

SUMMARY:

Egypt is a country with an immense diversity of Culture expressions and its government has always believed strongly on the importance of working and living together.

Together, cultures could create a rich and strong tapestry and could be an engine for sustainable development for individuals, communities and countries.

In Cairo as well as major cities in Egypt, a large number of old Egyptian traditions remain from the time of the Pharaohs, and contrast with pure tribal customs brought in by many invaders throughout the centuries. That contradiction and contrast between areas of Egypt is what makes the singularity of the country as well as its culture's features.

“Our rich diversity . . . is our collective strength.”¹

Therefore, the management of the richness and diversity of Culture in Egypt has been always doubly balanced through:

The State:

(Within the Ministry of Culture):

The Supreme Council of Culture (SCC)

The Supreme Council for culture is the very high instance of Culture in Egypt. It was created in 1980 in substitution of the Supreme Council for Safeguarding of Arts, literature and Human sciences that took place in 1956. This SCC acts as Advisory body for the government with reference to cultural affairs and targets principally the development of Egypt's cultural policies, and the stimulation of creativity in culture and arts domain.

The SCC consists on 61 members. Thirty-two are appointed by the state and the other members are official representatives of relevant ministries and syndicates, as well as the heads of the Culture Ministry departments.

The private sector:

Egyptian Civil Society Organizations

Civil society organizations have been prevalent in the Egyptian public sphere since the 19th century. Its role has always been to complement the Egyptian government in providing social and cultural services.

The Egyptian Civil Society Organizations have played an important role over the Egyptian modern history, they use to be a very important partner for Development and Democratie.

In the frame of the national policies set up by the Egyptian government, large and various measures have been put in place with the aim of protecting and promoting the diversity of culture expressions.

¹ Johannesburg Declaration, 2002

These measures cover the administrative structures inside the Ministry, the cooperation with the private sector, the raising of public awareness, the reconsideration of the Curriculum of primary schools by enriching them with Cultural Heritage documents/materials and the contribution of women in the sustainable development of Culture. The measures also recognize the importance of Culture as an economic resource and the power of Social cohesion.

The report underscores a large number of activities undertaken in the framework of the ministry of Culture as well as other governmental institutions. In addition it highlights the efforts and productivity of the private sector to protect and promote the diversity of Culture expressions. A list of the non-governmental associations is herewith attached (cf. **Annexe 1** of Civil Society in Egypt). Few among them –well known and active on the national and international grounds- are highlighted in the heading of ‘Role of Civil Society’.

As per the challenges/difficulties that faced the Implementation of the convention, the most important ‘handicap’ would be the lack of institutional stability that hit Egypt in the last two years and that slowed down the import and export of culture activities. Despite this difficult and complicated atmosphere, Egypt kept a regular agenda in the Cultural domain and succeeded to hold festivals, symposiums, conferences convened with on the international map always respecting it’s deadline, or committing to it’s deadline.

However, this report shows the flourishing street and popular art that bloomed after the revolution, which took place on January 2011. Young artists have since experienced the taste of freedom allowing them to present a large and completely new panel of Culture expressions.

Realizing the importance that Culture expressions holds and the necessity of its protection, the Ministry of Culture documented the thousands of graffiti art that increasingly evolved in the last two years, and held many exhibitions inside and outside Egypt. This documentation was a very important demarche since a big number of these graffiti’s rubbed on the Egyptian walls represent the voice of its youth.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

a- Name of Party:

Egypt

b- Date of Ratification:

23/8/2007

c- Ratification process:

Governmental process

d- Total Contribution of IFCD:

None

e- Organization Responsible for Report:

Egyptian Ministry of Culture

f- Officially designated point of contact

Cultural Development Fund

g- Date Report Was Prepared:

March 2013

h- Name of Designated Official Signing the Report:

Gihane Zaki, Focal point for 2005 convention –Ministry of Culture.

I- Description of Consultation Process Established for the Preparation of the Report and Names of Representatives Participating in Civil Society Organizations:

A consultation process was put in place last August in the aim of elaborating/reflecting a global and realistic image of the Egyptian ground in regard with the governmental strategy for the protection and promotion of Diversity of Cultural expression.

Few representatives of civil society organizations have participated in the preparation of this report. For example, the Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions and National Archives of Folk Life and Folk Traditions and they submit a full report prepared by Dr. Nawal el Messiri and Dr. Ahmad Morsi on their activities. Young IT specialists and competent regional researchers contributed in providing information for the report. The report was brought up to national experts as well as stakeholders of the Ministry of Culture for suggestions and comments.

2- MEASURES

In accordance with the sovereign right of the state parties to formulate and implement cultural policies and adopt measures (Article 5.1 of the convention). Egypt has undertaken numerous ones to encourage the implementation of policy instruments and training activities in the cultural domain. The Egyptian Ministry of Culture put in place an arsenal of tools/activities to support the creation, production and distribution of cultural activities and has set different ways to facilitate the dissemination and access to cultural activities and services around the country. The action of the Ministry is undertaken with the participation of stakeholders, notably civil society as defined in the Operational Guidelines of the 2005 convention.

2.1 Cultural policies and measures

The Measures taken by the Ministry apply to the following fields:

a) Creation/production:

Longtime before the ratification of the 2005 convention, precisely in 1989, the Egyptian government had created a special Fund for Cultural development (CDF) with the aim of providing assistance for young artists and undertaking cultural projects that generate direct impact on the society. The CDF is pursuing this mission through diverse channels and “windows” over the Nile Valley (**Annexe 2**: Achievement of the CDF over the last 20 years)

In parallel, the CDF rehabilitates old houses and palaces converting those spaces into cultural centers to promote diversity of culture expression. In the large open space of the Opera House (Down Town) a sophisticated center for Creativity took place with the aim of supporting young

artist's activities. (**Annexe 3:** Powerpoint CD of the rehabilitation of the old Houses – presented by arch. Abuseada in Saudi Arabia meeting for the safeguarding of the Arab Heritage)

The Culture Development Fund (CDF) put in place a panel of centers that cover a large number of culture expressions.

As example, we could mention:

- The center for Creativity (Hanager)

Basically, the objective of this center is to support young performers, singers, and dancers by providing assistance for the production of their art work. The role of this center is also to supervise young artists in the domain of experimental Theater and provide them with specialists who observe and direct the work of qualified elements. The strategy of the center targets the distribution and dissemination of domestic cultural services.

- The House of the song (Palace of Emir *Bishtak*)

The objective of this house is to offer training activities in the domain of music and vocal/instrumental sounds. The artists are challenged to produce harmony and expression of emotion with authenticity essence.

- The House of *She'r (Beit el Set Wassila)*

This place in the heart of the World Heritage site of Historic Cairo is allocated by the Ministry of Culture to promote Arabic literature and calligraphy and to nurture people's memory of famous Arab poets and poems.

- The House of *3oud (Palace of Harawi)*

With the objective of preserving one of the most authentic instruments of oriental music “*3oud*”, the Ministry of Culture has dedicated the old Mamelouk house of “*Harawi*” to this purpose. This creativity center aims to:

Record and promote traditional music and musicians in Egypt, as living heritage able to renew the intercultural bridges.

To highlight the vital role of the music in societies and underline its importance from the old time up to now in shaping the imagination of the Egyptian people.

To organize workshops supervised by the most distinguished specialists in the area of oriental instruments.

To offer national prizes/ awards with the aim to encourage the perception of this music as a resource for creativity.

b) Advocacy/promotion

Regarding the participation of Egypt in the exchange of various international legal instruments to advocate and promote the right of Culture, a close coordination is currently underway for this purpose. Nevertheless, Egypt has been hit by the administrative split of the two portfolio of Culture and Antiquities (Former SCA). An internal adjustment is needed before any participation in exchange on legal instruments on international bases. In regard with the relation UNESCO/

Ministry of Culture for example, the legal status is reviewed in order to adjust the situation and pursue the legendary cooperation with the organization.

In parallel, Cultural Bilateral conventions are signed between the Ministry of Culture and its homologues in foreign countries. In order to optimize the follow up of the clauses of the various conventions, a unit has been created especially for this purpose. (**Annexe 4**: List of countries that have MOU/Convention with Egypt)

-Egypt has ratified the most important conventions of UNESCO:

- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict – Hague- (1954)

This Convention was the first international treaty aimed at protecting cultural heritage in the context of war, and which highlighted the concept of common heritage and led to the creation of the International Committee of Blue Shield..

- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970)

Sixteen years after the adoption of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its Protocol of 1954, the international community decided to extend this protection by adopting the 1970 UNESCO Convention, to curb the increasing illicit international trafficking of cultural property. Under the provisions of this pioneering international treaty, States cooperate to protect the cultural property on their territory and fight its illicit import, export and transfer. This international legal instrument addresses a rapidly evolving issue that is attracting a significant political, media, diplomatic, and legal attention.

- Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)

The World Heritage Convention is the most ratified international treaty for cultural and natural heritage preservation in the world. The World Heritage Convention celebrates sustainable development and the role of local communities. Due to changing demographics, growing inequalities and diminishing resources, the relationship between heritage conservation and sustainable development is more important than ever. World Heritage has then a major role to play in every country.

- Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is promoted by UNESCO as a counterpart to the World Heritage that focuses mainly on tangible aspects of culture. Prior to the UNESCO Convention, efforts had already been made by Egypt to safeguard its intangible heritage. In 1958, legislations are adjusted to preserve and promote intangible heritage and the creation of an academic center for Folk studies.

- On a regional basis, Bilateral Culture exchanges with Arab countries of the region are prosperous especially with Arab emirates in the last two years.

C) Export and Import strategies

The Egyptian Ministry of Culture has developed a special policy for export-driven (promoting cultural expression abroad). Scholarships are offered for young creators in various domains, like sculpture, painting, commix, video art, critique artistic, lighting, costume, etc.... in the aim of assuring the dialogue with other western schools.

To reinforce the dialogue south-north, the ministry of Culture is armed with a wide, refined and sophisticated platform in the heart of Europe, the Egyptian Academy in Rome, from where Egyptian young artists could exchange and export their millennium culture while getting inspired from the mythic culture of the west.

To strengthen the import-driven strategies, the Ministry of Culture adopts policies that enable the distribution of diverse cultural expressions in their respective markets.

A specialized structure (*'elaqat Saqafia Kharigia*) within the Ministry of Culture is concerned by the international cultural exchanges, the supervision and dissemination of the foreign various expressions in the appropriate areas in order to optimize their input on the society and stimulate the curiosity of the Egyptian citizens to learn more and increase their knowledge for discovering the world.

Egypt has a very important activity in regard with Festivals and Art Symposiums. The most important is the International Film Festival held every November in Cairo with a wide bunch of Directors/actors and cineaste who share their experiences with the Egyptian society.

Egypt organizes also two international Art symposium, the first and oldest is the one in Luxor dedicated for Art painting and the second one in Aswan for Sculpture. Artists from everywhere in the globe comes to enjoy the gathering and fruitful exchange that is realized during those two international events.

Egypt contributes as well in the International Biennale of Venezia (Italy) through the outstanding Pavilion of which the Egyptian academy in Rome is supervising (**Annexe III**: summary of the Egyptian contribution during the 55th session of the Art Biennale).

NGO's across the country have been very active in the cultural exchanges of musical troops and other activities that have a direct impact on the society. (**Annexe 5**: Web site address with a list of NGO's in Egypt and their main activities).

D) Access strategies

The Ministry of Culture pursues the support of the important projects which were launched with the creation of the Ministry itself in 1958 to facilitate the access of Culture all over the Egyptian territory. Inspired from the brilliant idea of André Malraux of "Les Maisons de la Jeunesse et de la Culture" (MJC) a wide panel of palaces spread over the governorates of Egypt under the name of Qossour el Saqafa el Gamahiria) ensuring the accessibility of culture to all society levels with the right language.

Cultural Houses (*Qossour el Saqafa el Gamahiria*)

Cultural Palaces are Cultural spots principally created with a new vision for the dissemination of culture education in the villages, communities and the small municipalities with limited corporate powers.

These spots are of big importance in the rural areas where the families cannot reach a decent culture source due to poverty, lack of communication with big cities around and lack of transportation means.

In parallel, those palaces use to play a strategic role in the promotion of sustainable development through audiovisual communication and other cultural services.

Regular 'creative workshops are taking place within the existing local centers with the objective of training young professionals in business management. These efforts are geared towards the development of a competitive indigenous-led creative micro-industry.

Project of the CDF 100 libraries (*Maktabat al Qora*)

This project was launched with the aim of fighting the lack of communication between the citizens of villages and rural areas to perform physically the demanding tasks of communities.

Arab school of cinema and television through internet (*Sabil Qayetbay*)

The development of technology that is under way in the field of culture allows considerable changes to take place in the creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural content. The Arab school of cinema and television offers through a precious tool -the internet- disseminate a large curriculum in cinema and television for arabic speaking people worldwide.

Bibliotheca Alexandrina

A center of excellence in the production and diffusion of knowledge and considered as one of the most important spot that disseminate Culture, according to latest technologies. It is a place for exchange between cultures and people. The Bibliotheca Alexandria seeks to recapture the spirit of the original ancient Library of Alexandria. It aspires to be:

- The world's window on Egypt.
- Egypt's window on the world.
- A leading institution of the digital age.
- A center for learning, tolerance, Cultural dialogue and understanding.

Few centers are affiliated to the Bibliotheca, the most known world wise is

Cultnat (Centre for the documentation of the cultural and natural Heritage)

The center aims to implement the latest technology in documenting the heritage of Egypt, and emphasizes its richness and diversity through the media. Therefore, an outstanding instrument for the dissemination of Culture through modern technology is created within this center with the name of Culturama. In fact, Culturama is a Cultural Panorama over nine screens, the first ever patented 9-projector interactive system. It is an innovative harmonized mix of cultural and natural heritage information, using an enlightening and attractive multimedia program and the latest display technology. Winner of many awards with Patent Right No. 23651 from the Arab Republic of Egypt- Ministry of State for Scientific Research, the Culturama, which was developed by the Egyptian Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT), allows the presentation of a wealth of data layers, where the presenter can click on an item and go to a new level of detail. It is a remarkably informative multi-media presentation of Egypt's heritage across 5000 years of history up to modern times.

Encourage and foster the development of expertise in editing Web sites and digital material, which require very different skills to those of print publishing

The General Organization of Book and archives is undertaking serious measures to implement a national policy for training the new generation of Web editors specialized in cultural material, the organization would be rendering a great service to the future of education and culture in Egypt.

The establishment of the Manuscript Department came about when the Bibliotheca set plans for organizational restructuring soon after he assumed his responsibilities as the Librarian of Alexandria. The manuscript department has substantially evolved, since the presidential decree (no. 268) concerning its establishment, into an independent administration housing specialized sections and laboratories. The administration was later subdivided into two academic institutions: the Manuscript Center (MsC) and the Manuscript Museum (MsM).

The MsC operates through a number of integrated sections, which work tunefully with the ones in the twin institution; the MsM. To facilitate the smooth running of the work flow, units and operations were merged across both institutions into three highly specialized sections in each. Thus, the MsC currently houses the following sections:

Heritage Publishing Section

The section releases assorted publications of the MsC in both electronic and printed forms within the framework of a number of ambitious endeavours; one of which is the Digital Archive Project. It aims at the production of digital copies of the BA's rare manuscripts and books. Using high-tech scanners or state-of-the-art digital cameras, graphic specialists capture and digitally process images of manuscripts. The creation of a Virtual Browser for the rarities in the BA was also one of such accomplishments.

Chief among the projects which the section has adopted is the Digital Manuscript Library; the first CD-set that has been released and it comprises a collection of the rarest manuscripts in the BA. The second set represents some of the rarities of the Islamic heritage collection in the mosque of al-‘Ārif bi-Allāh Abū al-‘Abbās al-Mursī. The section is currently working on the third set which comprises a remarkable manuscript collection of the Religious Institute of Smūa. The fourth set features elected manuscripts from the Uppsala University Library's collection.

Other fields pertaining to the section's scope of work are printed publications series: Multilingual Heritage Publishing, and Selected Rarities of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

Restoration Section (Laboratory)

The laboratory development took impressive steps to evolve into a comprehensive section affiliated to the MsC. It operates with highly qualified experts undertaking the restoration of manuscripts, rare books, and maps, in addition to repairing and disinfecting the books in use.

Manuscripts and rare books receive pre-restoration chemical treatment before beginning any actual work of repair. Then they get manually restored, assembled, and sewn up together into a book block. Afterward, end bands are prepared and original mended covers are fixed. Finally, restored items are preserved in boxes specially made in the Laboratory. With the generous donation of Jumua El-Majid (United Arab Emirates), the Laboratory is equipped with a leaf casting machine for rare book restoration. Since its establishment in 1996, the section has restored 166 rare manuscripts, 1102 rare books 67 old maps, and 32 plans.

Academic Activities & Specialized Translation Section

Already assigned with specialized heritage translation from/into Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Greek, the Section, formerly Specialized Translation Unit, supports the center's academic orientation via a number of integrated tasks. It coordinates international academic activities and events with parallel bodies in other countries.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

According to article 12 of the convention, the international cooperation occupies a large part of the Egyptian strategy for promoting and protecting Culture Diversity. A Special Sector for International cooperation “*Qetaa el Zelaqat el Saqafia el Kharigia*” works on this purpose and facilitates the cultural dialogue between Egypt and countries all over the world. This sector plays an important role as well in reinforcing partnerships with civil society and the private sector in fostering and promoting cultural exchanges.

Best practices are encouraged although the general political and economic did not allow decent remunerations.

The Ministry of Culture supports the mobility of artists from the private sector and co-product with non-governmental organizations performances/festivals/movies/cultural publications/etc...

Samaa Musical Ensemble:

One of the most significant example is “Samaa Musical Ensemble” which represents the biggest and most important musical festival in Egypt. This show is reflecting cultural diversity in Egypt (Soufi, Coptic, catholic, Sunni,) moreover, it hosts musicians belonging to the private sector and coming from more than 30 countries all over the world. This festival is held twice a year and drains a record of audience from all society levels as well as the expatriates. (Annexe 6: Documentation on *sama3* festival)

The "Festival of the Sun":

It was launched by a grant from UNESCO and European Commission. The major objective of this Mediterranean festival is to create a common framework for the preservation of cultural identities of the Mediterranean people while moving closer together.

In order to celebrate and to promote the Sun Festival presence in Egypt, festivities were held in one of the alleys of the World Heritage site of Historic Cairo.

The Ministry of Culture encourages traditional festivals to become privileged occasions for sharing hospitality and be open to others, while protecting the various traditions and arts and crafts surviving through them. Another goal is to make a first inventory and mapping of Egyptian traditional festivals to be recorded in a national data base in order to protect and promote the Network.

The Ministry of Culture participates in a large number of Symposiums, conferences, festivals biennales, international events for all type of arts and Culture.

On the international map:

Egypt has always assured the leader ship in the internation cooperation in the culture domain and has been a model of tolerance and moderate behaviour .

"A moving demonstration of the miracles that can be achieved by international cooperation," in the words of the Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura who sent a message to the participants of a meeting held in Egypt to commemorate the Nubia Campaign. "Saving the temples and artefacts of Nubia became an urgent priority transcending national interests and pride, and, as we all know, the international community brilliantly rose to that challenge. Need it be further stressed

that such international solidarity is more than ever timely in the current period of global, financial, environmental and social crisis..."

The scale of the 20-year project and the immense technological challenge it generated were unprecedented in UNESCO's history. A total of 22 monuments and architectural complexes were relocated with the assistance of 40 technical missions from five continents.

The success of the Campaign inspired the development and adoption in 1972 of UNESCO's World Heritage Convention and the inscription of sites on UNESCO's World Heritage List on which the Nubian Monuments from Abu Simbel to Philae were inscribed in 1979.

On the regional map:

Egypt is very active in the Middle East region in the exchange of expertise and specialists in the domain of Culture and art.

Egypt participates in a large number of cultural events in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Arab Emirates, Lebanon and other countries.

Recently a book fair has been held in Tunisia with the participation of the General Organisation of the book (Ministry of Culture) In the frame of this event, young artists have realized a traditional Egyptian performance.

Egypt has an important place in the Meeting of the Arab Ministers of Culture held under the auspices of the Arab League and it took place in 2012 in Manama (Bahrain). The resolution that came up from this strategic meeting is considered as "*Feuille de route*" and resolutions have direct impact on national strategies/policies everywhere in the Arab world.

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2.3 Integration of Culture in Sustainable Development Policies

According to article 13 of the convention in regard with Integration of Culture in Sustainable Development Policies, Egypt is endeavouring to give the Culture the place it deserves in the national development policies at all level. The general atmosphere does not allow the flourishing of the measures taken and to foster aspects relating to the protection and promotion of the diversity of Culture.

Although, Egypt through the Ministry of Industry (Industrial Modernization Centre) has undertaken several measures to integrate traditional crafts as a strategic element in the national development policies. In parallel, researches are undertaken to study the conditions around the traditional crafts.

The Ministry of Culture has created a Center for traditional artifacts (*Fostat* area).

The center gathered various traditional crafts like pottery, textile, copper works, handmade jewelry, wood works and ceramics. The building that covers 2,400 square metres, consists on workshops, lecture areas, dormitories, exhibition galleries, glazing rooms, offices, a multi-purpose hall, and guest rooms for artists, all of which are centered around a series of open air courtyards. Authentic materials were used with the exception of reinforced concrete. The centre of Fostat who aims to safeguard the traditional artifacts has become an important teaching institution. An important collaboration with the very famous school of Prince Charles in the UK is to be underlined as well as the joint activities/ regular visits of outstanding experts.

This strategy of the Centre aimed to foster universal access participation in and enjoyment of the creation and production of cultural expressions. The exposure of the craftsmen to the international markets is encouraged by the Egyptian policies as well as their presence in international fairs believing that this “dialogue” contributes to the strengthening of identity and social cohesion and to the building of inclusive societies that uphold the equal dignity and respect for cultural diversity.

The national and local contexts in Egypt are very unstable and it is very hard for the people in charge of culture to maintain the harmony of the local culture ecosystem. It requires a great deal of endurance since economic, environmental, social and cultural systems are interdependent and cannot be considered separately. Thus effective coordination mechanisms should be established before taking any decisions in regard with integration of Culture in Sustainable Development Policies.

The last two years in Egypt were hit by a large number of institutional changes, and a weakness in the level of the decision makers. Though, a Raising awareness campaign is needed among decision makers on the importance of the Culture dimension of development to meet with the objectives of article 13.

The fundamental role of education is to be underscored, especially during this hard time the country is going through. Unfortunately, there is a lack in the educational system in its different aspects as well as the understanding and appreciation of diversity of its expressions.

Nevertheless, new technologies, and expansion of networked communication systems use to play an important role in the Egyptian society. The role played by new technologies and social networks during the 25th January revolution reflects the ease of the young generation in dealing with those tools.

2.4 PROTECTING CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS UNDER THREAT

The Ministry of Culture as well as the Private sector in Egypt have been very active for the safeguarding of cultural expressions over the last decade.

- On a national bases “Al Sirah AI Hilalliyya” was identified in need of urgent safeguarding by the Egyptian Government and was the first element to be inscribed on the Intangible World Heritage The measures adopted to protect this cultural expression consists on a large survey run by the Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions in order to locate the Sirah’s narrators in different parts of Egypt. In parallel, the various texts and informations collected in regard with narrators, their life history, training, skills ,economic status were recorded in the national archive.
In parallel, two of the important culture expressions under threat were re-considered from the Egyptian government recently and were presented as follow o to be inscribed on the Intangible World Heritage list.
- Representative List: Tahtib (remarkable and authentic Festive Art practiced in both societies Rural (14%) and Urban (86%)
- Endangered List in Need of Safeguarding: Aragoz marionette.
- Best Practices: The art of Tally and Sustainable Development

-The Tally Project.

ESFT was commissioned by National Council for Women to document the Art of Tally and train women of Upper Egypt to safeguard this craft. Though this project started before the convention of 2007 yet, to this date ESFT is still in contact with the bearer of this tradition to insure the quality of their products and safeguard the authenticity of their motifs and supply them with new uses and functions for tally work.

-The Documentation of the Egyptian Crafts.

This project was executed in 2009 by ESFT on behalf of The Industrial Modernization Centre (IMC) of the Ministry of industry. IMC selected ESFT and the Archives to collect the traditional knowledge of tangible and intangible aspects of these crafts in order to incorporate them in their developmental plans.

3. Awareness raising and participation of civil society

In order to raise the awareness of the people the state has initiated the creation of a large number of museums to acquaint the public with the diversity of their heritage and also preserve certain cultural elements which are liable to extinction. The initiation of cultural museums within different areas in the desert and over the Nile valley is a significant contribution of the State to safeguarding the cultural heritage of Egypt.

The State -in collaboration with UNESCO- initiated in the frame of the second international Nubia campaign- a museum for the Nubian cultural heritage in the city of Aswan. The architecture of this museum is based on the modern concepts of scenography which makes it attractive to both local and foreign visitors.

In fact, a large number of the present Nubian generations have never visited Nubia before its inundation by the High Dam. Though, the importance of such a cultural spot that dedicated a cross section to show a traditional Nubian house, its display, its interior distinguished with artistic decorations. Also the Museum displayed the natural environment and its variations including the Nile, the mountains, the desert and the monuments. All these elements had disappeared but the museum documented its grandeur and the artistic values which are still dominating the Nubian behaviors and practices.

In AI Arish city, another museum called 'the Sinai Museum' took place. The main objective of this museum is to acquaint the civil society with cultural heritage of Sinai. It became imperative to have such a museum to raise the awareness of the young generation of Sinai and the richness and diversity of the Egyptian heritage in general.

In the western desert, the oasis of Siwa also, has its own cultural museum which was initiated by two famous artists/collectors: Abou El-Eineen and his wife Reaaya el Nimr. Many of the elements in this museum are no more available which shows the importance of the donations of private collectors.

ROLE AND PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY²:

Article **11 requests** from the different parties to acknowledge the fundamental role of civil society in protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions and to encourage the active participation of civil society in their efforts to achieve the goals of this convention.

Egypt encourages non-governmental organizations to act as innovators and change-agent for the implementation of the convention.

The Ministry of Culture is adopting new ideas/approaches to the formulation of culture and is encouraging the development of innovative cultural processes and practices that help achieve the protection and promotion of the Diversity of Cultural expressions.

The potential of civil society should be put to use to offer the population, new and "avant-garde" approaches that can flourish in specific cultural domains with the aim of safeguarding and improving (or support) Cultural Diversity.

Giving voice to groups, such as Autistic children and women, in order to ensure that they are taken into account when formulating cultural policies

When formulating cultural policies, certain "categories" of people are set-a-side or discarded, such as Autistic Children and Women. Therefore civil society should acknowledge the importance of giving them the same voice as everyone else.

Here below, non benefit association that are closely working for the implementation of the 2005 convention:

² Nadine Sika is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the American University in Cairo has written several articles on the role of civil society. As example 'Civil Society and Democratization in Egypt: The Road Not Yet Traveled'

UNDP, Egypt's Social Contract: The Role of Civil Society (Cairo: UNDP, 2008).
Hamdy Hassan, "Civil Society in Egypt under the Mubarak Regime," Afro-Asian Journal of Social Sciences 2, no. 2.2 (Quarter II, 2011), 1-18.
Center for Development Services, An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt: Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt (Cairo: Center for Development Services, 2005)

The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT)

Was founded in 2000 under the supervision of the Egyptian Ministry of Social Affairs, as an NGO specialized in folk traditions with main target to safeguard and document the Egyptian intangible Heritage with its various expressions.

ESFT is working closely with both ministry of Culture and Ministry of Antiquities and has accomplished several projects which exemplify the wealth and diversity of the cultural expressions in Egypt. Experts of the ESFT were involved in the scientific committee for the scenography of the national Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC), which is the product of the second international campaign for the safeguarding of Nubia Monuments (Mars, 1983)

ESFT organizes various and workshops in order to train young people to fieldwork methods as well as the way and how to prepare proper inventories/documentation/classification of Egyptian cultural expressions.

ESFT was commissioned by the Egyptian government to document the Art of Tally. The goals were focused on offering high level training to women in Upper Egypt, on supplying them with new uses and functions for tally work, on safeguarding this craft, Insuring its sustainability by protecting the bearers of this tradition

and last but not least to preserve their products and the authenticity of their motifs.

DARB 1718

In the midst of historic Old Cairo emerges a beating heart for contemporary art and culture. Darb 1718 is an Egyptian non-profit organization founded in 2008. Its premises include a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces that host different art mediums and cultural events.

Darb 1718 houses two art exhibition spaces, theater, dance and concert stages, outdoor cinema for independent film screenings, gardens and rooftops in addition to an artist residency to accommodate international artists and curators. The center provides workshops, programs and initiatives to educate and mentor emerging artists and offers them a space to exhibit their work alongside established artists.

It is a hub connecting Egyptian artists from several walks of life with the local and international art and culture scene. Darb 1718 is an art center and gathering point for all art events in Egypt. It is wide stage for Cairo's Contemporary Art Scene.

MAKAN: Egyptian Centre for Culture and Art (ECCA)

ECCA aims to record and present traditional music and musicians in Egypt as vibrant and renewable cultural resources that bridge Mediterranean and sub-Saharan African cultures. ECCA further encourages efforts to re-awaken the multi-layered complexity of Egyptian culture, of its music and arts, to bring back to life the fundamental role they've all played in the daily life and imagination of the Egyptian people. Its Target is also to counter the trend to isolate it from its original communities, to share this rich resource with the world and, present it in new contexts and encourage to perceive this traditional music as a resource for creativity.

The main objectives of this Center are:

To encourage diversity, specificity and vibrancy of Egypt's cultural scene as a strategy to counter cultural uniformity, consumerism and an increasing intolerance for the marginal.

To contribute to dialogue among people from different cultures through an intense process of artistic production.

To participate in safeguarding Egyptian cultural and memory by researching and documenting its intangible cultural heritage and by encouraging the re-establishment of popular traditions and social festivals.

To present Egyptian oral and traditional arts as they are now, rarely, practiced to a wide audience.

SAKIET EL SAWI

The name 'El Sakia' or 'The Waterwheel' derives from its five-part novel series with the same name. Since our center is concerned with culture, the word 'water' was replaced by 'culture'.

The main venue in Zamalek has five stages situated in the River Hall, the Wisdom Hall, the Word Hall, the Sakia Garden and the Bostan El Nil. The halls are equipped with cinema screens and all kinds of audiovisual aids. Three more halls are available to accommodate workshops and seminars.

Art Exhibitions: El Sawy Culture wheel is an artistic platform, situated in the heart of Cairo for yet unknown students and beginners. It hosts exhibitions of young and upcoming artists.

Seminars: El Sawy Culture wheel initiates dialogues in different subjects on current and long-lasting topics where Freedom of thought is encouraged.

Awareness Campaign : Every year El Sawy Culture wheel focuses on one main theme. 2009 was chosen to be the 'year of Dignity', in which efforts were directed towards three main points: 1. eliminate the profession of begging 2. Revive manhood and courage 3. Keep cleanliness and professionalism.

Workshops : El Sawy Culture wheel offers a various panel of workshops for teaching Art and Sculpture.

Library : Sawi Culture wheel offers a wide range of books for children and adults in Arabic, English and French. Visitors can pick and read a book and even borrow it to read it at home.

Magazine : After only four years of existence, in 2007 El Sawy Culturewheel launched its quarterly magazine El Sakia el Warakeya - an integrated Culture magazine, written in Standard Arabic, directed towards the youth. El Sakia el Warakeya magazine provides information about all fields of culture and covers news of El Sawy Culture wheel as well as other cultural centers.

Radio: In 2009, El Sawy Culture wheel launched its own online radio

Station "Sound of Sakia": Its mission is to enrich the cultural scene in Egypt by expanding the reach of El Sawy Culture wheel's stage for local artists, workshops and speakers through high quality cultural online programming to be accessible to a broader audience in Egypt and worldwide.

Children: Children are on top of our priorities. Therefore we initiated the program Let me Think – LMT. LMT is a workshop designed to teach children to think, imagine and develop solutions and ideas for specific virtual situations and problems. The aim of the program is to show children how

thinking could be a fun activity, by inciting them to do it informally through mind exercise and games.

Partners: El Sawy Culture wheel involves its friends and volunteers in various projects and missions starting from simple tasks such as controlling gates to advanced missions of holding workshops and seminars.

El Sawy Culture wheel is the creator of The White Circle as a sign for a smoke free environment, which is now used by the WHO (World Health Organization) in 22 countries. According to this principle smoking is not allowed in any section of El Sawy Culture wheel, including the garden.

THE ASSOCIATION OF UPPER EGYPT FOR EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (AUEED)

In 1940, the Jesuit Fathers established the AUEED and requested from frère Henri Ayroust a Prominent Egyptian Sociologist- to manage it and provide services to the Egyptian community.

The main scope of services provided was "Education", until the total number of schools of the AUEED reached 120 -varying between one class schools & full capacity modern schools.

Henri Ayroust was assisted by several wealthy Egyptian families to support the AUEED activities financially as the AUEED provided its free-of-tuition education before the government applied this program on the national level.

The number of the AUEED schools changed through time through merging some schools and closing others, till it reached 40 schools in 1956, after the ministerial law was enacted to assure that every school must have at least 6 classes and a playground.

In 1964, the AUEED administration was shifted to staff other than clergymen, and the scope of services of the AUEED started to widen, while new internal bylaws were set.

In 1967, the Association was registered officially at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The general Assembly members, decided in 1971 to change the name of the Association from "The Catholic Association for Schools in Egypt" to be "*The Christian Association for Schools and Social Promotion*", so as to reflect the field of activities of the Association. The name was changed again in 1990 to be "*The Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development*" (AUEED)

-The Association of Nubian Heritage

This Association concentrates on safeguarding the Nubian Heritage and promoting it to be passed to the coming generations.

The Association of the Sinai Heritage:

This Association collects and documents the cultural heritage of Saint. It publishes pamphlets and participates in exhibitions to promote its heritage and make it accessible to the international communities.

Asalah:

The Asalah's main objective is to safeguard the Egyptian traditional crafts by supporting financially and morally craftsmen and help them by organizing exhibitions and proper publicity to convey the authentic traditional art to the grand public.

4. Main achievements and challenges to implement of the convention. □

Achievements that have been realized with the aim of the protection of the diversity of Culture expressions are numerous and diversified. The activities undertaken by all sectors of the Ministry of Culture and definitely contributes on the process of the protection of diversity of Culture expressions are underlined on the website mentioned in the Annexe 7

(Annexe 7: List of web site of the sectors mentioned above).

The Supreme Council of Culture ; General Organization for Cultural Palaces ; Egyptian General Book Organization ; General Organization for Books and National Archives ; National Cultural Center – Opera ; National Organization for Urban Harmony ; Academy of Arts ; Cultural Development Fund sector; Fine Arts Sector ; National Center for Translation ; Foreign Cultural Relations Sector ; Cultural production sector.

However, the Ministry of culture together with the Ministry of Social Solidarity supported the NGO's concerned with cultural heritage of Egyptian providing craftsmen in joining subsidized local and international exhibition. The Ministry of Culture provided opportunities for the traditional bearers of performing arts to join festivals of performing arts in Egypt and abroad.

After the revolution, civil society actors expected appropriate legislation supported by new laws that would advance their cooperation with the state.

In parallel, other complementary actions by other ministries are conducted to support NGO's in charge of dissemination of Culture. For example, the Ministry of industry collaborated with the Society for Folk Traditions in including the traditional crafts in its program of development.

The Ministry of Information, especially TV sector initiated a special channel fully dedicated for cultural heritage with the aim of attracting the Grand Public. The challenge is to create programs that would appeal to the layman and be part of the state channels, more accessible to the general public.

However, **the main challenge** that actually is facing the Implementation of the convention is the destabilization of the governmental channel for the Culture management.

In fact, during the 25th of January 2011 revolution, the Supreme Council of Antiquities is decided to be a separate portfolio.

This policy threatens clearly the economical balance of the administrative display put place in 1958 and that use to work out in perfect harmony.

In the present time, the Ministry of Culture loses the vital economical pillar which is the antiquities revenue and the Culture development Fund is struggling to keep the track without the 10% that -according to legislation of its creation- should be versed from SCA, ancestor of the ministry of state for antiquities.

Prof. Gihane Zaki

Focal point for Arab Republic of Egypt

Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).