achievement of tolerance, and from tolerance into tolerance with the environment; climate change and the national strategy for climate change; and the goals that can be worked on with community participation; possible awareness efforts; and the role that all groups can play towards these issues through religious discourse. A meeting was also held under the title “Tolerance and Confronting Violence... from Principle to Application”, which emphasized the importance of tolerance; and how citizenship is achieved through it. A seminar was held under the title “Social Cohesion and the Consolidation of Citizenship”; it is part of the activities of the project to enhance citizenship values and practices in Minya Governorate, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Solidarity. The seminar addressed the concept of citizenship and the challenges facing society in achieving social cohesion. It also emphasized the social responsibility in consolidating citizenship. A conference titled “Towards a Citizenship Supportive of Cultural Diversity” was also held.

60. The Ministry of Awqaf (religious endowments) published more than 182 publications and translations to spread enlightened moderate thought, including the “Ro’ia” (Vision) series. An electronic endowment portal has also been launched and publishing has expanded in more than 23 languages. In addition, the Ministry worked on translating the Friday sermon into more than 18 languages, in addition to publishing it in audio and written versions. Within the framework of renewing religious discourse to be inclusive of all citizens, about 19 visual Friday sermons were published in sign language, for deaf people, and about 8 audio sermons were published, for blind people, on the website of the Ministry of Awqaf and its various outlets on social media.

61. The Ministry held a number of training courses for imams and female preachers on religious freedom, including: 17 training courses on citizenship rights in the regional directorates, attended by 850 imams and female preachers. In addition, the Ministry held 4 training courses on “the role and impact of psychology on renewing religious discourse” for 130 imams in several governorates. The Ministry also held a training course for 60 imams from Kazakhstan, in which a number of topics were tackled, including:

the rules of general jurisprudence, the controls of fatwa, concepts that must be corrected, and the joint course between imams and scholars of Egypt and India for (18) senior scholars from India, the deans of its (India) colleges, the professors of its universities, and the heads of its religious and cultural institutions. During the training course, significant issues and focus areas that call for spreading tolerance, moderation, and coexistence among societies were presented. In addition, the course for peaceful coexistence was held for (29) participants representing (18) countries, accompanied by (15) imams, and (20) courses in citizenship and population awareness for (1000) imams and preachers in a number of governorates. (5) courses in cooperation with the National Center for Social and Criminological Research titled “preparing cadres of Islamic and Christian clerics for developing community awareness and building positive trends in the governorates and villages of Decent Life initiative”.

62. The issue of religious freedoms is addressed through the program “Khatira Da'wiyah” by the Minister of Awqaf, which is broadcasted daily on the Holy Quran radio station. The program discusses and talks about moral values and human contributions in society. The issue of religious freedom was also addressed in a number of Friday sermons, including: a sermon on lessons learned from the Prophet's Farewell Sermon; a sermon on peace with oneself, society, the environment and the universe; a sermon on religion, the homeland and humanity, together to build, not destroy; and a sermon on Egypt's role in building human civilization.

63. The Minister of Awqaf participated in a number of events, including: a panel discussion on the book: “Tolerance is a way of life” issued by the Ministry of Awqaf in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture; a conference on “Tolerance and Confronting Violence from Principle to Application”, organized by the Coptic Evangelical Organization; and a conference of Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Kazakhstan, to discuss the role of leaders of world and traditional religions in the spiritual and social development of mankind. In his speech, the Minister emphasized that the message of religions is unanimous when it comes to tolerance, and that our message is to complete the dissemination of valuable principles and global journalism, in a way that achieves the good of local communities, creating high-level global peace. The Minister also participated in: the international conference titled “Coexistence, Tolerance, and Acceptance of the Other towards a Better Future” at the Bibliotheca Alexandria; the international conference titled: “Religious Awareness of Youth in the Digital Age”; and “Tolerance, Peace and Sustainable Development in the Arab World” Conference, in which he affirmed that there is no development without tolerance, and that countries that believe in diversity, difference, and respect for the other are the most stable countries, in terms of security and development, while countries that have fallen into the circle of hatred have entered endless circles of violence and chaos.

64. The Ministry of Endowments participated in a seminar titled “Religious Discourse and Identity Consolidation” in February 2022. A number of Ministry leaders from the governorates of (Minya-Beni Suef-Assiut-Sohag) also participated with a number of pastors in a training course organized by the National Council for Women, on “Integration of religious leaders in gender issues”.

65. The Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs issued (102) books that are widely distributed, the most important of which are “Pillars of Community Security”, “Citizenship Contract”, and “The Humanity of Islamic Civilization”, in addition to issuing 119 books translated into a number of foreign languages; among these are “concepts that must be corrected in the face of extremism”, and “critical thought between heritage and contemporary”.

66. Within the framework of cooperation between the Ministry of Awqaf and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, a number of educational caravans were implemented under the slogan “The New Republic and the Way to the Future”, including talk about religious and social tolerance.

67. Within the framework of cooperation between the Ministry of Awqaf and the Ministry of Education and Technical Education to develop teachers’ skills, promote religious freedoms, and disseminate the foundations of tolerance and coexistence, the 26<sup>th</sup> session on developing the skills of teachers of religious education and promoting religious freedoms was implemented with the participation of 100 male and female teachers from the two governorates of Alexandria and Beheira.

68. The two ministries also organized the joint cultural competition, and among the topics presented for discussion in the competition were: the topic “The Nation’s Right” in light of the book “The Right of the Nation” within the “Ro’ia” (Vision) series for publication, and the topic “Protection of Places of Worship” in light of the book “Protecting Places of Worship” within the Vision series for publication; and the topic “The Danger of Takfir and Fatwa Without Knowledge” in light of the book “The Dangerousness of Takfir and Fatwa Without Knowledge” within the series of Vision for publication.

69. The Ministry of Awqaf held a number of seminars, in cooperation with the National Media Authority, on the issue of renewing religious discourse, including the “Social Values” seminar, the “Sacred Months as a Message of Peace for Humanity” seminar, and the “Tolerance as a Way of Life” seminar. The Ministry also organized 82 courses, in coordination with Egyptian universities, on personality building and raising awareness of the dangers of extremism. It also participated in a number of training workshops that brought together female preachers and nuns, addressing various topics, foremost of which were ways to promote a culture of citizenship, non-discrimination, dialogue and acceptance of the other.

70. The Ministry of Youth and Sports established the Egyptian Federation for Values and Life, to be in cooperation with large groups of young people in various governorates, community institutions, youth centers and various ministries.

71. The Ministry of Youth and Sports also held (120) seminars titled “Correcting Misconceptions Among Youth”, and (27) seminars titled “Loyalty and Sense of Belonging”, and dialogue meetings titled “Egypt First... No to Intolerance” to confront destructive ideas and their impact on youth, with the participation of 3700 participants. In addition, the Ministry implemented the “Morals, Freedoms and Human Building” program in cooperation with Al-Azhar to confront negative phenomena and support good morals and positive social values. The Ministry held dialogue meetings under the slogan “Our Messenger... A Role Model for Us” to spread the culture of peaceful and social coexistence and reject misconceptions with the participation of 4830 participants. The Ministry launched an initiative titled “Our Values from Our Heritage” for religious and moral awareness, which includes a number of focus areas, including: correcting religious misconceptions, moderation and tolerance of the Islamic religion, how to reject extremism, violence and intolerance among young people, as well as respect and acceptance of the other. That is in addition to the launch of the cultural salon titled “The Path of Love” in a number of governorates, which aimed to spread a culture of coexistence, tolerance and acceptance of the other, and renunciation of violence and hatred. Lastly, the Ministry of Youth and Sports launched the “Step Towards a Better Life” initiative, which includes a number of topics, including: renewing religious discourse and correcting misconceptions and behaviors.

72. The Ministry of Social Solidarity continued to implement a program to promote citizenship in 44 of the villages most affected by extremism and sectarian events in Minya Governorate, which have been assigned by the Supreme Committee for Confronting Sectarianism since September 2020. The program is implemented through technical and material support amounting to 12 million EGP, provided by the Ministry of Social Solidarity's fund to support the projects of non-governmental organizations to seven large non-governmental institutions, which in turn cooperate with a large network of local non-governmental institutions in villages, amounting to 100 small community development institutions. The program aims to promote citizenship and respect for religious and cultural diversity against all forms of religious extremism, through: strengthening social protection for vulnerable groups, raising awareness of the values and culture of citizenship and respect for the distinctive religious, cultural and social diversity of the Egyptian society; and enhancing community participation of all Egyptians, from all religious, community and cultural backgrounds, in community protection and awareness programs.

73. The Ministry held the first meeting titled "The Cost of Terrorism: A Comprehensive Egyptian Approach", where the preliminary results of the study "The Economic and Social Cost of Terrorism" were announced. The research project includes four main focus areas, which are the political, economic, social and cultural focus areas, and in each of them the cost of terrorism is studied, along with its causes and ways to treat it. The research project deals with terrorism with a broader vision than previous studies, as the treatment is not limited to preventing violent attacks carried out by armed groups, but also includes the system of extremist groups, extremist thought and values, which represent a base that legitimizes the terrorist act; as the experience of Egyptian, Arab and Islamic societies shows that the terrorist act and the intellectual basis on which it is based must be dealt with as one package.

74. The Ministry is integrating a component of cultural awareness and improving the social attitudes and behaviors of citizens in the villages of Decent Life through the activities of the awareness program for community development.

75. The Ministry of Social Solidarity strengthened its partnership with non-governmental organizations working in the field of human rights, as it signed protocols of cooperation and provided 4 million pounds to support two large non-governmental organizations working in the field of human rights and citizenship, with the aim of spreading the human rights culture, building knowledge and awareness in the fields of human rights, promoting citizenship, ensuring equal opportunities, and rejecting hatred, fanaticism and extremism in Decent Life villages.

76. The Ministry supported the "Confrontation and Roaming Theater", in coordination between the Ministries of Culture and Social Solidarity, as the Ministry of Social Solidarity funded the second phase of the Theater at a cost of 2.5 million pounds, which targeted a number of villages deprived of culture and awareness services by providing 325 nights of performances, in twenty governorates. The Confrontation and Roaming Theater aims to build the Egyptian character and develop awareness through purposeful plays that include enlightening messages to confront extremism and religious and social intolerance, in addition to promoting social messages that support the values of work and sense of belonging to Egypt among young people.

77. At the level of higher education, a number of universities organized activities in the field of renewing religious discourse and combating extremism. Mansoura University organized a cultural session titled "Rejection of Violence and Reconciliation with the Other - The Call of the Heavenly Religions", where the strategic importance of confronting violence and extremism and their negative impact on the unity of

society was addressed. During the session, it was also been clarified that all monotheistic religions renounce violence and call for tolerance and reconciliation, and criminalize abuse in all its forms.

78. Damietta University held a seminar titled “Spreading Correct Thought and Confronting the Negative Effects of Extremist Thought”, where the role of religious and youth institutions in spreading awareness among young people and correcting misconceptions and habits practiced by some young people in society was emphasized, with the aim of protecting them from the harm of rumors and lies and enable them to practice their natural role in driving the economy, culture and politics within their societies.

79. Helwan University held a seminar titled “The Student's Role in Renouncing Extremism and Combating Terrorism”, which included a review of the State's vision and orientation for the university student, which contributes to the development of students’ experiences, culture, awareness and awareness of the State's efforts to advance Egyptian society and fight terrorism. It also included presenting the role of soft power and arts in confronting extremism and terrorism, as well as reviewing manifestations of terrorism and extremism throughout the ages.

80. Matrouh University held a series of awareness seminars for students to combat extremism, in cooperation with Al-Azhar. These seminars aimed at presenting the manifestations and dimensions of extremism and intellectual terrorism, its effects and risks, and emphasizing that extremism at the intellectual level contributes to the spread of intolerance and violence and threatens the stability of the individual, family and society.

81. Ain Shams University held a seminar titled “Highlighting Sound Thought and Confronting Extremist Thought”, which dealt with how to support the State's efforts in combating terrorism to preserve the security and stability of Egypt and achieve comprehensive development in accordance with Egypt Vision 2030.

82. Kafr El sheikh University held a seminar titled “Promoting the values of citizenship in the face of extremism”, which aimed at instilling of patriotism and sense of belonging among students, affirming the Egyptian national identity and correcting misconceptions.

83. Menoufia University held an awareness seminar titled “The Dangers of Terrorism and Extremism” and addressed the importance of the educational sector as an integral part and even a pivotal pillar in confronting extremism and the intrigues of evil forces, which do not stop their attempts to penetrate educational institutions in the region, and spread their poison in the minds and hearts of our children and youth.

84. Assiut University held a seminar titled “The Role of Diplomacy in Combating Terrorism”, in which the Egyptian State's rejection of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations was affirmed, and it renewed its commitment not only to confronting terrorism, but also to combating extremist ideologies that fuel brutal violence practiced by terrorist groups.

85. Benha University held a seminar titled “Tolerance of Religions”, in which it was emphasized that religious tolerance is the basis for the progress of the family and societies as a whole; in addition to the “Listen and Speak Forum” program in its second edition to combat extremism, which emphasized the importance of spreading correct thought to confront extremism.

86. Suez University held the first international conference titled “Religious Awareness of Youth in the Digital Age” in cooperation with the League of Islamic Universities. The conference put forward a set of recommendations, including inviting Islamic universities to contribute to developing an effective strategy for religious communication in the digital age by qualifying workers in civil and private religious institutions, and confronting the negative effects of digital platforms that have become attractive to youth but also disrupting to reform efforts in support of building religious awareness that protects youth from extremism. The conference called for working on the integration of official and popular efforts and those of the civil society institutions in spreading a culture of tolerance among members of society, especially the youth.

87. The Supreme Council of Universities decided to integrate the academic material of “The Tolerance of Religions and the Ethics of Dialogue with the Other”, which highlights the tolerance of religions and the manners of dialogue between people, which was prepared by a group of senior scholars, to be included in the social issues course that is taught to students.

88. Within the partnership with the civil society and efforts to strengthen relations among citizens, build social capital, improve the quality of life, and strengthen partnership with the Government, the Technical Secretariat of the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights launched the “Experiences in Development” project, which aims to monitor, document, draw lessons learned and present policy proposals, and recommendations based on development experiences that stemmed from coexistence between Muslims and Christians, and from local experiences, that have at their core a desire to participate in life's opportunities, face challenges, and plan a better future without exclusion.

**Fifth: Egyptian Efforts on the International Arena Regarding the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Religious Freedoms:**

89. In April 2022, Egypt was chosen as a co-chair - with the European Union - of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which is considered one of the significant international mechanisms concerned with developing the value system for combating terrorism and extremism, as Egypt intends, during its presidency of the Forum, to seek to maximize its role in a manner that better responds to the needs of developing countries, especially African countries, by strengthening their capabilities in the fields of combating terrorism and extremism, within the framework of Egypt's firm conviction that defeating terrorism and extremism will only be possible by developing the relevant national capacities, in parallel with strengthening international and regional cooperation in this regard.

90. Egypt participated in the High-level International Conference on Human Rights, Civil Society and Combating Terrorism, which was held in Malaga in May 2022. The conference dealt with mechanisms to enhance social cohesion and protect the society against terrorist threats; and to strengthen the component of respect for human rights, gender equality and the rule of law within the approach that is followed by the international community in combating terrorism and extremism, in addition to mechanisms to promote the rights of victims of terrorism.

91. Egypt also participated in a workshop on “gender-based approach to combating violent extremism, preventing it and combating terrorism” that was held in Dakar in May 2022. The workshop dealt with mechanisms to promote gender equality in leadership and policy-making related to combating and preventing terrorism, in addition to integrating a gender perspective among the approaches that are



related to enhancing the effectiveness of the criminal justice system, and how to enhance respect for women's rights in the context of combating terrorism.

**Sixth: Communication with Egyptians Abroad:**

92. Within the framework of the role of the Ministry of Immigration and Expatriate Affairs in communicating with Egyptians abroad and deepening their values of loyalty and sense of belonging, it organized the activities of the third LOGOS Coptic Youth Forum for Egyptian youth abroad, in cooperation with the Coptic Orthodox Church. Nearly 200 young people from various parishes of the Episcopate of St. Mark in 30 countries representing all countries of the world, participated in the Forum, which aimed at introducing Coptic emigrant youth to their motherland. The activities of the sixth annual camp for sons and grandsons of Egyptian expatriates abroad from the fourth and fifth generations were held, under the slogan "Speak Arabic and Live Egyptian" in Sharm El-Sheikh, within the framework of familiarizing the emerging Egyptian generations abroad with their civilization and history, and emphasizing their belonging and loyalty to the homeland. The Ministry also signed a protocol of cooperation with Al-Azhar to enhance national belonging, increase community awareness, and reunite the Egyptian family.