

Conscience of the Nation and the Citizen



Today, we present to you Issue No. 1 of our magazine; and we look forward to making it a platform for all national ideas and opinions. Our magazine will not be a traditional periodical publication; rather it will be a forum for ideas, events, news and all materials relating to the conscience of our Nation and our citizens; and publishing it is not surprising from the Administrative Control Authority.

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Administrative Control Authority ...the Conscience of Nation

The Administrative Control Authority was established in 1964 as one of the gains of the Revolution of 1952 following the development of the Egyptian State's power as well as increase in the number of its entities and bodies represented in ministries, governorates, and corporations as well as the growth of national industrial base and increase in the workforce size. This required the creation of a strong government body for assuming the national role of controlling the performance of the administrative apparatus and its affiliates by handling the "shortcomings in work and production" as well as "protecting public wealth" and consolidating the concept of respect for "the public office reputation and dignity". The Authority witnessed the succession of many generations of officials, who performed their national role through responding to the political and economic conditions, laws and societal changes taking place in the Egyptian Nation.

However, the publication of Issue No. 1 of the magazine by the Research and Studies Center in the Egyptian Anti-Corruption Academy is considered an expression of the distinctive role of the Administrative Control Authority, as a major tributary to the "conscience of our Nation", the title given to Issue No. 1 of our magazine.

Since the Revolution of June 30, 2013, support of the Political Leadership represents the foundation and mainstay of implementing ambitious development plans and fighting corruption. Honestly speaking, we can say that the need for development has coincided with the creation of a factual mechanism for fighting corruption, like two sides of the same coin.

In fact, their unity reinforces the principle of "the rule of law". The sincere will of the Political Leadership and the diligent real capabilities of the anti-corruption agencies have been materialized through formation of the National Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Corruption, chaired by the Prime Minister and the Coordinating National Sub-Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Corruption, chaired by the Minister, Chairman of the Administrative Control Authority. The former is concerned with setting the main policies and goals for combating corruption; and the latter is concerned with setting sub-goals and implementing the actual mechanisms for achieving those policies.

In culmination of these efforts, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2014 -2018 has been implemented, with 84 administrative bodies including ministries, governorates, universities and other

administrative bodies participating in its realization. These bodies have formed different work teams for achieving this purpose, which has been followed by the implementation of the Strategy's second version 2019/2022-, with 104 parties participating in its implementation.

The Authority has also played a major role in supporting the ambitious development plans under mandate of the President of the Republic, through the Authority's participation in following up the development plans and the implementation procedures for the various projects, together with the other specialized agencies charged with both the technical and engineering follow-up. The Authority's role was manifested in following up the administrative contracts implementation procedures, and achievement of the rates of works implementation as per the set schedules. The Authority contributed to pushing forward the projects rates, overcoming some of the faced implementation difficulties as well as preventing any suspicions or corrupt practices impairing the implementation mechanisms, for ensuring the projects' readiness for opening based on their nature and the works volume, cost and significance.

Societal Role ... the Conscience of Nation

Given the fact that the practices and efforts of the Administrative Control Authority represent an essential part of "the conscience of our Nation," the Authority constitutes a single front which unites and integrates with another front, namely the "citizen's conscience", for achieving objective balance in fighting corruption in the most powerful and effective manner.

The State and its agencies exert relentless efforts for setting the necessary policies and goals for eliminating corruption; and the presence of societal support together with the required citizens' culture and desire to implement the mechanisms and achieve results make these efforts fruitful.

If we review the experiences of other countries, which sought to implement leading development plans, we find that they worked on fighting corruption crimes and practices as one of the most essential pillars of development. In fact, they strived to integrate with the people of their societies to realize their ambitious goals through awareness raising and education to combat corruption.

One of the most prominent international examples is the experience of Hong Kong, which turned the proliferation of corrupt practices as a daily life pattern into an international example of integrity and corruption prevention. ⁽¹⁾



Integration of the Two Consciences

For realizing their ambitions, it is essential for all experiences of fighting corruption to work in an integrated manner through utilizing the government's strategy as well as the capabilities and objectives of the main anti-corruption agencies and the citizens' culture. This entails raising the citizens' awareness and familiarizing them with the forms, elements, risks, harms and effects of corruption on the entire society.

As we have previously explained, the will of the Political Leadership gives attention to all issues, because it supports the development or amendment of strict laws for fighting corruption in integration with the appropriate legislative tools; and it facilitates the development of a clear strategy for combating corruption through setting the objectives, mechanisms and executive elements of the strategy's application.

However, the serious problem that hampers all the efforts of combating corruption is represented in the lack of citizens' culture and awareness.

For reviving the citizens' awareness and consolidating their culture, many factors must work in an integrated manner. These include maximizing the role of the State's educational and cultural institutions, such as ministries, bodies and all specialized agencies, being the main sponsors of awareness raising. There are also the non-governmental organizations, which are more widespread and closer to the citizens based on a balanced geographical distribution as well as the citizen's real culture and desire to eradicate corruption and its consequences.

The role of these elements is not limited to raising awareness

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Anti-Corruption Academy Building

of the corrupt actions, which constitute public money crimes and impair the reputation and dignity of the public office stipulated in the Penal Code, supplementary laws and related amendments. Rather, their scope extends to include (corrupt practices) referring to "The daily actions of citizens as well as public officials, especially those who provide public services, who are usually characterized by slackening, slowness and neglect." We can differentiate between corrupt actions and corrupt practices by identifying the first exclusively and setting the punishment corresponding with the circumstances of its commission and its effects; while the second cannot be identified exclusively. Such behaviors may not require punitive criminal or administrative accountability, although they reinforce the culture of corruption and affect the citizens' awareness greatly as well as lead to coexistence with corruption and accepting it within the society as a de facto matter.

Thus, they establish the spread of the corruption culture without deterrence or control.

The ways of fighting those practices include raising awareness, disseminating the culture of fighting corruption, highlighting the national identity as well as assembling around a single national goal related to maintaining our Nation's dignified position and the interests of our society within an integrated reform development project.

Promising Hope and Due Greatfulness

After I had almost finished the first article of Issue no. 1 of this cultural magazine issued by the Egyptian Anti-Corruption Academy, represented by the Research and Studies Center, given the fact that the Academy is the training and educational body of the Administrative Control Authority, I was overcome by the feelings of pride, hope and due Greatfulness.

The pride is represented in affiliation of the Authority's members and employees to this towering, well-established organization.

The promising hope lies in exerting serious efforts to eliminate corrupt practices and spread awareness and culture for combating corruption in society.

Greatfulness is due to the officials who support the educational and promotional policy of the Academy and its societal role, led by the Minister, Chairman of the Administrative Control Authority; Vice-Chairman of the Authority and the Academy's Board of Directors. Our hope has been realized and our dream has become a tangible reality, which we can hold with our hands and see with our eyes. Thank you to all of them.

In conclusion, we, the family of the Anti-Corruption Academy, pledge to maintain the publication of our periodical, which will serve as a national cultural beacon since its first issue, through publishing anti-corruption articles, studies and research work, deriving inspiration and support from our wise Political Leadership and its comprehensive development vision.

(1) A dialogue session at Aman Transparency Foundation in the State of Palestine, "Daniel Lee", International Expert who held the office of Deputy Commissioner and Head of Operations at the Independent Commission Against Corruption in Hong Kong - December 13, 2017.