

MEDIA

SUSTAINABILITY INDEX—

MIDDLE EAST AND

NORTH AFRICA



MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX 2005

The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in the Middle East and North Africa

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USAID

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is an independent agency that provides economic, development, and humanitarian assistance around the world in support of the foreign-policy goals of the United States. The agency works to support long-term and sustainable economic growth and advances US foreign-policy objectives by supporting economic growth, agriculture, and trade; global health; and democracy, conflict prevention, and humanitarian assistance.

USAID provides assistance in four regions of the world: Sub-Saharan Africa; Asia and the Near East; Latin America and the Caribbean; and Europe and Eurasia.

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MEPI

The United States Department of State's Middle East Partnership Initiative provides tangible support to reformers in the Middle East and North Africa so democracy can spread, education can thrive, economies can grow, and women can be empowered. In four years, this presidential initiative has devoted \$293 million to more than 350 programs in 15 countries and the Palestinian territories to support the aspirations of those working to build a more peaceful and prosperous Middle East. Examples of the initiative's work includes campaign schools, independent media training, civic education, entrepreneurship skill building, youth leadership development, trade transparency promotion, business hubs for women, and judicial and legal reform training.

UNESCO

UNESCO, the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, maintains a Communication and Information (CI) sector that is guided by the principles of freedom of expression and freedom of the press as basic human rights. Since 2003, the CI sector has supported the Iraqi people in their transition to democracy. Among other projects, UNESCO facilitated initiatives to develop a national media policy and provided practical guidance for journalists and civil society prior to the elections. Training and networking opportunities were made available to more than 550 media workers and professionals.

IREX

IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development.

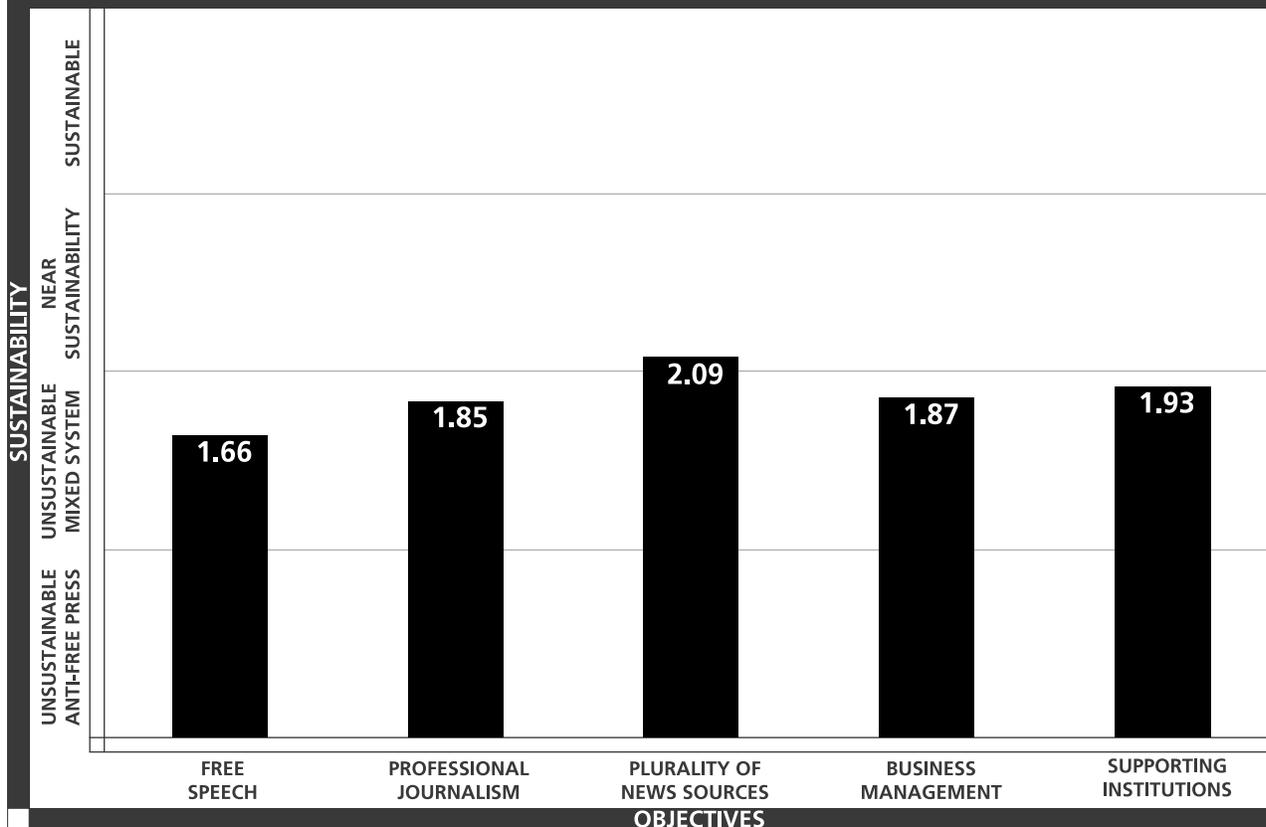
Founded in 1968, IREX has an annual portfolio of \$50 million and a staff of over 500 professionals worldwide. IREX and its partner IREX Europe deliver cross-cutting programs and consulting expertise in more than 50 countries.

Egypt has one of the more developed media sectors in the Middle East and North Africa region, and its cultural influence has reached many Arab countries. It is also one of the more tightly controlled, despite the emergence of a handful of privately owned broadcasters and newspapers. The government is under increasing pressure domestically from opposition political forces and to a degree internationally from the United States and other governments to loosen restrictions on freedom of expression and the media. The presidential and parliamentary elections held during 2005 provided focal points around which a new popular movement called “Kifaya” (“Enough”) could mobilize increasing support for reform not only from among opposition groupings but also professional associations and students.

For the first time in Egyptian history, the presidential election held in September 2005 was contested by several candidates. Hosni Mubarak won a fifth consecutive six-year term with 88.6 percent of the votes. Opposition candidate Ayman Nour of the Al-Ghad party received 7.6 percent, and Numan Gumaa of the Wafd party received 2.9 percent. Parliamentary elections in November and December resulted in the ruling party holding its majority with 324 seats, 73 percent of elected members, but the Muslim Brotherhood won 88 seats, or 20 percent. The remaining seats went to other opposition-party and independent candidates.

Human-rights groups monitoring news coverage of the elections reported a bias in the state media toward President Mubarak and candidates of the ruling party, while the few independent media outlets were complimented for their balanced coverage. Many irregularities that occurred during the voting were noted by the 2005 Media Sustainability Index (MSI) panel for Egypt, but the members agreed that the most important outcome was the confidence the public and the media gained in their right to exercise freedom of expression. The panelists said many political taboos fell, and journalists, human-rights advocates, and opposition groups have turned to challenging the restrictions imposed by the state of emergency imposed continuously since 1981 as well as the legal potential to imprison journalists, which President Mubarak promised in 2004 to see eliminated.

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: EGYPT



Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0-1): Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives. Government and laws actively hinder free media development, professionalism is low, and media-industry activity is minimal.

Unsustainable Mixed System (1-2): Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system. Evident progress in free-press advocacy, increased professionalism, and new media businesses may be too recent to judge sustainability.

Near Sustainability (2-3): Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism, and the business environment supportive of independent media. Advances have survived changes in government and have been codified in law and practice. However, more time may be needed to ensure that change is enduring and that increased professionalism and the media business environment are sustainable.

Sustainable (3-4): Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives. Systems supporting independent media have survived multiple governments, economic fluctuations, and changes in public opinion or social conventions.

Overall, the MSI panel assessed Egypt's media sector as 1.88. It considered the legal protections for press freedom to be the weakest area, with the multiple available news and information sources the strongest relatively.

OBJECTIVE 1: FREE SPEECH

Egypt Objective Score: 1.66 / 4.00

Article 47 of the Egyptian Constitution provides: "Freedom of expression is guaranteed. Every individual has the right to express his opinion and to publicize it verbally or in writing or by photography or other means within the limits of the law. Self-criticism and constructive criticism guarantee the safety of the national structure." Article 48 of the Constitution states further: "Freedom of the press, printing, publication and mass media shall be guaranteed. Censorship on newspapers is forbidden, as is notifying, suspending or cancelling them by administrative means." However, this article also reads: "In a state of emergency or during a time of war limited censorship may be imposed on newspapers, publications and mass media in matters related to public safety or natural security in accordance with the law."

The Constitution also contains a chapter on the press (Chapter Seven, Part Two) that provides in its Article 208: "The freedom of the press is guaranteed and press censorship is forbidden. It is also forbidden to threaten, confiscate or cancel a newspaper through administrative measures, as stipulated in the Constitution and defined by the law." The Constitution adds in Article 210: "Journalists have the right to obtain news and information according to the regulations set by law. Their activities are not subject to any authority other than the law."

However, according to MSI panelist Negad El Borai, a media law specialist, "These constitutional rights have lost their protective force because of an array of laws and regulations which infringe on freedom of expression and the journalists rights to access information."

Indeed, the Emergency Law in force since 1981, the 1996 Press Law, the Penal Law, the 1971 Law on the Protection of National Unity, the 1977 Law on the Security of the Nation and the Citizen, the Publications Law, and the Parties Law have been used extensively to limit the rights to publish, according to MSI panelists. These statues also have served to protect the government against media scrutiny as well as prosecute journalists who overstep unwritten red lines that govern what can be reported on, they said.

The Emergency Law 158 of 1958 contains provisions that

give broad, almost absolute, powers to the President "to order censorship on correspondence of all kinds, as well as on newspapers, publications, drawings and all means of expression and advertising before they are published; order their confiscation or suspension or shut down printing houses provided that the censorship is applied to matters related to public peace or national security."

The Emergency Law allows also the Ministry of Defense to ban publications it deems to involve sensitive security issues, and gives the Public Prosecutor authority to issue a temporary ban on the publication of news pertaining to cases involving national security. It allows the Council of Ministers to ban publications that seem to be offensive to public morals, detrimental to religion, or likely to cause a breach of peace. The law gives the Ministry of the Interior the authority to prevent specific issues of foreign newspapers from entering the country if necessary to protect public order. Finally, the law allows authorities to prosecute alleged violations and obtain criminal penalties in state security courts and military-style tribunals where defendants have limited rights to appeal.

Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information.

FREE-SPEECH INDICATORS:

- > Legal/social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
- > Licensing of broadcast media is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
- > Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
- > Crimes against journalists or media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
- > State or public media do not receive preferential legal treatment, and law guarantees editorial independence.
- > Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and the offended party must prove falsity and malice.
- > Public information is easily accessible; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Media outlets have unrestricted access to information; this is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Entry into the journalism profession is free, and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

The election period and the mobilization of various civil-society organizations, especially those in the Kifaya movement, raised awareness of free-speech issues during 2005, especially in cities and among professionals and students, MSI panelists said. Violations of press freedoms caused a degree of outrage among journalists, lawyers, students, and others staging street protests and letter-writing campaigns.

The Press Law 96 of 1996 prohibits censorship in Article 3, but in Article 4 allows it during states of emergency in cases involving national security or public order. The law also prohibits administrative bans or seizure of publications in Article 5, and forbids harming journalists because of opinions they present or truthful information they

publish or forcing them to reveal their sources unless required by the courts within the law—as in cases touching on national security (Article 7).

The Press Law does contain several provisions allowing for imprisonment of journalists for various offenses, including defamation, insult, and false information. Under Article 185, insulting a public official in relation to the conduct of the official's duty or service can be punished with a maximum of one-year imprisonment. Article 303 stipulates imprisonment of up to two years for defamation of a public official in relation to the conduct of the official's duty or service. Article 307 states that sentences should be doubled in cases where insult or defamation occur in printed material.

Act 20 of 1936 concerning publications provides that foreign publications may be banned from entering or being distributed in the country under the terms of a decree issued by the Council of Ministers for the purpose of maintaining public order. The Act also provides that publications published in Egypt that contain material considered of pornographic nature or to ridicule religions in such a way as to jeopardize public security may be banned.

Although Egypt has signed and ratified many international conventions and treaties, including the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, it has not incorporated them in the legislative systems and the courts reference national legislation in freedom of

expression trials, said Negad El Borai. He cited the continuing of the Emergency Law as an example of international human-rights standards not being applied.

The election period and the mobilization of various civil-society organizations, especially those in the Kifaya movement, raised awareness of free-speech issues during 2005, especially in cities and among professionals and students, MSI panelists said. Violations of press freedoms caused a degree of outrage among journalists, lawyers, students, and others staging street protests and letter-writing campaigns. However, many citizens still do not recognize individual rights as fundamental, and, Negad El Borai said, Egyptian society in general "does not yet accept the value of freedom of expression."

In 2005, human-rights groups recorded 34 cases of journalists who were sentenced to imprisonment or fines, 28 cases of journalists who appeared before a judge, and 21 cases of journalists investigated by the public prosecutors. The majority of these cases concerned defamation of public officials and insult of private individuals.

On April 13, 2005, Cairo Criminal Court sentenced journalists Abdel Nasser Ali, Youssef el-Aoumi, and Alaa Yaha Mohamed el-Ghatrify from *El-Masry El-Youm* newspaper to one year of imprisonment and a \$1,750 fine for libeling Housing Minister Mohamed Ibrahim Soliman in a report in August 2004 stating that the police had searched the offices of the minister. On May 13, 2005, security forces arrested nine members of an Al Jazeera TV news crew and detained them in a state security office for seven hours after the journalists attempted to cover a general meeting of the Cairo Judges' Club. On November 9, 2005, Al Jazeera correspondent Ahmed Mansour was assaulted and beaten by two unidentified men as he prepared to interview an opposition politician.

Another notable case in June 2005 involved female demonstrators and reporters—some of them foreign—who were attacked by supporters of the ruling National Democratic Party at the entrance of the Egyptian Press Syndicate. Female journalists had their clothes torn and were groped. Complaints about the assault were lodged with the police, and the Public Prosecutor was called on to investigate. However, the case was frozen when the prosecutor said there was not enough evidence, an assessment disputed by witnesses who said there were photographs and video footage that captured the attacks.

No advance was made during 2005 on President Mubarak's declared intention to draft a new press law that would eliminate prison sentences for journalists.

The announcement, made in 2004, had been greeted with optimism by the Egyptian Press Syndicate, which had fought to establish the right to express opinions concerning the efficacy of government officials without fear of imprisonment. The Press Syndicate prepared a draft amendment endorsed by the governmental Egyptian Human Rights Council. (In July 2006, Parliament passed a controversial revision of the press law that did eliminate prison sentences in some cases, including libel, but retained them in others and was criticized by press-freedom advocates.)

All licensed private broadcasters in Egypt are based in the Media Free Zone in 6th of October City, a district being built on desert at the edge of Cairo, and operate under a February 2000 decree that was issued by the Information Ministry to regulate the licensing and operations of private televisions and radios. The General Authority for Free Zones is the body responsible for issuing licenses. However, the decree did not cancel the Law 13 of 1979, modified by Law 223 of 1989, which gives the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) a monopoly over terrestrial broadcasting. Four private satellite televisions received licenses in 2001: Dream 1 and Dream 2, owned 90 percent by Egyptian businessman Ahmed Bahgat and 10 percent by the ERTU; Al-Mehwar TV, a joint stock company owned by Egyptian businessmen and headed by Hassan Rateb, an investor in Sinai Cement, with a 10 percent stake held by the government; a shopping station, Tamima; and a tourism promotion station that has gone off the air since. In 2003, licenses were given to two music radio stations, Nile FM in English and Nogoom FM in Arabic, owned by media mogul Emad Adib's Nile Radio Productions. The MSI panel agreed that the licensing system is not fully fair, as it is controlled by the state and not by an independent commission, and also that it is opaque, as the conditions of operation for these broadcasters are not known to the public.

The regulations governing licensing of broadcasting in the Media Free Zone exclude "channels of a religious, factional, and partisan nature or involving sex or violence" and set the capital for private projects to not less than \$3.47 million. Aghapy (Love) TV, the first minority broadcaster, belongs to the Coptic Christian Church. It broadcasts in Arabic using the US satellite Telstar 12 and was founded in 2005 by the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria. Aghapy did not receive a license from the Egyptian authorities because of its religious character. However, it has managed to produce its programs from different convents and private locations and hand them over to Telstar 12 for broadcast.

MSI panelist Sayyed Ali, assistant editor at the state *Al-Ahram* newspaper and a teacher at the Faculty of Mass

Communication at Cairo University, said "there are 312 demands for authorization to establish FM radios that have not been satisfied or are waiting answers from the government. But it is the president who intervenes directly on this question."

Among those who were denied license for FM radios are the Al Ghad party, which launched its own online radio station in June 2005, and the Muslim Brotherhood, which started its online radio in October 2005. Several other private online radios were also begun during the year, and the government's permissive stance toward the Internet has allowed these stations to be established outside the current legal constraints on the media, which do not cover the Internet, the MSI panelists said. The low cost of setting up and running Internet radio also encouraged their development. Although the audience is restricted by the low rate of Internet penetration in Egypt—estimated at fewer than 3 million users, or around 4 percent of the population—the relatively low cost of Internet access has made these stations increasingly available to a fast-growing number of young, urban, middle-class Egyptians.

State broadcasting is run by the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU), a government body that is controlled by the Minister of Information and managed by a board whose chair is appointed by the President. The ERTU board members are selected by the Minister of Information and drawn from various state institutions. The Council of Ministers also appoints some members who are not civil servants but generally lawyers, artists, judges, or politicians. However, these "public figures" must remain in a minority and, the MSI panel said, generally are supportive of government policy.

The Supreme Press Council, which supervises the government-owned print media, including *Al-Ahram* and *Al-Akhbar*, is chaired by the Shura Council speaker and includes as members the chairmen and editors-in-chief of Egyptian media outlets, the head of the Egyptian Press Syndicate, mass communications and law professors, and other public figures.

The licensing system for newspapers is controversial. Negad El Borai said, "You have to be a political party approved by the Shura Council, which is dominated by the ruling party, or to set up a company with huge capital and apply to the Supreme Press Council, whose members are also linked to the regime." For this reason, said panelist Tarek Abdel Jabar, manager of the online radio station Egypt Today, "most of the private publications are licensed abroad and must get two authorizations from the Ministry of Information, one to print in the free zone and one to distribute in Cairo,

but before distribution these publications must submit to the censor.”

According to Article 13 of the Press Law, “freedom for political parties and public and private corporate bodies to issue newspapers” is guaranteed by law. However, under Law 96 of 1996, individuals are denied the right to own or publish newspapers. Only corporate entities may do so, subject to a licensing system. This, in turn, requires aspiring publishing companies to furnish proof that they have deposited the sum of \$43,000 or \$173,000, depending on whether the paper is to be weekly or daily, in an Egyptian bank, along with full details of the planned editorial policy and administrative framework. Those individuals who are denied licenses or cannot afford the deposit may start their publications abroad, perhaps in Lebanon or Britain, and register in Egypt as foreign publications. “While the state can launch new publications and broadcast stations without any restrictions and at any moment it wants, private investors in media enterprises are subjected to tough financial conditions or are simply denied the right to operate,” said Hussam Al Sayed, deputy editor-in-chief of the Islam Online news website.

The law does not favor state-owned media outright. But in practice, the panel agreed, state-owned media benefit from getting public resources for needed investment in new equipment. Panelists said editors and managers of the state media are appointed by the government and are considered to be under the direct influence of the government and the ruling party. They also said that major businesses interfere in the coverage of their activities by the state media.

There is no specific law that guarantees access to state-held information. However, the Press Law guarantees the right of journalists to obtain only allowed news, statistics, and information and to publish them according to the law. It also prohibits imposition of restrictions on the flow of information or on the equal access to information of newspapers in ways that would infringe on the rights of citizens to such information. Restrictions on the free flow of information can only be justified, according to Article 9 of Law 96 of 1996, for the protection of national security and defense of the nation and its higher interests. According to Article 10, journalists have the right to receive responses to requests for information unless the information is classified as secret. These provisions, the panel agreed, have no effect in practice. They mentioned several other statutes that prohibit disclosure of information, such as the state security law and the police law. Several panelists recalled that attempts by a group of journalists and lawyers to campaign for adoption of a

law that protects official documents and reorganizes the state archives failed quickly.

Butaina Kamel, a presenter at Egyptian television, said that “journalists rely on their personal contacts within the informal networks of the government administration to get information. However, journalists working in the state media sector have better access than their colleagues in the private or partisan media.” Tarek Abdel Jabar added, “The three state-owned dailies and the national news agency are the first to be served with news by officials, and journalists of the independent media often complain about the lack of information to the Supreme Press Council but they don’t get any response.”

The government does not restrict access to international news and news sources. However, “the use of the information gathered from online media and news agencies varies depending on the degree of self-censorship practiced, especially at state media,” said Hussam Al Sayed. He noted that due to the lack of responsiveness by Egyptian officials to media inquiries, Internet-based media have become a major source of information for other journalists, especially when Egypt is confronted with a major crisis, such as a boat sinking or a terrorist act or when world leaders meet in Egypt.

Egyptian journalists require special authorization from the Ministry of Information to cover directly some events such as terrorist acts and activities of the president and his ministers. Foreign journalists must apply for a permanent accreditation to work in Egypt or a temporary license. Visiting reporters need to apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, specifying the subject to be covered, and various documents must be submitted. Most visiting journalists do not apply for an authorization unless they have to interview officials or cover major official events.

The government does not control entrance to journalism schools, and the process of hiring entry-level journalists is also free from state interference. The possession of a press card is not a requirement to work, but it is necessary to join the Press Syndicate, which provides benefits including social security, medical insurance, and pension schemes, as well as monthly financial support of \$45. Traditionally, said Tarek Abdel Jabar, “accreditation is routine for journalism graduates, who normally spend one year as a trainee—or two, in the case of those with no academic journalism qualifications—and then editors register then with the Press Syndicate. But in recent years, many media outlets have refused to register their employees in the Syndicate so their period as trainees can be prolonged, and in some cases it has reached 10 years.”

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Egypt Objective Score: 1.85 / 4.00

The MSI panel agreed that the majority of Egyptian journalists rarely check facts or seek out multiple points of view, and often perceive one source of information to be enough. This practice is endemic at the state-owned media, which give prominence to government sources of information, and at political party media, which report from their own partisan sources, said Hamdy Hassan, head of the Al-Ahram Training Institute. The private press, however, "has improved reporting on diverse political views and opened pages to civil-society groups," according to Negad El Borai.

The Journalists Code of Ethics, approved by the Supreme Press Council and adopted by the Egyptian Press Syndicate in 1998, contains references to general universal standards on freedom of expression, such as Article 19 of the 1948 UN Declaration on Human Rights. The code also lists obligations for journalists, such as to not promote racism, distort facts, accept gifts, or plagiarize. The Press Law mentions ethics, with Article 20 prohibiting incitement to religious hatred and racism and Article 21 barring violations of individuals' private lives, including of those holding public posts, unless the subject is in relation to their work and is in the public interest. Journalists who contravene these two articles can be sentenced to a maximum of one-year imprisonment and a fine of between \$870 and \$1,750. However, according to the MSI panel members, the code of ethics is rarely upheld. They pointed in particular to corruption among journalists working for the so-called yellow weeklies registered abroad and for publications of certain fringe political parties.

The Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) has its own ethics code. It prohibits criticism of the national system, national heroism, nationalism, officers of the military, the security services and the courts, as well as religious leaders and state officials. The code also prohibits the broadcast of any confidential information and any scientific, technical, professional, or religious advice or commentary unless it has been reviewed by the editors. Criticism of other programs broadcast within the ERTU also is prohibited by the code of ethics. Most panelists characterized these prohibitions as contrary to international standards and representing, in effect, a penal law.

Managers of the state-owned media practice self-censorship, especially regarding news critical to the regime, while private and partisan media are increasingly publishing critical assessments of the

President, his family, and the government, said Hamdy Hassan.

The panel agreed that the period of the presidential and legislative elections in 2005, combined with international pressure, has allowed the private and partisan press to break many political taboos. However, self-censorship, the panel said, is still broadly applicable to internal security issues due to laws prohibiting the publication of any unauthorized information related to anti-terrorism efforts, radical Islamist groups, or Egyptian relations with Israel, except when the Israeli government is criticized.

The panel agreed that state and private broadcast media give more time to entertainment than news. "Music, serialization of films, games, etc. are made to attract advertisers, and for the hard news, people

The panel agreed that state and private broadcast media give more time to entertainment than news. "Music, serialization of films, games, etc. are made to attract advertisers, and for the hard news, people usually watch Al Jazeera or Al Arabiya satellite channels," said Negad El Borai.

Journalism meets professional standards of quality.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM INDICATORS:

- > Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced.
- > Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards.
- > Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship.
- > Journalists cover key events and issues.
- > Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption.
- > Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming.
- > Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient.
- > Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

usually watch Al Jazeera or Al Arabiya satellite channels,” said Negad El Borai. The panel agreed that there are still subjects that need to be dealt with by probing, ongoing reporting, such as social problems, economic issues, the environment, and relations between the Muslim and Coptic communities, but that tackling these issues requires both training and courage on the part of the journalists’ community.

Journalists’ salaries are low and below the scale of other private-sector professionals. According to panelists, salaries at the state newspaper company *Al-Ahram* are the highest, with a new journalist receiving \$80 to \$90 a month. Some private media also pay relatively higher salaries, such as *Al Misr Al-Youm* and *Nahdath Misr*, which start journalists at up to \$120 a month. “But they tend to use many freelancers who work also with the state press and who are paid an average of \$30 per article,” said Ashraf Shehab, a journalist with *Al-Ahali* newspaper. Salaries for broadcast journalists are the lowest, as they are indexed on the public-service scale, he added. “A new journalist at state radio or television may start at \$35 per month. However, top editors and media managers are much more highly paid, although it is not possible to know the full salary, bonus, and other benefits those at the major state publications earn. At *Al-Ahram*, said Hamdy Hassan, the editor-in-chief receives a percentage of the advertising revenue, according to internal rules.

Low salaries contribute to corruption across the media, Ashraf Shehab said, but those receiving higher salaries are not exempted. Panelists discussed the case of Ibrahim Nafei, a former chairman of *Al-Ahram*, ex-secretary general of the Press Syndicate, and confidant of President Mubarak, who has been publicly accused of profiting from the newspaper group’s budget and public funds. The allegations, which are the subject of a Shura Council proceeding, include millions in profits from buying agricultural land, awarding contracts to family firms without competitive bidding, and selling of newspaper assets, according to reports in *Al Ahram Weekly*. Nafei, who was replaced at the newspaper in July 2005, has said he is the victim of a smear campaign that also seeks to tarnish the state media.

The MSI panel also discussed corruption linked to private businesses that seek to buy positive news coverage of their products in some private or partisan press. “Many journalists have become advertising agents to make ends meet,” said Ashraf Shehab. He explained that “the general practice is that journalists, instead of receiving money or gifts from companies, get an ad, which they place in their newspapers for a commission or in other small papers where the

commission is higher—sometimes up to 50 percent of the value of the ad.”

Many of the partisan media use obsolete equipment, panelists said, but technical facilities and equipment at the state-owned and private press are relatively modern. However, they said, lack of training for journalists and technical staff leaves them unable to maximize the use of technology.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES

Egypt Objective Score: 2.09 / 4.00

The Egyptian public can receive news and information from state radio and television and private satellite broadcasters and from newspapers locally produced and imported. The MSI panel considered the Egyptian media sector to be closest to sustainability in the multiple news sources available, giving this objective a score of 2.09.

The state owns and manages two national television stations, Channel 1 and Channel 2, and six regional channels, each of which covers a group of governorates. It also has two satellite television channels, the Egyptian Satellite Channel and Nile TV and its 12 thematic channels, which broadcast through the Egyptian satellite NileSat. The massive state system—ERTU employs about 37,000 people—also includes six major state radio networks. The general network includes four stations, one for general programming, one religious, one emphasizing sports and youth, and one for the Middle East. The Voice of the Arab network includes Voice of the Arab, Palestine, and Nile radios. A regional network includes 10 local stations located in different governorates and a culture network that includes European, Cultural, and Music radio stations. An external radio network has 48 programs in 35 languages directed at Africa, the Americas, Europe, Asia/Middle East, and Israel.

According to Hamdy Hassan, the state television channels have lost appeal and audience to Arab satellite competitors, including Al Jazeera, MBC, Al Arabiya, and LBC, which offer more diverse news and information programming and more attractive entertainment shows. He added that the state broadcasters in the governorates also have lost audience, and their news programs offer mainly a repetition of the national news.

Egypt also has several private satellite televisions, including Dream 1 and Dream 2, in which ERTU has a 10 percent stake. The tax on advertisements has been reduced from 36 to 15 percent. The official press

has been embroiled in a big scandal since it came to light that for years it didn't pass on the tax to the tax authorities but kept it as additional income. BTW, the Press Syndicate, gets a percentage of advertising income from newspapers, providing for one-third of its budget share, and Al-Mihwar TV, in which the government has a 10 percent stake. Its public-affairs broadcasting is mainly in the talk-show format, alongside entertainment shows and films. Two private music channels, Nile FM in English and Nogoom in Arabic, transmit to greater Cairo but offer no news coverage. Aghapy TV, belonging to Egypt's Coptic Christian Church, is the first minority broadcaster. Located in Cairo, it was founded in 2005 and broadcasts through the US satellite Telstar 12 because it is not allowed to use state monopoly transmitters.

The print media sector is composed of state-owned, partisan, and private newspapers. The state owns three media corporations. The first is Al-Ahram, which publishes the daily *Al-Ahram* and edits 12 other publications, including the English-language *Al-Ahram Weekly*, the French-language *Al-Ahram Hebdo*, *Al-Massa'*, and *Al-Shabab*. The foundation also owns a printing press, a distribution network, a marketing and advertising company, a press service agency, the Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, a journalism training

center, and other enterprises. A second state media organization is Dar al-Tahrir for Publication and Printing, which owns three daily newspapers, *Al-Gomhouriya* in Arabic, the *Egyptian Gazette* in English, and *Progres Egyptian* in French. Dar al-Tahrir also owns seven weeklies and two monthlies as well as four supplements that cover sports, religion, and music. The third state media entity is the Akhbar al-Youm Foundation, which owns the daily *Al-Akhbar*, the weeklies *Akhbar Al-Youm*, *Akhbar al-Hawadeth*, *Akhbar Al-Adab*, and *Akhbar Al-Riyada*, and several others thematic publications. The foundation runs a media training center and a public-opinion-poll institute.

The print media are largely a Cairo phenomenon, said Hamdy Hassan. "People living in other cities have a relative low access to state press due to their own distribution network, and because of the widespread use of dishes, satellite television, including state broadcasts, is becoming more and more accessible," he said.

State media support, in one way or another, policy of the government through the government-appointed editors-in-chief, the MSI panelists said. However, the panel agreed that the broadcast media are, in some cases, open to social issues. The panel mentioned examples of programs, such as "Al-Thel Al-Ahmar" (the Red Shadow) of the second national television channel, "Qadiyya wa Mafihha" (What Is in the Issue?), and "Fi al-Umq" (Indepth), that they believe tackle issues such as those concerning youth, women's rights, and corruption from an analytical point of view with guests from the opposition or government representatives. However, the panelists said other critical issues, such as the situation of the Coptic Christian minority, are still marginalized or treated from the state's propaganda point of view.

The print media are largely a Cairo phenomenon, said Hamdy Hassan. "People living in other cities have a relative low access to state press due to their own distribution network, and because of the widespread use of dishes, satellite television, including state broadcasts, is becoming more and more accessible," he said. Ashraf Shehab added, "With the exception of glossy magazines, the press is affordable for the majority of the population, but for unknown reasons, people tend to watch televisions rather than purchase newspapers." Hamdy Hassan agreed that the Egyptian public now has "a variety of sources of information,

Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable and objective news.

PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES INDICATORS:

- > A plurality of affordable public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet) exists.
- > Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted.
- > State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
- > Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media.
- > Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs.
- > Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
- > A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

satellite televisions and radios, the Internet, and publications representing all kind of political backgrounds and ownership, but major factors still hamper the democratic access to media, such as low incomes—people cannot buy newspapers everyday—and the concentration of media in Cairo.”

The state-owned Middle East News Agency (MENA) is the sole national agency that operates in Egypt, and is considered the largest news agency in Africa and the Arab world. Launched in 1955 as a private company owned by a consortium of private newspapers, it was nationalized in 1960 by the government of Jamal Abdel Nasser. The agency has 400 working journalists in its Cairo headquarters and offices in the governorates and abroad. The agency produces 16 news bulletins and other publications in Arabic, English, and French and reaches clients through the Internet, e-mail, text messages, and desktop services for news, reports, and photos.

Political parties in Egypt also own newspapers. The most noticeable are the daily *Al-Wafd* of the Al-Wafd (Liberal) party, and the *Al-Shaab* daily, which is currently banned but continues to be published online by the Labour Party, which has an Islamist tendency. The *Al-Ahaly* daily is published by the Tagammu Party, the *Al-Arabi* weekly is published by the Nasserist Arab Socialist Party, and the *Al-Gad* weekly represents the newly established Al-Gad party. *Al-Karama* is owned by the party of the same name but awaits official recognition. “The role of the partisan press has diminished drastically,” said Hamdy Hassan, “essentially because of the weakness of the officially sanctioned political parties and also because of the poor economic state of the newspapers. They rarely receive advertising, and their quality is rejected by the public.”

There are also several private newspapers, including the dailies *Al Misri Al-Youm*, *Nahdat Misr*, the *Daily Star Egypt* in English, *Al-Fagr*, and *Ad-Dustour*. The only minority publication is the privately weekly newspaper *Watani*, which caters to the Coptic community. There are also multiple publications registered abroad owned by Egyptians who were denied license and mainly printed in the Media Free Zone. The Internet also has facilitated the launching of several news websites, blogs, and online radio stations.

The private press “has grown rapidly in number and impact,” said Hamdy Hassan. “They can be divided in three categories: the nationalist press represented by the weekly *Al-Ousboa* that confronts the government on all issues, the popular commercial publications such as *Al-Fagr*, *ad-Dustour*, and *Sawt al-Oumah*, and those that promote a liberal approach, such as *Al Misri Al-Youm* and *Nahdat Misr*.” He added that “this private print media

has introduced the public to issues that were impossible to discuss in the past, such as whether President Mubarak’s son should inherit the presidency, corruption in various forms, the religious institutions in the country, and many other social and cultural issues.” The panel agreed that the private press has also indirectly opened up the government press, which started to engage critically in its approach of sensitive subjects.

Private broadcasters are not allowed to produce their own newscasts, but they circumvent this limitation to a degree by offering talk shows in which they address subjects in the news and sometimes controversial political and social issues. The discussion includes guests belonging to varied political and ideological positions as well as the participation of the public by phone, Internet, or text messaging. These programs are better than the state newscasts because they allow time for the news to be understood from different points of views, said Tarek Abdel Jabar. The government has interfered in the past by criticizing some talk shows, produced by the private broadcasters for the choice of guests or subjects, said Butaina Kamel. However, because the stations’ owners are close to the regime, they balance between respecting the red lines and trying to attract viewers for their advertisers through interesting new styles of broadcasting, she added.

In general, information on media ownership in Egypt is not a major criterion for news consumers, panelists said. However, the ownership of media outlets is generally understood for the media registered in Egypt, either with the ERTU or the Supreme Press Council. There is less transparency for the privately owned newspapers that acquired their licenses from abroad and those that have bought or rented a license from a political party. Political parties, said Negad El Borai, used to have the right to get licenses for any number of publications they wanted to issue, and some started to rent or sell these licenses to individuals not known to the public. This was despite Article 49 of the Press Law, which prohibits these practices, and the punishment is fines or revocation of the license. In July 2005, an amendment to the political parties’ law limited to two the number of newspaper licenses a party could have and specified that these newspapers must reflect primarily the party’s ideology, policies, and activities. Negad El Borai also said it is believed these new restrictions were imposed to prevent selling or renting licenses to outlawed organizations, such as the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Press Law requires that the names of the owners of publications be provided and that no one partner can have more than 10 percent of the capital so that

monopolies are discouraged and the state print empire is not challenged. But Negad El Borai said that in practice this provision is not respected and that many individual media owners exceed this limitation.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Egypt Objective Score: 1.87 / 4.00

The MSI panel ranked the state outlets as the least effective in business management in the Egyptian media sector. The managers of the state newspapers and broadcasting outlets are for the most part more concerned with satisfying the political aspirations of the regime than developing profitable businesses, said Hamdy Hassan. The state media system developed during the socialist period still constitutes a huge burden on Egypt economy, he added, and all the state press companies have huge debts because their managers did not see their role in the growing private market. The state media economy is so huge that there may be no other government today owning as many publications and broadcasters, he said. And the sheer number of outlets, each with their own management structures and sizable staffs, has served to disperse what resources and business skills exist.

The state broadcaster ERTU has debts from banks and the state estimated at \$435 million and the massive salary burden represented by 37,000 staff, the MSI panelists said. The other state press companies are in similar situations. "Some observers have concluded that Egypt must privatize publications that are losing money and encourage the rest to introduce modern management policy in line with the international practices," Hamdy Hassan said.

Private media, especially the satellite television channels, also are losing money despite being staffed by professional managers, panelists said. They suggested this was because of limited resources developed from advertising.

Newspaper printing houses and distribution networks are owned by the state through the media companies. Most have introduced more modern technologies for printing. Due to the limited private newspaper market, their revenues are generated from other printing activities, including books and brochures, with the budget of the state covering salaries and other operational costs. Distribution networks also are managed by the state newspapers, with the most important one belonging to Al-Ahram. There are some private printing houses operated by political parties or individual businesses, but turnover is limited because most of the work is monopolized by the state presses.

The state-owned publications operate a variety of activities from which they receive revenue. For example, Al-Ahram owns, in addition to its press and distribution companies, an advertising agency and research and training centers. It also holds shares in several companies and banks in Egypt and overseas. The ERTU network gets its revenues from advertising and also from the sale of programming to other Arab countries. It also produces, through its Voice of Cairo, documentaries for special events. In 2003, the network sold its programs to 48 Arab and foreign television stations and to 12 Arab radio stations, collecting revenue of about \$18 million.

The private media receive revenues mainly from sales, sponsorship, and advertising. The private television companies Dream and Al-Mihwar get most of their revenues from advertising, especially placed by the other businesses of their owners, and sponsorship of certain programs.

"Some observers have concluded that Egypt must privatize publications that are losing money and encourage the rest to introduce modern management policy in line with the international practices," Hamdy Hassan said.

Independent media are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

- > Media outlets and supporting firms operate as efficient, professional, and profit-generating businesses.
- > Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
- > Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
- > Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards at commercial outlets.
- > Independent media do not receive government subsidies.
- > Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor products to the needs and interests of audiences.
- > Broadcast ratings and circulation figures are reliably and independently produced.

Most state dailies have their own advertising agencies. *Al-Ahram's* is the most prominent, operating a department that procures ads for all the publications of the group, offers design ideas and prepares them for its clients, plans and evaluates advertising campaigns, and publishes special advertising supplements for government ministries, companies, and foreign governments celebrating national days. The latest available data shows that *Al-Ahram* received 1999 advertising revenue of about \$94 million. "*Al-Ahram* is the only newspaper that has its own professional advertising team," Hamdy Hassan said, "and most of the private and partisan publications use the services of advertising agencies."

Spending on advertising does not exceed \$6 per person in Egypt. Many international firms are present in the

Negad El Borai said that overall "students complain about the dominance of theoretical subjects and the lack of practice." There are also concerns voiced about huge classes and professors who have had little opportunity to update their skills. Panelists who have been trained at Egyptian universities agreed that many new journalists are ill-equipped to work professionally.

market, such as Coca-Cola, Nestlé, Procter and Gamble and Unilever, and they constitute the major investors in advertising. The total spending for 2004 in all sectors was put at \$427 million, with the print media receiving 62 percent of the revenue, television 31 percent, radio 6 percent, and cinema 1 percent. By sectors,

telecommunications companies were first with \$70.9 million, or 16.6 percent of the total expenditure. Egypt offers good infrastructure and services for the production of ads, MSI panelists said. There are about 100 advertising agencies, but Tarek Nour, Lookliwatas, and about 10 other major agencies account for between 80 and 90 percent of the ad spending.

The MSI panel agreed that advertisers focus more on state media. According to a September 2005 report by the Economic Mission of the French Embassy in Cairo, "The lack of transparency in the price of the ads, and concessions that the state provide, such as reduction in the 36 percent tax on advertising or the scheduling of the tax payment, punish the private sector." (The tax on advertising subsequently was reduced to 15 percent.)

The state press has become embroiled in a scandal since it came to light that for years the organizations were not passing on the tax to the tax authorities but keeping it as additional income. The Egyptian Press Syndicate gets a percentage of newspapers' advertising income, providing for a third of its budget.

Market research or broadcast ratings have not yet been introduced in the Egyptian media market. The ERTU and *Al-Ahram* have their own research departments but rarely engage in serious market research, MSI panelists said. The Faculty of Mass Communication at Cairo University also has a department specializing in media research and opinion surveys. According to the department website, three studies have been conducted—on opinions about ERTU programming, the readership of *Akhbar Al-Youm* newspaper, and the future of *Al-Ahram* newspapers. These studies, according to the panel, were not publicly discussed and had no apparent impact on the outlets' products. The MSI participants did consider serious research conducted in January 2005 by the Amman-based Arab Advisory Group. The "Cairo Households Media Survey 2005" interviewed face-to-face 562 people across the city, showing that 91 percent of Cairo households were still tuning in to state-owned terrestrial television channels. It also showed that of the satellite television viewers, 68.3 percent tuned in to news channels, with *Al Jazeera* the most widely watched (88.4 percent), followed by *Al Arabiya* (35.1 percent), *Nile News* (3.9 percent), *CNN* (6.6 percent), and *Al Hurra* (4.6 percent).

There are no credible figures for newspaper circulation in Egypt and no institution responsible for auditing circulation. UNESCO data cited by the panel indicated that there are 31 editions for every 1,000 inhabitants and that the most four widely read newspapers are the state *Al-Ahram*, *Al-Gomhouriyya*, and *Al-Akhbar*, followed by the privately owned *Al Misry Al-Youm*. The panel agreed that newspaper readership is declining in Egypt because of the competition from broadcasting.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Egypt Objective Score: 1.93 / 4.00

The main media-sector supporting institution in Egypt is the Press Syndicate, which is open both to editors of all ranks and journalists—except those working for the state broadcaster, who constitute the majority of working journalists in the country. ERTU employees are considered public servants, and the MSI panelists said the prohibition on their membership in the Syndicate is necessary to prevent the state from controlling the

organization any more than it currently does. For more than two decades, a government candidate did monopolize the post of chairman of the union, which has more than 4,000 members. But during the 2003 election, Galal Aref, a journalist from *Akhbar Al-Youm* considered to be Nasserist, won after a fierce battle.

The union provides members with financial subsidies of \$45 to \$50 and some health insurance and pension benefits. It also has become more active in defending the rights of its membership and campaigning for press law reforms, including the abolition of provisions allowing for imprisonment of journalists.

In June 2005, a new group was launched within the Syndicate called Journalists for Change. Numbering about 50 journalists, the group campaigned against jail sentences for journalists and for the right of anyone to establish newspapers. It also advocates for the chairmen of the state newspapers to be elected by their constituencies instead of being appointed by the government.

Several nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) intervene actively to defend journalists and campaign for press law reform. The most prominent is the Egyptian Human Rights Organization. Human-rights groups are today a force with the potential to influence the government and the Parliament, said panelist Negad El Borai. They have developed their advocacy skills somewhat and have advanced from simply writing letters of protest or press releases to proposing comprehensive drafts of proposed reforms and organizing meetings, public demonstrations, and seminars, he said.

The Faculty of Mass Communication at the University of Cairo, the Adham Center for Broadcast Journalism and the mass communications department at the American University in Cairo, and the Al-Ahram Regional Press Institute are among the more prominent training organizations in Egypt. They also have a regional presence, attracting some students and participants from elsewhere in the Middle East.

However, Negad El Borai said, overall “students complain about the dominance of theoretical subjects and the lack of practice.” There are also concerns voiced about huge classes and professors who have had little opportunity to update their skills. Panelists who have been trained at Egyptian universities agreed that many new journalists are ill-equipped to work professionally.

Panelists noted that the Adham Center provides higher-quality training and receives many applications because of the growing market for television journalists due to the expansion of the Arab satellite channels. But they

also said it is too expensive for most Egyptians, who must opt for state institutions.

There are more than a dozen journalism and communication faculties around the country. The most important is the Faculty of Mass Communication of the University of Cairo, which has graduated most of Egypt’s professionals in the field.

The faculty has three branches—press, television and radio; public relations; and advertising—and offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees and doctorates. The faculty also has four centers, including ones conducting public-opinion surveys and researching women in the media.

Distribution networks of print media are in the hands of the main state-owned newspaper companies. The most important one, Al-Ahram Distribution Company, owns shops in airports, clubs, underground stations, and summer resorts, as well as outlets and bookstores exceeding 2,700 in number. Tarek Abdel Jabar said that “most of the distribution networks are concentrated in Cairo and vast areas do not receive newspapers.”

Supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent media.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INDICATORS:

- > Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services.
- > Professional associations work to protect journalists’ rights.
- > NGOs support free speech and independent media.
- > Quality journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience exist.
- > Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
- > Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.
- > Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.

Short-term training is a big issue for the journalism community in Egypt, according to panelists. They said there are many international and local institutions offering programs, but that many lack a clear strategy. UNESCO, USAID, and the German Friedrich Ebert Foundation are among the donors supporting journalism training. The BBC World Service Trust and Internews, among other international organizations, have been implementing projects, along with local institutions such as the state newspaper companies' training centers, the Press Syndicate, and some human-rights groups. Most of the training is free but basic, panelists said.

Negad El Borai noted that most newspapers do not have internal training programs that are part of staff development policy and that some even do not support their journalists' participation in external training opportunities. The panel listed as the most needed training areas the use of the new communications technologies and their integration into the work of journalists, the techniques of investigative journalism, developing ethics codes and practices, and the modern management of media.

Printing houses are in the hands of the largest state publications and also are used by private and partisan publications. Newsprint is also a state monopoly and is imported from Canada, Russia, the United States, and Finland. According to panelist Hussam Al Sayyed, the state monopoly affects the independent press by limiting the press run and therefore circulation, and also by delays in printing.

Broadcasting transmitters are state-owned. They are rented to private broadcasters operating from the Media Free Zone. Distribution networks of print media are in the hands of the main state-owned newspaper companies. The most important one, Al-Ahram Distribution Company, owns shops in airports, clubs, underground stations, and summer resorts, as well as outlets and bookstores exceeding 2,700 in number. Tarek Abdel Jabar said that "most of the distribution networks are concentrated in Cairo and vast areas do not receive newspapers."

This state distribution monopoly has created a number of problems for the private press, according to some panelists. These include imposing a quota on the number of distributed copies, the disappearance of copies in the distribution network, and restrictions at kiosks. The authorities have been allowed by the distributors to intervene to stop dissemination of newspapers, including in the case of the first edition of *Al-Ghad* party newspaper, which did not arrive in the kiosks on March 7, 2005. The headline of the newspaper announced that the chairman of the party,

Ayman Nour, would run for president. According to media reports, the paper was delayed one day while officials demanded some changes. The only private daily newspaper, *Al Misry al-Youm*, was pulled off the stands when it reported an allegation of corruption during the parliamentary elections in 2005. The papers had to republish the story the next day.

The Internet is free in Egypt, but its use is constrained by cost, language, literacy, inadequate infrastructure, and skills shortages, panelists said. However, with strong support from the government, Egypt is witnessing something of an Internet boom. There were an estimated 8.5 million Internet users in 2005, up from 535,000 in 2000. In January 2002, the government launched free Internet service, meaning consumers no longer paid fees to Internet service providers (ISPs) but only the price of a regular telephone call—extremely cheap by international standards. ISPs lease access ports from the state fixed-line monopoly and buy a dial-up number, which they then market to consumers. In return, the ISPs are paid 70 percent of the revenue from connections made through their phone number. However, the measure is controversial because ISPs complain of high leasing rates and say their profit margins are low. Many of the smaller ISPs, among the 64 in operation when the system was introduced, have since closed.

MSI Participants

Negad El Borai, lawyer and head, Democracy Group

Tarek Abdel Jabar, director, Misr Al Youm Online Radio

Butaina Kamel, journalist, Egypt Television

Hussam Al Sayyed, deputy editor, Islam Online news website

Abdel Bassir Hassan, correspondent, BBC Cairo

Tarek Tuhami, journalist, *Al Wafd* newspaper

Imad Sayyed Ahmed, political editor, *Rose Al Youssef* newspaper

MSI Interviewees

The following were interviewed for their input but did not participate in the panel or scoring

Dr. Hamdy Hassan, head, Al-Ahram Training Centre

Ashraf Shehab, journalist, *al-Ahaly* newspaper

Moderator

Said Essoulami, executive director, CMF MENA, Morocco

EGYPT AT A GLANCE

GENERAL

- **Population:** 68.7 million (2004 est., World Bank)
- **Capital city:** Cairo
- **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Eastern Hamitic stock (Egyptians, Bedouins, and Berbers) 99%, Greek, Nubian, Armenian, other European 1% (www.nationsencyclopedia.com, 2006)
- **Religions (% of population):** Muslim (mostly Sunni) 90%, Coptic Christian and other 10% (www.nationsencyclopedia.com, 2006)
- **Languages (% of population):** Arabic (official), English and French understood by educated groups (www.nationsencyclopedia.com, 2006)
- **GDP (purchasing power parity):** \$75.1 billion (2004 est., World Bank)
- **GNI per capita (purchasing power parity):** \$1,310 (2004 est., World Bank)
- **Literacy rate (% of population):** male 67.2%, female 43.6% (2004 est., UNICEF)
- **President or top authority:** Prime Minister Ahmed NAZIF (since July 9, 2004)
- **Next scheduled elections:** Presidential, to be held in 2011

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- **Newspaper circulation statistics:** Total Circulation: 3,585,453 (includes daily and non-daily) (UNDP-POGAR, 2000) Largest Paper: *Al-Ahram* (Arabic) 900,000 (largest paper in the Middle East) (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004)
- **Broadcast ratings:** N/A
- **Number of print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** 453
- **Newspapers:** 296 (16 dailies, 45 non-dailies, 235 periodicals) (UNDP-POGAR, 2000)
- **TV stations:** 98, Radio stations: 59 (www.pressreference.com, 2002)
- **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** N/A
- **Number of Internet users:** 1.9 million est. (UNDP-POGAR, 2002)

