

Narrative Summit 2025 Documentation

“Egypt Reset”

Narrative Summit 2025		
Topics	Speakers	Page Number
Introduction		
Narrative PR Summit Board of Directors		
General Recommendation	Key Takeaways from Speakers and Media Coverage	
Key Initiatives Launched During the 9th Edition of the Narrative Summit	1. The Storyteller Awards “Al Rawi Award” 2. Launch of the Egyptian Public Relations Association and Membership in Global Alliance	
Unlocking Egypt’s Potential: Success Drivers and Investment Opportunities	Sir Mohamed Mansour	
Zero Waste Eco Villages Pilot Initiative	Dr. Rawya Mansour	
Overview of "Entr'acte Siwa"	Mounir Neamatalla	
Preserving Heritage for Future Generations	Azza Fahmy	
Building a Tech-Driven Economy: Egypt’s Roadmap for Entrepreneurial Success	Mounir Nakhla, Founder and CEO of MNT-Halan	
From London to Cairo: Lessons Learned in the Healthcare Sector	Dr. Sherif Hakki, consultant surgeon and educator	
Art as a Gateway to Egypt’s Global Presence	Actress Yousra	
Preserving Heritage and Revitalizing Downtown Cairo	Karim Shafei, Chairman of Al-Ismailia for Real Estate Investment	
Panel Discussion 1: Egypt From A Bucket List to a "Must Go" Experience	Dr. Ahmed Ghoneim , CEO of the Grand Egyptian Museum; Dr. Florian Amereller , Owner and Board Member of El Moudira Hotel and Founder of EgyptBeyond.com; Eng. Ahmed El Sewedy , President & CEO of EL SEWEDY ELECTRIC; Amy Mowafi , Co-founder and Managing Partner of MO4 Networks; and Sarah Gallo , Destination Marketing Strategist and Global Travel Expert at The Five Foot Traveler.	

<p>Panel Discussion 2: Empowering the Private Sector is Vital to Egypt's Growth and Prosperity</p>	<p>Dr. Ahmed Moharram Founder and Managing Director, Anchorage Investments, Hisham El Khazindar Co-Founder & Managing Director of Qalaa Holdings, Ahmed Tarek, Entrepreneur & Visionary Investor, Dr. Sherif El Kholy Partner & Head of Middle East & Africa, Actis , Neveen Al Tahri Chairperson. Delta Shield for Investment, and Mounir Nakhla Founder & CEO of MNT-Halan</p>	
<p>Panel Discussion 3: History and Culture: Perception of Egypt</p>	<p>Bettany Hughes, British Award Winning Historian, Author and Broadcaster; Mahmoud Sabit, Egyptian Historian, Lecturer, and Political Commentator; Zach Sherif, Interior and Lighting Designer, Creative Director, and Producer of Events and Films; Louis Barthélemy, Multidisciplinary Artist and Designer; and Maria Shallonbarger, Luxury Travel Journalist and Editor at the Financial Times.</p>	
<p>Panel Discussion 4: Futureproofing: How to Handle Shocks and Stresses</p>	<p>Ayman Ismail, Chairman of the board of UN Global Compact Egypt Network, Dr. Rawya Mansour, Founder and Chairwoman of RAMSCO Trade and Distribution Company, Dr. Ibrahim Hegazy, Professor of Marketing at the American University in Cairo, Irene Lungu, Head of Corporate Affairs at Zambia Forestry Company, and Professor Justin Green, President & CEO of the Global Alliance for Public Relations & Communication Management,</p>	
<p>Panel Discussion 5: Sports as a Unifying Force for Communities</p>	<p>Amr El-Sonbaty, Egypt's Parliament Member, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Heliopolis Sporting Club, and Founder of Smash Academy, Ahmed Elgendy, Egypt's modern pentathlon champion and Paris 2024 Olympian, Hassan Khalifa, CEO of Pioneers Insurance Brokerage and Managing Partner at Stamina Sports & Fitness Ahmed Abdoun, Founder & CEO of 7 Agency Omar El Borolossy, President & Managing Director at ElBorolossy Squash Academy</p>	
<p>Panel Discussion 6: Entrepreneurship and Driving Tourism: Stories that Need to Be Told</p>	<p>Amr Mansi, Founder and CEO of I Events, Paul Antaki, Founder of Premium International for Financial Services, Hala Hegazy, Managing Director and Group COO of NRP Group (Nogoum FM - Nile FM), Mohamed Abou Ghaly, CEO and Board Member of Abou Ghaly Motors, and Mohamed El Kahhal, Managing Director of Kahhal Looms.</p>	
<p>Building Egypt's Narrative Through Art, Talent, and Human Connection</p>	<p>Mario Testino, visionary photographer, creative director, and cultural storyteller Hisham Kharma, Music Composer and Producer</p>	

	Speech by Dr. Rania Al-Mashat, Minister of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation	
	Speech by Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports	
	Speech by Major General Amr Hanafy, Governor of the Red Sea	

Introduction

Narrative Summit is Egypt's first international public relations forum dedicated to nation branding, launched with the mission of spotlighting Egypt's positive image and creating a platform that brings together decision-makers, entrepreneurs, and the private sector to share forward-thinking ideas and strategies. The overarching goal is to attract foreign direct investment, position Egypt as a leading tourism and investment destination, and reintroduce the country as a modern, youthful nation confidently advancing toward the future.

Since its inaugural edition in 2016, the summit has gained significant momentum. The third edition in 2018 was held under the auspices of the Prime Minister, and the fourth edition took place in November 2019 during the Arab Sustainable Development Week, organized by the League of Arab States and under the auspices of H.E. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

Over eight editions, the summit has proudly welcomed numerous government ministers, senior officials, global policy leaders, influential business figures, and top entrepreneurs. It continues to position Egypt as a diversified investment and tourism hub with the potential to attract large-scale investments, all while promoting innovation and positive impact across key sectors.

In addition, the eighth edition of the Narrative Summit, held under the captivating theme "Egypt Forever Forward," brought together a stellar lineup of local and international speakers who convened for an entire day to exchange ideas and share valuable insights. Held at the stunning Somabay on the Red Sea. This prestigious event was hosted under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Egyptian Tourism Authority, and the Red Sea Governorate. Additionally, it was organized in collaboration with the American Chamber of Commerce and UN Women. The summit focused on reinforcing Egypt's global tourism leadership, promoting high-value tourism, and driving national economic growth through sustainable tourism development.

Narrative Summit 2025 – "Egypt Reset"

The ninth edition of the Narrative Summit 2025 launched this year with a renewed vision, focusing on three key pillars: tourism, investment, and sports. The summit aimed to spotlight Egypt's promising opportunities in these sectors to attract foreign investment and support the national economy.

Held in Soma Bay on the Red Sea coast, the Narrative Summit 2025 took place under the patronage and attendance of the Ministers of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation, Youth and Sports, Investment and Tourism, as well as the Governor of the Red Sea, with leadership from the private sector.

This year's summit was held under the theme "Egypt Reset", bringing together a distinguished group of local and international experts and professionals for a full day of dialogue and exchange of ideas, all dedicated to advancing Egypt's nation branding and positioning it on the global stage.

Narrative PR Summit's Board of Directors

- Sir Mohamed Mansour, Chairman of Mansour Group and Chair of the Board of Narrative Summit
- Mrs. Lamia Kamel, Founder of the Narrative PR Summit, Managing Director of CC Plus, and former Assistant Minister of Tourism and Antiquities for Promotion
- Sir Ben Elliot, International Businessman, & Tourism and Investment Expert
- Khaled El-Enany, Former Minister of Tourism and Antiquities and Egypt's Candidate for the post of Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- Dr. Rawya Mansour, Chairwoman of RAMSCO Egypt and Oasis Technologies Monaco
- Steven Shepperson-Smith, President of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR)
- Azza Fahmy, International Jewelry Designer
- Renowned Actress Yousra
- Renowned Artist and Designer Louis Barthélemy
- Mrs. Hala Hegazi, Managing Director & Group COO Nile Radio Productions

General Recommendation

Ensure the regular and sustainable organization of such events, led and managed by the private sector with the support of major investors—such as Sir Mohamed Mansour, Mr. Mounir Neamatalla, and others—and under the patronage of the Egyptian state. The role of the government should focus on providing support, regulation, and ongoing oversight without direct involvement in operational planning. This approach aims to foster stronger collaboration across private sector players both locally and internationally.

Key Initiatives Launched During the 9th Edition of the Narrative Summit

1. The Storyteller Awards “Al Rawi Award”

Narrative Summit 2025 introduced the *Storyteller Awards* to encourage young creatives to produce compelling content that highlights Egypt’s position as a leading cultural and economic force. Lamia Kamel, Founder of the Narrative Summit and Managing Director of CC Plus, emphasized that the award aims to empower youth and provide a platform for expressing their creative vision of Egypt.

During the summit in Soma Bay, jury chair Tarek Nour announced the top three winners, praising their innovation and expressive storytelling. He also expressed gratitude to the summit for enabling these young talents to shine.

Recommendations:

- Evolve the *Storyteller Awards* into a national, sustainable initiative to strengthen youth engagement and national pride.
- Leverage the visual and cinematic works created through the competition in Egypt’s tourism promotion campaigns, with support from both the state and private sector.

2. Launch of the Egyptian Public Relations Association and Membership in Global Alliance

Lamia Kamel also announced the establishment of Egypt’s first national public relations

association, launched with the support of five leading PR firms. The association has officially joined the *Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management*, making Egypt the first North African country to secure membership.

The initiative aims to unify local PR efforts, elevate the profession's role in development, and promote Egypt's image both domestically and internationally. It also focuses on youth capacity-building through specialized training, workshops, and innovative initiatives.

Recommendations:

- Align efforts across PR firms to strengthen the industry at both national and international levels.
- Capitalize on the Global Alliance membership to upgrade the skill sets of Egyptian PR professionals.
- Prioritize youth training and workforce preparation through targeted workshops and programs.
- Launch innovative campaigns that strategically enhance Egypt's global image.
- Foster collaboration between association members and global partners to share best practices.

Unlocking Egypt's Potential: Success Drivers and Investment Opportunities

Sir Mohamed Mansour

International Businessman, Chairman of Man Capital LLP, and Chairman of Mansour Group & Honorary Chair of the Board of Narrative Summit

In his keynote speech titled "My Drive to Succeed," Mohamed Mansour, Chairman of Man Capital LLP, and Chairman of Mansour Group delivered an inspiring message of hope and optimism, highlighting the immense potential that Egypt presents. Starting from an exceptional heritage to remarkable contemporary assets, Mansour emphasized that Egypt is capable of owning the narrative both within the nation and on the global stage.

Celebrating Egypt's Rich History and Culture

Mansour commenced his talk by underlining Egypt's extensive history and cultural richness, making it an iconic nation with a legacy spanning 7,000 years. He highlighted the ancient treasures and poetic heritage that not only fuel the creativity of storytellers worldwide but also establish Egypt as a preferred global destination.

Mohamed Mansour emphasized **the strategic importance of tourism to Egypt's national identity and global positioning**. He described it as the country's "unique selling point," underscoring its potential to drive long-term growth. He drew particular attention to the **Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo**, where he serves as a trustee. Mansour described the project as one of global significance, stating that once fully open, expected in July 2025, it has the potential to become "the greatest museum on earth." He noted that the museum is anticipated to attract millions of visitors, reinforcing Egypt's standing as a leading cultural and tourism destination.

He specifically emphasized the remarkable feats of Egyptian construction, with the great pyramids standing as the sole surviving ancient wonder of the world. He also noted that Egyptians have always been distinguished as skilled and proud traders, underscoring the current commitment to continue this legacy by venturing into promising business opportunities, following in the illustrious footsteps of those who came before.

Egypt's Most Prominent Assets

Adding to Egypt's exceptional heritage and culture, Mansour indicated that the **nation's most valuable asset is its population of 110 million**, particularly its vibrant youth with an age distribution where half are below 25. He emphasized the qualities of loyalty, hard work, resilience, and determination among Egyptians, who consistently give their best. In addition,

they possess a strong sense of pride and belonging to Egypt. Mansour attributed these characteristics, along with a robust education system, as instrumental in helping Egyptians overcome challenges throughout their rich historical journey.

Moreover, Mansour praised the numerous young Egyptian men and women who have excelled globally, making significant contributions in the largest capitals around the world and leaving a substantial impact.

Foreign Investment and International Relations

Mansour stressed the burgeoning growth in Egypt's investment landscape, highlighting the plethora of opportunities emerging from the country's new strategic approach and visionary roadmap. He also highlighted that Egypt's investment scene is experiencing remarkable growth and offering abundant opportunities, in several sectors including **clean energy, technology, infrastructure, and real estate.** He also elaborated on Egypt's distinctive cultural and historical heritage, noting how it positions the country as a rising player on the global innovation map, particularly as the world enters a new industrial revolution driven by technology and artificial intelligence. He also underscored the pivotal role of private investments, working in tandem with ongoing support from the public sector.

A Personal Journey and Commitment to Egypt

Speaking of the esteemed Mansour Group, Mohamed Mansour expressed his pride in the journey that began in Egypt and has now expanded to over 100 countries, boasting nearly 60,000 Egyptian employees. **He reassured his commitment to Egypt, stating that he will continue returning to the country.** One of his primary focuses for investment lies in electric vehicles, aligning with his dedication to sustainability.

In line with this commitment, Sir Mansour announced during the Summit that **Mansour Group plans to invest USD 150 million in the Egyptian market** to open a new factory for car manufacturing as well as EVs, which is expected to create 10 thousand job opportunities for the youth. and will export vehicles to the Middle East, to Africa, and hopefully to Europe. He also emphasized the importance of giving back, expressing his belief that it is the private sector's collective duty to contribute to the country. He added that this spirit of generosity must continue to be upheld by Egypt's business leaders today.

The Right to Dream Academy and the Power of Education

Mansour concluded his speech by shedding light on his impactful project, the **"Right to Dream," a program that links individuals aspiring for higher education with scholarship opportunities in the US and UK,** ensuring that football remains a pivotal part of their journey. For those aspiring to kick-start their professional football careers, the two-year development program equips them for the next phase. Mansour shared that he has been on

this remarkable journey for over two decades, commencing in Ghana in 1999, driven by the simple yet powerful belief that everyone has the right to dream.

Expanding on the initiative's success, Mansour highlighted that seven players from this program participated in the latest World Cup. Furthermore, 120 graduates have earned scholarships from prestigious universities worldwide, including Stanford, Harvard, Oxford, and Cambridge. Notably, these aspiring individuals, given the opportunity to dream, come from families with an average income of just USD 2 per day.

Demonstrating his commitment to community service, Mansour disclosed the recent launch of the "Right to Dream" Academy in Egypt. This initiative aims to inspire young boys and girls in every village to pursue their passion for football. In the first round alone, it garnered over 65,000 applications, indicating a promising future in nurturing talents akin to Mohamed Salah, individuals who can dream, achieve greatness, and take pride in their national identity.

Recommendations

As Mohamed Mansour delved into Egypt's key assets and the evolving investment landscape, the speech provided vital recommendations, emphasizing the following:

1. Leveraging Egypt's current investment momentum by prioritizing strategic development across high-growth sectors such as clean energy, technology, infrastructure, and real estate.
2. Capitalizing on the country's unique cultural and historical assets to strengthen its position on the global innovation map—particularly as the world transitions into a new industrial era shaped by advanced technology and artificial intelligence. This involves encouraging investment in innovation-driven initiatives that enable the next generation to thrive and achieve their full potential.
3. Tourism remains Egypt's greatest point of differentiation and its "unique selling point" with the tourism sector attracting millions of tourists each year, with an estimated incremental annual increase of one million. This is attributed to the compelling cultural heritage, implementation of new measures, enhanced infrastructure, and monumental projects like the Egyptian Grand Museum, destined to be one of the most significant museums in human history.
4. Recognizing the 110 million population as a potent asset, and the vital role of fostering pride and a sense of belonging to the country. The focus should be on supporting the youth majority, tapping into their exceptional potential, ability to overcome challenges, and ensuring access to quality education.
5. Encouraging collaboration with the private sector is crucial. This involves providing incentives and streamlining procedures to thrive with private investments in Egypt, aligning with the strides made by the public sector in its development and investments.

6. Underlining the critical role of the private sector in accelerating Egypt's economic development by creating job opportunities and supporting local communities and reaffirming that giving back to the country is a shared duty, urging Egypt's business leaders to carry forward a spirit of contribution that supports both economic resilience and inclusive growth.
7. Launching initiatives aimed at developing a new generation of young boys and girls is imperative. Providing them with a world-class education enables them to pursue their dreams and succeed in various life aspects while maintaining a strong connection to their national identity.

Zero Waste Eco Villages Pilot Initiative

Dr. Rawya Mansour

**Chairwoman of RAMSCO Construction & Eco-Villages and Oasis Technologies
Monaco**

Entrepreneur Rawya Mansour shared her inspiring journey toward achieving sustainable development, championing green investment, and advancing sustainable agricultural development through the creation of environmentally friendly zero-waste eco-villages. As a trailblazer in organic farming in Egypt, Mansour highlighted her proactive approach in this arena since 2007 when she established RAMSCO Construction & Eco-Villages, employing organic fertilizers and state-of-the-art agricultural technology. She emphasized the success of the pilot project at the research center, which led to the establishment of RAMSCO for Sustainable Agricultural Development in 2009. Following that, OASIS (Organic Agriculture for Social International Solidarity) was founded in Monaco in 2012. Mansour stressed the pivotal role of these sustainable initiatives in tackling economic, social, and environmental challenges, contributing significantly to poverty alleviation and environmental preservation.

Mansour shared insights from her study, uncovering that Egypt has a substantial 36 million tons of agricultural waste. This resource can be effectively repurposed through Biochar technology, transforming it into organic fertilizers and potentially cultivating 1.5 million acres. She emphasized that establishing 300 eco-friendly villages based on organic farming could generate jobs for 10 million people, halt labor migration abroad, and pave the way for achieving food security.

Mansour voiced her aspiration to create eco-villages with zero waste, targeting the provision of food for all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable. She emphasized that the three key principles for achieving food security are availability, accessibility, and affordability, while the challenges revolve around climate change, carbon footprint, and rising costs.

She decided to move away from the Delta, where the land has been impacted by rising salinity levels. Instead, she collaborated with the Agricultural Research Center to reclaim 30 acres in the desert outskirts of Ismailia Governorate. For her, innovative agricultural investment isn't just a remedy for food security crises; it's also a real-life experiment in empowering rural women.

Mansour emphasized that she initiated RAMSCO by incorporating Biochar, an innovative approach for reducing gas emissions. This method conserves water, enhances soil quality, and reduces irrigation water consumption by 30% and drip-irrigation by 60%. Additionally, it produces healthy food without the need for pesticides. She highlighted that this project fosters a circular economy by recycling all agricultural waste, making it a zero-waste endeavor.

Mansour elaborated that she initiated RAMSCO, focusing on sustainable development and organic farming through the innovative use of the patented Biochar machine to recycle food waste and minimize emissions. This distinctive approach not only contributes to environmental sustainability but also empowers marginalized female farmers. By providing training in this eco-friendly farming technique, the project facilitates their transition to green economy practices, ultimately leading to a reduction in water consumption.

Mansour stressed the importance of cooperation between the public and private sectors, irrespective of an institution's size or overarching strategies. Consequently, RAMSCO has partnered with various entities, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation. A notable collaborator is Anchorage Investments, the driving force behind Anchor Benitoite—a significant industrial complex in the SCZone producing diverse derivatives and petrochemical products.

With a belief in the pivotal role of women in addressing climate change and sustainable development, Mansour highlighted that empowering rural women stands as a central objective in her various projects. By providing them with fitting job opportunities within their social settings, these initiatives aid in alleviating poverty and addressing food shortages.

In conclusion, Mansour reiterated her continued dedication to implementing projects that benefit the environment, align with sustainable development goals, empower women, and elevate living standards through diverse employment, training, and capacity-building opportunities.

Recommendations:

1. Implementing projects that prioritize addressing food security as a crucial step in reducing poverty and hunger.
2. Empowering women in agriculture is essential to tackle poverty and eradicate the food crisis.
3. Promoting and adopting sustainable methods in agriculture is pivotal for addressing economic, social, and environmental crises.
4. Utilizing organic agricultural products to expand Egypt's agricultural export base.
5. Expanding the creation of ecovillages with zero waste is key to achieving a green economy and sustainable development.
6. Embracing organic farming in desert cultivation, tapping into the vast deserts of Egypt and Africa.
7. Encouraging companies and projects to reduce their carbon footprint through partnerships.
8. Fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors to reinforce the nation's economic development.

Overview of "Entr'acte Siwa" by Mounir Neamatalla

At the Narrative Summit, Mr. Mounir Neamatalla presented his book "*Entr'acte Siwa*," a literary and visual journey that reflects Egypt's rich history, the concept of joy, and the enduring power of human connection. The book weaves together narrative and photography through its main characters—Lia, Lee, and Suleiman—who advocate for positive change through human relationships while rejecting violence in all its forms. The work culminates with the story "*Maktoub*," a love story set in Siwa Oasis during World War II, inspired by the author's personal journey to Siwa where he discovered a profound sense of harmony and happiness.

Recommendations:

1. Promote eco-tourism and highlight its role in attracting visitors from around the world.
2. Showcase cultural and natural heritage sites such as Siwa Oasis to strengthen Egypt's global tourism narrative.
3. Support eco-tourism initiatives by emphasizing the beauty and environmental value of destinations like Siwa.
4. Raise awareness about the importance of environmental conservation and encourage support for ecological projects.

Preserving Heritage for Future Generations

During her speech at the ninth edition of the Narrative Summit, **international jewelry designer Azza Fahmy** revealed the establishment of the **Azza Fahmy Design School in Aswan** and the **Azza Fahmy Foundation for Training**. Both initiatives are managed with a unique development-focused vision aimed at providing skilled labor and fostering a supportive environment for Egypt's jewelry industry, which heavily relies on both designers and artisans. Fahmy noted that many current designers have studied abroad—a privilege not accessible to all—and that these initiatives open new opportunities within Egypt.

Azza Fahmy expressed her pride in founding **a school dedicated to teaching young women jewelry design in Aswan**, highlighting that many of the graduates have become

professional designers and, importantly, sources of income for their families. She stressed the need to develop the skills and capabilities of Egyptian youth to create a new generation of artisans and innovators in the handicrafts sector.

Fahmy emphasized that the school forms part of the group's broader social responsibility efforts. She also founded the **Azza Fahmy Foundation**, a non-profit organization committed to **preserving Egypt's traditional crafts**—an integral part of the country's cultural heritage. The Foundation offers vocational training programs, employment opportunities, and support for young entrepreneurs in the craft industry, ensuring the sustainability of Egypt's artisanal traditions.

Speaking about the group's recent achievements, Fahmy pointed to the opening of the **brand's newest branch in Saudi Arabia**, along with the expansion of its presence in the United Kingdom. She noted that the **Saudi branch was specifically designed to reflect Egyptian identity** and has been warmly received by customers. Today, the Azza Fahmy brand operates across Doha, Dubai, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, London, and Egypt—the birthplace of the brand's journey more than 55 years ago.

As for her sources of inspiration, Fahmy credited books, museums, and her travels across the Arab world. She shared how observing the craftsmanship and intricate details of traditional jewelry, meeting artisans, and learning from their experiences were all part of a plan she set over half a century ago to deepen her knowledge of jewelry-making and Arab folk heritage. Her memoirs are a testament to a lifetime dedicated to preserving and celebrating cultural traditions.

Recommendations:

1. **Promote Aswan's natural beauty** by highlighting its unique landscapes and strengthening its position on the global tourism map.
2. Encourage business leaders and entrepreneurs to support various Egyptian governorates by investing in and developing distinctive local handicraft industries.
3. Showcase Nubian heritage and traditional crafts to attract tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences.
4. Organize tourism events, festivals, and exhibitions that spotlight Aswan as a premier global travel destination.
5. Empower women in the handicrafts sector by launching training programs aimed at helping women, particularly in remote areas, turn their skills into sustainable sources of income.

6. Preserve Egypt's cultural heritage by documenting traditional handicrafts and safeguarding artisanal techniques for future generations.
7. Strengthen corporate social responsibility initiatives by encouraging companies and institutions to launch programs supporting community development and preserving traditional crafts.

Building a Tech-Driven Economy: Egypt's Roadmap for Entrepreneurial Success

In his address at the Narrative Summit, **Mounir Nakhla, Founder and CEO of MNT-Halan**, spoke about **the significant opportunities available for entrepreneurship in Egypt**, noting that the country stands at a critical juncture amid the unprecedented pace of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) revolution, which is progressing even faster than past industrial and internet revolutions.

Nakhla shared his personal journey in microfinance, which began in 2010 with an initiative to finance tuk-tuk purchases. This venture expanded rapidly, reaching 200 branches by 2014 and eventually leading to the launch of Egypt's largest microfinance company. He highlighted a pivotal moment in 2017 when meeting the founder of a successful Indonesian company made him realize the transformative power of technology in accelerating growth.

Following this insight, Nakhla launched a tech-driven application and, despite numerous challenges, successfully transitioned the company into a fully technology-based operation. This strategic shift resulted in significant growth: MNT-Halan has served 8 million customers, provided loans worth \$11 billion, and expanded internationally into Turkey, the UAE, and Pakistan, with further expansion plans underway.

Nakhla concluded by calling for **stronger support for young innovators in Egypt**, emphasizing the need for a flexible legislative environment and easier access to funding for technology startups. He affirmed that Egypt has a real opportunity to establish itself as a global leader in the tech entrepreneurship space.

Recommendations:

1. Create a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and technology-driven ventures.
2. Simplify company establishment procedures by implementing clear and straightforward regulations for launching and closing businesses, especially in cases of failure, without complex legal hurdles.
3. Encourage investment in technology by offering tax incentives and support packages for startups focusing on artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.
4. Provide accessible microloans to young innovators to fund and encourage the launch of new entrepreneurial projects.
5. Craft Egypt's Narrative to reposition it as a global hub for entrepreneurship and innovation.
6. Enact incentive-driven legislation to support the development of fintech solutions and the integration of artificial intelligence technologies.
7. Increase funding and support for startups and innovative projects, particularly those specializing in AI and financial technology.
8. Expand access to financing for innovative ideas by offering small, flexible loans aimed at empowering young entrepreneurs.

From London to Cairo: Lessons Learned in the Healthcare Sector

In his speech at the Narrative Summit, **Dr. Sherif Hakki, the internationally renowned consultant surgeon and educator**, presented a series of key insights into Egypt's healthcare sector, drawing on his personal experiences in medicine and surgery. He began by sharing a personal anecdote about two fellow Egyptian graduates he encountered on a flight, both of whom had become highly successful doctors abroad, yet chose not to return to Egypt due to the prevailing conditions in the healthcare sector, citing low salaries and restrictive new regulations.

Dr. Hakki also highlighted alarming statistics regarding **the migration of Egyptian doctors, noting that around 90% of medical graduates aspire to leave the country** in search of better opportunities. He pointed out that Egypt ranks among the countries with the lowest doctor-to-patient ratios globally, an issue that demands urgent action.

He underscored the **urgent need to improve working conditions in Egypt's medical sector** and called for **healthcare reforms** that offer meaningful incentives to encourage skilled Egyptian doctors abroad to return home. Dr. Hakki emphasized that elevating the quality of healthcare services must be treated as a national priority to ensure better outcomes for all citizens.

Among his recommendations, he underscored the importance of improving the mechanisms for fundraising for medical charities, noting that a significant portion of donations often fail to reach the patients who truly need them. He advocated for directing these funds toward upgrading public healthcare facilities and attracting top medical talent to work within the system.

In conclusion, Dr. Hakki called for a concerted **national effort to reclaim Egypt's medical minds abroad**, asserting that doing so would significantly strengthen the country's healthcare sector and improve the standard of care for all Egyptian citizens.

Recommendations:

1. Improve working conditions in Egypt's healthcare sector by offering competitive salaries, supportive legislation, and incentives that encourage doctors to stay and practice within the country.
2. Address the issue of medical brain drain by creating advanced professional opportunities and improving both healthcare services and living standards to attract skilled Egyptian doctors back home.

3. Enhance the public healthcare system by developing a more efficient and equitable model that ensures quality healthcare services for all citizens, with a focus on upgrading standards in public hospitals.
4. Restructure the fundraising mechanisms for medical charities to ensure donations directly reach patients and channel funds toward improving public healthcare facilities and providing direct patient care.
5. Invest in health tourism as a strategic tool to strengthen the healthcare sector and generate additional resources to support medical infrastructure and services.
6. Launch specialized training programs within Egypt to advance medical professionals' skills, helping to attract and retain top talent in the healthcare sector.
7. Encourage innovation in the medical field by supporting creative and forward-thinking doctors, providing them with development opportunities and sufficient resources to drive positive change.
8. Promote greater collaboration among doctors across specialties to achieve better patient outcomes and advance the overall quality of medical services.

Art as a Gateway to Egypt's Global Presence

Renowned actress Yousra expressed her pride in participating in the **Narrative Summit** and her appreciation for the efforts behind this important event aimed at elevating Egypt's image internationally. She praised the Summit's Board of Directors, describing it as one of the most distinguished globally, with a selection of highly accomplished and influential leaders.

During her speech, Yousra stressed the importance of unity and collaboration to overcome challenges and continue Egypt's journey toward progress. She emphasized that **shaping Egypt's future lies with the youth and the new generation**, who are key to building a brighter and more prosperous tomorrow.

Highlighting the role of art in enhancing Egypt's standing on the world stage, Yousra remarked: "Egypt is not just the land of ancient civilization and history; it is also the land of culture, literature, music, cinema, and theater. Egyptian films and television series have succeeded in uniting the Arab world and reaching a broad international audience." She urged for **greater efforts to position Egypt as a prime destination for global film productions**, encouraging more movies to be filmed at the country's iconic sites instead of abroad — a move she believes would not only showcase Egypt's rich heritage but also drive significant economic growth by attracting increased foreign investment.

Yousra concluded her remarks by underscoring the need for collective action carried out with dedication and integrity to support Egypt and propel it toward a brighter future. She also praised the role of the private sector, under the auspices of the Egyptian government, in supporting the country's economic, tourism, cultural, healthcare, and artistic sectors. **"What I witnessed today fills me with pride as an Egyptian woman,"** she said, "and reflects the beautiful image of Egypt that the world deserves to see."

Recommendations:

1. Strengthen the role of art in promoting Egypt's image globally through organizing international festivals and collaborative cultural events.
2. Facilitate procedures for international film and television productions to shoot in Egypt's historic and touristic sites, supporting the economy and generating valuable foreign currency.

3. Design international media campaigns positioning Egypt as a culture, art, and history hub.
4. Encourage the hosting of major global art events in Egypt to boost cultural tourism and international visibility.
5. Promote Egyptian culture and arts as a diplomatic ambassador abroad, leveraging cinema and creative industries to present a positive and dynamic image of Egypt to the world.

Preserving Heritage and Revitalizing Downtown Cairo

During his speech at the ninth edition of the Narrative Summit, **Karim Shafei**, Chairman of **Al-Ismailia for Real Estate Investment**, highlighted the company's efforts to revive Downtown Cairo. He emphasized that the primary goal is **to preserve the city's unique architectural identity** while transforming the area into a major destination for tourism, entertainment, and investment.

Shafei explained that the company's vision for Downtown Cairo is to create a vibrant urban center that blends authenticity with modernity by developing integrated projects comprising serviced apartments, office spaces, retail outlets, and restaurants. Their marketing strategies heavily rely on hosting cultural events, which have, so far, attracted thousands of visitors to the area.

He noted that the relocation of government institutions to the New Administrative Capital has created new opportunities for revitalizing historic properties, leading to increased investment prospects and attracting both local and foreign clients, particularly from the Gulf region.

Regarding ongoing projects, the company is currently restoring several historic buildings, such as the "Tamara" building and others, in collaboration with specialized firms, integrating modern design elements while preserving historic features. Successful models such as the redevelopment of "La Viennoise" and "Radio Cinema" have received widespread acclaim, encouraging other historic property owners to collaborate with the company.

Shafei concluded his remarks by reaffirming the company's commitment to using environmentally friendly and sustainable materials, ensuring **the preservation of Downtown Cairo's character** and setting a benchmark for heritage revitalization projects across Egypt.

Recommendations:

1. Prioritize the preservation of Downtown Cairo's unique architectural identity through restoration and revitalization efforts that respect its historic character.
2. Develop Downtown Cairo into a premier hub for tourism, culture, and entertainment that reflects Egypt's rich heritage.

3. Capitalize on the opportunities created by relocating government institutions to the New Administrative Capital by enhancing alternative activities and attracting visitors and investors.
4. Organize cultural and artistic events in Downtown Cairo to enhance its appeal and revive its cultural spirit.
5. Combine efforts to attract tourists and investors from international markets, particularly the Gulf region, by offering services and projects tailored to their needs.
6. Expand the successful Downtown Cairo revival model to other historic areas of Cairo, such as Zamalek, Garden City, and Maadi.

Panel Discussion 1: Egypt From A Bucket List to a "Must Go" Experience

After the morning inspirational speeches, a special panel discussion titled "**Egypt From A Bucket List to a "Must Go" Experience**" was held in the early afternoon, moderated by **Lamia Kamel**, to explore Egypt's investment climate, the state's efforts to attract investors, and the role of media in promoting Egypt globally, alongside showcasing real success stories.

The panel featured notable speakers: **Dr. Ahmed Ghoneim**, CEO of the Grand Egyptian Museum; **Dr. Florian Amereller**, Owner and Board Member of El Moudira Hotel and Founder of EgyptBeyond.com; **Eng. Ahmed El Sewedy**, President & CEO of EL SEWEDY ELECTRIC; **Amy Mowafi**, Co-founder and Managing Partner of MO4 Networks; and **Sarah Gallo**, Destination Marketing Strategist and Global Travel Expert at The Five Foot Traveler.

During the session, **Eng. Ahmed El Sewedy**, President & CEO of EL SEWEDY ELECTRIC, shared his vision for Egypt's economy in light of the country's recent mega projects. He remarked that the achievements realized in Egypt over the past decade are unparalleled throughout the country's modern history.

El Sewedy emphasized that Egypt has the potential to replicate China's success story, praising the government's strong support for the private sector. He affirmed that Egypt possesses all the necessary capabilities to become a leading manufacturing and exporting nation, provided that a clear roadmap and specific objectives are established to guide progress.

He further highlighted that the return on investment in Egypt's tourism sector is three times higher than in Dubai, the Gulf region, or Europe. He stressed that Egypt's true strength lies in its human capital, asserting that with proper training and development, Egyptian talent can become highly competitive globally. Consequently, ELSEWEDY ELECTRIC has been heavily investing in education, particularly in technical and vocational training, to equip graduates with skills that meet market demands.

El Sewedy noted that the private sector has played a vital role in driving Egypt's major projects and developmental achievements over the past decade. He expressed optimism about a forthcoming economic boom, driven by the government's increasing focus on supporting productive sectors such as industry, agriculture, and tourism. He also stressed the need to prioritize exports and expand into international markets.

He also highlighted Egypt's remarkable progress in infrastructure development, emphasizing that enhancements in utilities, roads, and facilities have strengthened the

country's appeal as a prime destination for both local and international investors.

In his concluding remarks, El Sewedy urged investors to capitalize on the abundant opportunities across Egypt's various sectors. He also called on the government to simplify licensing procedures and significantly cut down the time needed to establish and operate new factories, recommending that the full process—from licensing to production—be completed within a maximum of two months.

Dr. Florian Amereller, Owner and Board Member of El Moudira Hotel in Luxor and Founder of EgyptBeyond.com, who brings with him over three decades of experience in Egypt, expressed his pride and happiness in investing in the country. He emphasized that despite the challenges, Egypt offers tremendous opportunities, particularly in the tourism sector, that are well worth exploring.

Amereller explained that his vision centers on delivering authentic products that reflect the richness of local identity, with a strong focus on using local production rather than relying on imports. By utilizing Egypt's unique and beautiful local resources in construction and design, his projects celebrate the country's inherent beauty and craftsmanship. He stressed the importance of embracing Egypt's identity, affirming that **Egypt does not need to create a brand—it already possesses everything necessary**. The real task, he noted, is to leverage these resources wisely and present them clearly to the world.

Discussing his latest project, **Madera**, Amereller explained that its mission is to deliver a truly authentic experience by showcasing Egyptian excellence and local craftsmanship, without relying on imported materials. The project thoughtfully incorporates stunning building materials sourced from Alexandria and other regions, creating a product that is both emotionally resonant and deeply rooted in Egypt's rich heritage.

He emphasized that Egypt should focus on promoting its unique heritage rather than imitating others, encouraging pride in the country's traditions and beauty, especially when presenting Egypt to international visitors. As a German working extensively with Egyptians, Amereller described the experience as unique and inspiring, **praising the creativity and excellence of Egyptian workers when properly motivated and appreciated**. He also underlined the critical role of attention to detail as a competitive advantage, helping ensure quality and ease of work while elevating the overall standard of the final product.

Dr. Ahmed Ghoneim, CEO of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), announced that the museum's grand opening ceremony will be a landmark event unlike any other.

"We are working closely with our partners to deliver an extraordinary celebration," he said, adding that invitations have already been extended to heads of state and prominent global

figures. This milestone event will serve as the launchpad for a series of celebrations scheduled to unfold over the coming months.

Set to become the largest museum in the world dedicated to a single civilization, the Grand Egyptian Museum is designed to offer an unparalleled, immersive visitor experience. Dr. Ghoneim emphasized that a multidisciplinary team of experts is advising on how to blend modern sophistication with authentic heritage, ensuring the museum stands as a symbol of Egypt's timeless legacy presented through a contemporary lens.

He further highlighted that the museum's vision focuses on creating a welcoming, innovative, and integrated environment, one that captivates visitors and redefines how Egypt's treasures are experienced and celebrated globally.

Continuing the conversation on how to elevate Egypt's global narrative, **Amy Mowafi, Co-founder and Managing Partner at MO4 Networks**, emphasized that Egypt possesses an unparalleled wealth of assets that few countries, regardless of their level of sophistication and development, can match. She noted that travelers are no longer drawn solely by famous landmarks or historic monuments; rather, **it is the human connections that bring people back to cities time and again** — the friendships formed, the experiences shared, and the emotional ties created along the way.

Speaking about the Grand Egyptian Museum's opening, Mowafi stressed the importance of **humanizing** the narrative surrounding this monumental institution.

"What we need to focus on is telling the stories of the artisans, restorers, architects, archaeologists, and curators behind the museum," she said. She proposed collaborating with platforms like **National Geographic** to produce documentaries, podcasts, and photo essays that spotlight the individuals who have contributed to the museum's creation.

Mowafi also suggested that the Grand Egyptian Museum could serve as a bridge connecting Egypt's ancient heritage to its future cultural innovations by sharing stories about the cutting-edge technologies used in restoration and showcasing new forms of interactive storytelling.

Building on the conversation about Egypt's unique appeal, **Sarah Gallo, Destination Marketing Strategist and Global Travel Expert at The Five Foot Traveler**, shared that what left the deepest impression on her during her visits to Egypt was the warmth and hospitality of its people. She pointed out that this vital aspect of the Egyptian experience is often overlooked or not fully conveyed, much like the deeper storytelling surrounding Egypt's famed destinations.

Gallo noted that Egypt holds a unique place in global imagination, as many grow up hearing about the Pyramids, the Nile, and the Sphinx. Yet, she emphasized, familiarity often stops at these iconic landmarks, leaving the country's rich cultural and human stories largely untold.

Through her work and ongoing projects, Gallo is committed to highlighting Egypt's hospitality and bringing to life the incredible stories and lesser-known destinations that many travelers rarely encounter. She stressed that Egypt is home to a wealth of extraordinary, yet underpromoted, experiences, offering tremendous potential to enhance tourism, especially from the American market.

Recommendations:

1. Establish a clear roadmap with defined objectives to fully leverage Egypt's vast potential.
2. Streamline procedures and reduce the timeframe for obtaining permits to build and operate factories, aiming for a maximum turnaround of two months.
3. Prioritize export growth and expand into international markets to strengthen the economy.
4. Strengthen technical education and training programs to produce a highly skilled workforce that can successfully compete in global markets.
5. Accelerate government efforts to complete infrastructure projects, providing a solid foundation for attracting investments.
6. Focus on delivering products and services that reflect Egypt's cultural identity while promoting the use of local resources in design and construction.
7. Highlight Egypt's lesser-known tourism destinations and present them in innovative ways to the global market, particularly targeting the American audience.
8. Capitalize on the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum as a launchpad to market Egypt as a unique tourism destination and to drive global media coverage.
9. Develop innovative marketing strategies leveraging social media and modern technologies to reach and engage target markets effectively.
10. Emphasize storytelling that captures Egypt's cultural and human heritage, moving beyond the traditional focus on iconic landmarks alone.

11. Draw on the expertise of international specialists to craft a renewed vision for Egypt as a leading tourism and investment destination.
12. Evolve museums into fully integrated cultural hubs that not only attract visitors but also strengthen cultural connections globally.

Panel Discussion 2: Empowering the Private Sector is Vital to Egypt's Growth and Prosperity

The summit featured a thought-provoking panel discussion titled “ **Empowering the Private Sector is Vital to Egypt's Growth and Prosperity,**” highlighting the significant role played by the private sector in fostering economic growth. The panel was moderated by Farzana Baduel, from Curzon PR London and featured a lineup of influential speakers including, Dr. Ahmed Moharram Founder and Managing Director, Anchorage Investments, Hisham El Khazindar Co-Founder & Managing Director of Qalaa Holdings, Ahmed Tarek, Entrepreneur & Visionary Investor, Dr. Sherif El Kholy Partner & Head of Middle East & Africa, Actis , Neveen Al Tahri Chairperson. Delta Shield for Investment, and Mounir Nakhla Founder & CEO of MNT-Halan

As a panelist in this session, **Dr. Ahmed Moharram, the Founder and Managing Director of Anchorage Investments Ltd.**, shed light on the pivotal role of the private sector in Egypt’s economic development and highlighted the enablers and challenges of launching one of Egypt’s largest private-sector industrial projects: the USD 2.2 billion Anchor Benitoite Petrochemical Complex in Ain Sokhna.

The Anchor Benitoite project, developed by Anchorage Investments, is a state-of-the-art petrochemical complex designed to produce 1.75 million tons per annum of high-value products along its different phases, including propylene, polypropylene, and acrylic acid derivatives. Located within the Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone), the facility leverages Egypt's strategic access to global shipping lanes, investment incentives, and regulatory facilitation.

"The private sector is a vital driving engine of economic growth. When we invest in large-scale, export-oriented industries, we not only generate revenue and jobs but also help Egypt grab global market shares, build competitiveness and long-term economic resilience," explained Moharram.

In his remarks, Dr. Moharram emphasized key enablers of private sector success, including Egypt’s strategic geographical location amidst global maritime routes, proactive government support, and access to international proven technology and international partners. He also addressed challenges such as some infrastructure and utility gaps requiring additional captive capital investments to bridge these gaps, policy stability considerations, and capital and operational costs’ uncertainties.

He also stressed on the significance of empowering the private sector by creating an investment friendly environment stating, "To truly empower the private sector, we need to simplify the regulatory environment, foster public-private partnerships particularly with regards to decarbonization infrastructure, and - with regards to greenfield capital-intensive manufacturing projects - work together on building confidence and improving investors' sentiment towards advocating investment decisions being taken into Egypt's greenfield projects not only brownfield turnarounds with quick targeted exits."

Dr. Moharram further explained the importance of addressing the challenge of the cost of capital for private sector investors and entrepreneurs, especially in capital-intensive projects. to enhance competitiveness and increase Egypt's share in global markets.

"This is not an easy prescription," he noted, "yet it still remains the ultimate antidote for achieving systematic and dynamic growth of private sector entrepreneurship."

In his remarks, **Hisham El Khazindar Co-Founder & Managing Director of Qalaa Holdings** highlighted Egypt's multifaceted competitive advantages, including its strategic location, large population, diversified economy, and key trade agreements, as a strong foundation for sustainable growth. He advocated for private sector investment in industries that drive local value creation and reduce import reliance, such as energy, renewables, agri-food, and water desalination. He also credited Egypt's improved infrastructure and the strength of its current economic leadership as critical enablers of long-term economic resilience and investor confidence.

During his talk in the panel, **Ahmed Tarek, cross-sector entrepreneur with investments in education, healthcare, and business innovation**, centered his message around the concept of "**conscious capitalism**"—an approach to business that balances profit-making with purpose and social impact. He stressed that while capitalism often carries negative connotations, it can be a force for good when anchored in empathy, responsibility, and long-term thinking. Tarek argued that conscious capitalism should not be viewed as a foreign concept, but rather one deeply embedded in Egyptian culture, highlighting that giving back is part of the national identity, even if not always labeled as such.

In his statement, **Dr. Sherif El Kholy, Partner & Head of Middle East & Africa at ACTIS**, emphasized the urgent need to recalibrate Egypt's economic model by significantly expanding the role of the private sector. He pointed out that private investment and exports currently account for only 17% of the economy, while consumption and government spending dominate at 83%. Dr. El Kholy praised current efforts to reverse this imbalance, noting early signs of progress, including declining public investment and a rise in private-sector participation. He also praised the current economic leadership team, describing it

as one of the strongest in years, and expressed optimism about Egypt’s trajectory if it prioritizes private sector-driven development.

Highlighting the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation, **Neveen Al Tahri, Chairperson of Delta Shield for Investment**, identified intrapreneurship as a crucial driver of innovation within organizations. She emphasized that employees can create and lead new initiatives from within companies, citing examples like Orange and Danone. Al Tahri urged businesses to empower internal talent, stressing that fostering intrapreneurship is essential for sustainable growth and innovation.

On the importance of democratizing funding, **Mounir Nakhla, Founder and CEO of MNT-Halan**, emphasized the critical importance of improving access to funding for small entrepreneurs, describing them as the backbone of Egypt’s economy despite inflation. He highlighted the lack of banking sector motivation to democratize funding, noting the significant opportunity for fintech companies to fill this gap. He also stressed the transformative potential of digital infrastructure, which could exponentially expand financial inclusion.

Recommendations:

1. Streamlining regulatory procedures and minimizing bureaucratic red tape to create a more efficient, transparent, and investor-friendly environment. This includes simplifying licensing processes and reducing approval timelines to enable quicker decision-making and execution for private sector projects.
2. Encouraging private sector investment in high-impact industries that offer opportunities to substitute imports and enhance local value creation. Priority sectors include energy, gas distribution, renewables, water desalination, and agri-food—each with the potential to reduce dependency on foreign goods, improve trade balance, and strengthen Egypt’s economic self-reliance.
3. Enabling private sector-led growth across key industries such as manufacturing, mining, agriculture, tourism, and ICT to stimulate secondary industries and create a multiplier effect, ultimately improving the current account balance, attracting FDI, and building economic resilience.
4. Integrating private sector financing, technical know-how, and global best practices into key economic projects, particularly in manufacturing, to ease public budget pressures and reallocate resources toward strategic sectors like education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
5. Establish public-private partnership frameworks for decarbonization infrastructure—such as carbon transport pipelines, storage, and sequestration facilities—to attract private investment in heavy industry and the broader Oil & Gas value chain.

6. Maintain a coordinated national effort to improve Egypt's credit rating, enhancing the credibility of Egyptian investments in the eyes of foreign investors and global capital markets.
7. Promote purpose-led leadership and conscious capitalism by encouraging Egyptian business leaders to adopt a values-driven approach that prioritizes long-term impact over short-term profit. This includes investing in job creation, community development, and environmental sustainability.
8. Advocating for an economic framework where the private sector leads growth, supported by an enabling government that creates the conditions for investment and innovation while redefining the role for the state, focusing on regulation, enablement, and strategic collaboration rather than direct economic participation.
9. Leverage Egypt's young, tech-savvy population to drive the adoption of emerging technologies like AI, expanding financial inclusion and enhancing access to funding for small entrepreneurs, while positioning the country at the forefront of global economic transformation.

Panel Discussion 3: History and Culture: Perception of Egypt

During a distinguished panel discussion titled “**History and Culture: Perception of Egypt**” held as part of the summit’s events and moderated by **Malak Fouad**, Founder of A&T Media and Host of the renowned podcast “What I Did Next”, a number of experts and artists took part, including **Bettany Hughes**, British Award Winning Historian, Author and Broadcaster; **Mahmoud Sabit**, Egyptian Historian, Lecturer, and Political Commentator; **Zach Sherif**, Interior and Lighting Designer, Creative Director, and Producer of Events and Films; **Louis Barthélemy**, Multidisciplinary Artist and Designer; and **Maria Shallonbarger**, Luxury Travel Journalist and Editor at the Financial Times.

The distinguished Historian Mahmoud Sabit explained that Egypt’s history is a rich and expansive field that goes far beyond the Pharaonic era, encompassing other significant periods such as the 19th century. That period marked a pivotal turning point, as Egypt experienced a major renaissance that transitioned it from a state resembling the medieval era into the modern age. He pointed out that Egypt’s history demonstrates that Egyptians are the product of deep-rooted institutions, not merely minorities, an insight that reinforces their national identity. However, this history is sometimes neglected or marginalized, which is unfortunate, as national identity draws its strength from such a rich and enduring legacy. Cairo, home to one of the world’s richest legacies of Islamic architecture, has withstood centuries of historical upheavals, from the Crusades onward. Preserving this architectural and human heritage is both a challenge and an opportunity to revive Egypt’s rich historical narrative. It underscores the need to recognize history as a vital part of Egyptian identity and to intensify efforts to protect and promote Egypt’s enduring role in shaping the region and the world.

Bettany Hughes, a renowned British Historian, Author, and Broadcaster, shared her deep affection for Egypt, describing it as a passion that began in childhood when a teacher first introduced her to Egyptian culture. "At the age of five, I decided to become a historian because of that encounter," she said, emphasizing that Egypt has been an essential part of her life ever since.

Hughes explained that culture is not merely a product or a place, but a continuous process that demands effort and respect for the environment and heritage around us. Throughout history, humanity has consistently demonstrated a profound instinct for creativity and cultural expression. Egyptian history, in particular, has long been synonymous with excellence, where "Made in Egypt" once stood as a mark of greatness.

She stressed that culture is vital because it reflects identity, and that history is not just a record of the past, but a foundation for imagination and future possibilities. Highlighting Egypt’s ancient wonders, Hughes noted that monuments like the Pyramids are

not just symbols, but extraordinary achievements of human civilization. She underscored the importance of spotlighting Egypt's ancient marvels, including the Great Pyramid and the Lighthouse of Alexandria, encouraging the world to rediscover their magnificence, engage with their stories, and deepen their appreciation for Egypt's cultural legacy.

Continuing the discussion on culture and the preservation of Egypt's heritage, the International Artist Louis Barthélemy presented his vision for preserving Egypt's craftsmanship and heritage, pointing out that it is not enough to define Egypt solely through its grand Pharaonic past. "By doing so, we risk erasing the living heritage that brings our cities and villages to life today," he said. This was mentioned during his speech at Narrative Summit 2025, where he spoke about the importance of preserving Egypt's living heritage, embodied in all the handicrafts, such as weaving, embroidery, ceramics, mosaics, and other traditional techniques. He pointed out that preservation of crafts is about preserving identity, not out of nostalgia, but to emphasize the ability to change, continuity, and resilience.

Meanwhile, **Zach Sherif, Interior Designer and Creative Director**, announced the launch of a new initiative aimed at promoting Egyptian culture and arts through a global public-private collaboration. He noted that throughout history, Egypt has experienced several "revival waves," becoming a global cultural epicenter and inspiring the phenomenon known as *Egyptomania*.

The project, titled "**The Great Egyptian Year**," will feature synchronized events across major global museums, collaborations with top fashion houses, documentary film productions, and small art exhibitions worldwide — all within a coordinated year-long campaign.

Sherif emphasized the need to establish a joint design council between the public and private sectors to oversee urban planning that honors Egypt's architectural heritage while integrating contemporary visions. He further proposed engaging modern architects and sculptors to create iconic works that would reassert Egypt's status as a leading global hub for culture, design, and innovation.

Maria Shallenberger, a Luxury Travel Journalist and Editor at the Financial Times.stated: "During my trip to Florence, Italy, I found it to be a living example of how to create environments that preserve vitality for both locals and visitors". Florence, like Egypt, has a rich heritage that spans from ancient civilizations to modern infrastructure, making it a great source for case studies on how to blend the past with the present". In Italy, there are successful partnerships between the public and private sectors, such as transforming historical buildings into modern educational centers and museums. We can compare these experiences to what's happening in Cairo, such as the creative initiatives in the city, like the Ramadan activities that have revived public spaces. Such ideas can reinforce the

image of cities and transform them into global cultural destinations by combining local heritage with modern experiences.

Recommendations:

1. Strengthen the nation's branding by highlighting Egypt's diverse history, with particular focus on pivotal periods such as the 19th century.
2. Preserve Cairo's rich Islamic architecture and its associated cultural heritage, reviving it as a source of national and global pride while leveraging it as a powerful tool for cultural and tourism promotion.
3. Showcase Egypt's lesser-known wonders beyond the pyramids, such as the Lighthouse of Alexandria, through international cultural and media initiatives that present Egypt as a multifaceted tourism and cultural destination.
4. Foster meaningful dialogue between past and present—between traditional crafts and contemporary design—and between rural artisans and global audiences.
5. Establish a formal and integrated legal framework recognizing the status of artisans, including retirement systems, incentives for apprenticeship training, and the integration of handicrafts into national development strategies, education, and cultural diplomacy.
6. Launch state-supported training programs and empower young Egyptians to lead these initiatives to preserve traditional craftsmanship while simultaneously creating sustainable job opportunities.
7. Grant artisans formal recognition and invite them to represent Egypt at regional and international exhibitions as cultural ambassadors.
8. Create a dedicated entity to provide economic and social security for artisans, the majority of whom work informally without contracts, healthcare, or insurance—bridging both a socioeconomic gap and preventing cultural erosion.
9. To preserve the artistic legacy of *Khayamiya* (Egyptian tent-making), establish an institution or dedicated space that functions partly as a museum and partly as an educational hub celebrating and transmitting this unique craft.

Panel Discussion 4: Futureproofing: How to Handle Shocks and Stresses

A panel discussion session titled "**Futureproofing: How to Handle Shocks and Stresses**" reviewed several models of challenges and how to confront them, moderated by **Steven Shepperson Smith**, a board member of the Global Alliance for Public Relations, with participation from: **Irene Lungu**, Head of Corporate Affairs at Zambia Forestry Company, **Professor Justin Green**, President & CEO of the Global Alliance for Public Relations & Communication Management, **Ayman Ismail**, Chairman of the board of UN Global Compact Egypt Network, **Dr. Rawya Mansour**, Founder and Chairwoman of RAMSCO Trade and Distribution Company and **Dr. Ibrahim Hegazy**, Professor of Marketing at the American University in Cairo.

Ayman Ismail, Chairman of the UN Global Compact Egypt Network board, emphasized that sustainability has become a core element for competition in global markets and is no longer just a social responsibility or a formal requirement. He also confirmed that Egypt needs to shift from being a "land of opportunities" to being prepared to face political or economic global shocks, focusing on building resilience as a core part of its economic approach. He pointed out that boosting exports is essential for Egypt to remain economically competitive, pointing out that Egypt must significantly scale up its export volume to match countries like Turkey, which currently outperform it by a wide margin. He highlighted the role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which represent **90%** of economic activities, but are struggling with a lack of export readiness due to the absence of sustainability certifications and market knowledge. He announced the launch of the "Ready Egypt" initiative in collaboration with the United Nations, aimed at qualifying SMEs for export by assessing their readiness, providing training programs to enhance their efficiency, and strengthening compliance with international standards.

For her part, **Dr. Rawya Mansour, Founder and Chairwoman of RAMSCO Trade and Distribution Company**, stated: "We must prepare for water scarcity, and according to the United Nations, Alexandria will be submerged, leading to the displacement of approximately **6** million people from the northern coast to the inland. We must prepare for this scenario by utilizing desert farming technologies and creating waste-free ecological villages. Studies show that 1.5 million acres in Egypt could be cultivated using sustainable agricultural techniques, with the potential to establish eco-villages, each supporting 1,000 people on just 18 acres. However, challenges remain, including limited support for organic farming and restricted land access for women in agriculture. Despite Egypt's vulnerability to climate change, international climate funding remains scarce. To strengthen food security and curb irregular migration to Europe, Egypt must prioritize rural investment, backed by financial commitments from developed nations responsible for the bulk of global emissions."

Irene Lungu, Head of Corporate Affairs at Zambia Forestry Company, said: "I work in the forestry sector, where we manage around **63,000** hectares, making sustainability a top priority to ensure the continuity of resources. We plant trees in new areas and reforest the regions we utilize to maintain sustainable supplies. The impact of climate change has become tangible, as our country experienced severe drought during the **2023-2024** rainy season, which affected the planting of young trees and resulted in a significant energy shortage due to our reliance on hydroelectric power. To adapt, we have invested in alternative energy sources, such as solar power at both the institutional and individual levels. There is growing awareness of the need for sustainability among businesses and individuals, as sustainability is no longer viewed merely as a social initiative but as a fundamental environmental obligation".

Professor Justin Green, President & CEO of the Global Alliance for Public Relations & Communication Management pointed out that the World Economic Forum in Davos discussed the biggest short-term challenge: the spread of fake news and misinformation. The United Nations has emphasized that this is one of the most pressing challenges of our time. "Therefore, at the "Global Alliance", we created an initiative to enhance responsible communication with the aim of combating misinformation that negatively affects communities and threatens the credibility of institutions. Over the past year and a half, we have held meetings with the United Nations, the World Bank, and the European Commission, as well as several other countries, to reinforce this idea globally. It is crucial for Egypt to rise to this challenge, especially in the tourism sector, which could generate additional billions through positive and responsible communication." He elaborated.

Dr. Ibrahim Hegazy, Professor of Marketing at the American University in Cairo, emphasized that the number of tourists increased between **2022** and **2024** by nearly **36%**, estimated from **10-11** million to about **16** million tourists, reflecting Egypt's resilience. Additionally, tourism revenues increased from **10** billion dollars in **2022** to nearly **16** billion dollars in **2024**, reflecting a more than 40% increase. However, two urgent priorities remain for advancing Egypt's tourism sector. First, strengthening sustainable tourism by integrating practices like green mobility and eco-conscious development, and ensuring these efforts are visible on the international stage. Second, diversifying tourism offerings beyond cultural sites and beach resorts by promoting sectors such as health tourism, adventure tourism, and experiences that showcase Egypt's unique natural assets.

Recommendations:

1. Prioritize export as a core pillar of economic competitiveness.
2. Support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through capacity building and sustainability certification programs.
3. Strengthen economic policies to build resilience against political and financial shocks.

4. Provide targeted support for organic farmers and incentivize investment in the organic agriculture sector.
5. Strive for national food self-sufficiency by reducing dependency on imports.
6. Implement development projects in rural areas to generate employment opportunities and promote social stability.
7. Encourage the re-cultivation of underutilized land and expand afforestation initiatives in new areas.
8. Promote environmental awareness among schoolchildren and local communities.
9. Increase investment in renewable energy sources, such as solar power, while advancing policies that reduce reliance on traditional energy resources.
10. Develop a national strategy to combat fake news and misinformation.
11. Train media institutions and individuals in source verification and fact-checking techniques.

Panel Discussion 5: Sports as a Unifying Force for Communities

Sports have long been a powerful driver of unity, bringing people together and strengthening social bonds. Yet today, sports also stand out as a dynamic engine for investment and economic growth. This panel, moderated by **Ayman Hakki, Founder of the TriFactory**, explored how sports can serve as a bridge between communities while creating valuable economic and investment opportunities. Through compelling success stories, the discussion shed light on the vital role of sports in fostering connection and driving sustainable development.

Amr El-Sonbaty, Egypt's Parliament Member, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Heliopolis Sporting Club, and Founder of Smash Academy, emphasized that **sports investment is no longer a luxury**, but a critical pillar for boosting the economy and increasing GDP. He noted that sports define national identity and are an essential part of Egypt's cultural and civilizational fabric. Beyond fostering a healthy and productive society, sports today represent one of the world's most profitable economic sectors, ranking as the **second-largest industry globally in terms of revenue**.

El-Sonbaty stressed that Egypt's massive investment in sports infrastructure must be supported by a professional and capable administrative system to effectively manage and maximize these resources, including stadiums, training facilities, and athlete hosting centers.

Adding a personal perspective to the conversation, **Ahmed Elgendy, Egypt's modern pentathlon champion and Paris 2024 Olympian**, called on Egyptian families to support their children's athletic talents, sharing how his own family's encouragement was central to his success. Having started at the age of six, Elgendy emphasized the importance of athletes setting clear goals, not simply practicing sports, but striving to reach excellence through purpose and determination.

Building on the broader socioeconomic dimensions of sports, **Omar El Borolossy, President & Managing Director at ElBorolossy Squash Academy**, underlined the role of the middle class as the primary engine of sports development in Egypt. He noted that over 90% of athletes and sports participants come from this demographic. However, due to recent economic challenges, middle-class families are increasingly unable to sustain participation, particularly in high-cost individual sports like squash. El Borolossy highlighted Egypt's dominance in the sport, where Egyptian players consistently hold the top global rankings, reinforcing squash as a national asset worth preserving and investing in.

Building on the discussion around widening access to sports and capitalizing on Egypt's strengths, **Hassan Khalifa, CEO of Pioneers Insurance Brokerage and Managing Partner at Stamina Sports & Fitness**, highlighted two key priorities for developing Egypt's sports landscape. The first is encouraging non-athletes to engage in regular physical activity, and the second is positioning Egypt as a host for major international sports events such as "Ironman" and "Oceanman". He emphasized that these global competitions offer inclusive platforms where both amateurs and professionals can participate in inspiring physical challenges. With its nice climate and beautiful coastlines, more favorable than the colder seas of many competing countries, **Egypt is ideally suited to host such events**. Khalifa noted that expanding Egypt's presence in the global sports calendar would significantly enhance **sports tourism**, attracting large numbers of international athletes and their families, and ultimately boosting the local economy.

Shifting focus to the personal branding side of sports, **Ahmed Abdoun, Founder and CEO of 7 Agency**, underscored the importance of building athlete representation strategies early in their careers. **He stressed the need to align marketing and sponsorship strategies with each athlete's personal vision and goals**, helping shape their public image and unlock long-term potential.

Abdoun shared inspiring examples such as **Ali Farag**, who shattered the stereotype that athletes underperform academically. Farag graduated from Harvard and went on to become a four-time world squash champion and the current world Number One. He also spotlighted **Omar Marmoush**, a testament to what perseverance and discipline can achieve, as he rose to become one of the most promising footballers on the global stage.

Recommendations:

- Encourage companies and sponsors to provide financial and logistical support to help families sustain their children's participation in sports.
- Support athletes not only to prepare champions but also to foster physically and mentally healthy individuals and protect youth from harmful behavior, contributing to Egypt's image as a modern, progressive nation.
- Recognize that investing in sports is an investment in our children, in the future of our country, and in its international reputation. Therefore, supporting sports should be a national priority.
- Understand that athletic success requires more than talent and training—it depends on a holistic ecosystem that includes psychological support, scientific planning, and advanced talent development programs from an early age.

- Ensure effective management of sports facilities to maximize their potential, enhance foreign currency inflows, and drive successful sports investments.
- Prioritize strategic marketing under global entities to promote Egypt's capabilities in hosting major sporting events. These organizations influence where top athletes and teams train, similar to Spain's success in attracting elite training camps.
- Intensify efforts to increase sports investment as a powerful driver of economic growth, job creation, improved living standards, and overall quality of life.
- Introduce new legislation and incentives to attract both local and foreign investment into Egypt's sports sector and unlock its full potential.
- Create university-level athletic scholarship programs, similar to international models, to attract and retain top sports talent while boosting the prestige of Egyptian academic institutions.
- Provide the necessary support to encourage public participation in sports through accessible training facilities and nationwide awareness campaigns.
- Invest in resources to host international sports championships, thereby enhancing tourism and economic development.
- Promote the regular organization of local and international sporting events to support healthy lifestyles and position Egypt as a hub for sports tourism.

Panel Discussion 6: Entrepreneurship and Driving Tourism: Stories that Need to Be Told

A panel discussion titled "**Entrepreneurship and Driving Tourism: Stories that Need to Be Told**" was held as part of the summit, moderated by **AbdelHamid Sharara**, Founder of **RiseUp Summit**. The session featured key figures including **Amr Mansi**, Founder and CEO of **I Events**, **Paul Antaki**, Founder of **Premium International for Financial Services**, **Hala Hegazy**, Managing Director and Group COO of **NRP Group (Nogoum FM - Nile FM)**, **Mohamed Abou Ghaly**, CEO and Board Member of **Abou Ghaly Motors**, and **Mohamed El Kahhal**, Managing Director of **Kahhal Looms**.

During the session, **Hala Hegazy, Managing Director and Group COO of NRP Group (Nogoum FM - Nile FM)** stated: "We began our journey over 20 years ago and have achieved remarkable success. Today, we are proud to have 45 million daily listeners, commanding 90% of the market share and maintaining the top spot in global radio ratings.

What drives us is our deep love for Egypt. Our unique media voice resonates across the world, and we use it to highlight positivity and spotlight major events—all through our own efforts. What we lack, however, is official commissioning to cover and promote these significant events globally—something we see as a national duty, one we are more than willing to take on. We've built a loyal and wide-reaching audience and firmly believe in our ability to deliver impactful, clear messaging to every individual across the country."

Following Hala Hegazy's remarks, **Paul Antaki, Founder of Premium International for Financial Services**, shared his inspiring journey from the world of fashion, his true passion, where he began by launching his own brand. He later acquired licenses to manufacture international products locally, contributing significantly to the advancement of Egypt's domestic industry. Today, he proudly operates 95 stores across the country, all offering competitively priced, locally manufactured goods. In 2023, he organized the first-ever fashion week at the Egyptian Museum, a landmark event that empowered Egyptian designers to launch globally competitive brands, particularly as Egyptian cotton continues to enjoy worldwide acclaim. Antaki emphasized the importance of seizing the current momentum to host fashion festivals with a distinctly Egyptian identity. To do so, he urged improvements in store presentation, signage, and the overall shopping experience, noting that with strategic planning and support, Egypt can establish itself as a leading player in the fashion and retail sector.

Adding to the discussion, **Mohamed El Kahhal, Managing Director of Kahhal Looms**, reflected on his company's legacy in handwoven carpets—a tradition spanning more than 150 years. He underscored the values of quality, dedication, and a clear brand vision,

noting that building a brand is not merely about a name, but the value it adds to the product. While Egypt is home to many exceptional products, he observed that the country historically lacked a strong branding culture—a gap that has begun to narrow in recent years. Around two decades ago, Kahhal Looms launched the “Mamlouk” collection, featuring 100% authentically Egyptian designs. The collection became a bestseller, outperforming traditional copied patterns. All their carpets are crafted using entirely local materials, and El Kahhal stressed that handmade textile production is a national treasure that must be preserved, not only for economic gain but as a vital expression of Egypt’s cultural heritage.

Continuing the session, **Mohamed Abou Ghaly, CEO and Board Member of Abou Ghaly Motors**, shared the inspiring journey of his company, which began in 1980 and has since evolved through a consistent drive for innovation. He recounted the bold decision to introduce the iconic “London Cab” concept to Egypt in 2009, driven by a vision to improve transportation solutions within the country. **“Entrepreneurship,” he stated, “is not just a profession—it’s a mindset. Everyone in their field should adopt this spirit.”** Inspired by the expansion of Cairo Airport in 2010, Abou Ghaly launched “London Cab” as a safe and reliable airport transit option. This initiative eventually evolved into the broader “Safe Journey” concept, enabling secure and convenient mobility across Egypt. He also introduced the London Cab mobile application, a testament to the company’s belief in turning challenges into opportunities and continuously seeking growth even in uncertain times.

Building on the theme of innovation and opportunity, **Amr Mansi, Founder and CEO of I Events**, recounted his own journey from professional squash player to successful entrepreneur, stating, “I began my journey as a professional squash player, but my passion for creating experiences led me down a different path. I founded a company specializing in sports event management and launched the El Gouna International Squash Tournament, which quickly gained global recognition. That success encouraged me to expand into broader event planning, including co-founding the El Gouna Film Festival—an experience that marked a major milestone in my career.

Later, I launched the “Million Pound Menu” project and participated in the “Shark Tank” TV show, building on the momentum we had created. One of the standout collaborations for me was with “London Cab.” It was a truly exceptional experience that left a meaningful impact on everyone involved, reaffirming my belief in the power of collaboration and bold ideas.”

Recommendations:

- Support successful media platforms in Egypt to cover key national events and help project a positive image of the country globally.
- Invest in building strong brand identities for locally made products to enhance their global competitiveness.
- Host international events such as fashion weeks to showcase the quality of Egyptian products and help local designers gain global exposure.
- Promote entrepreneurship as a mindset across all sectors, while encouraging the adoption of innovative ideas and solutions.
- Strengthen efforts to organize cultural and sports events that boost tourism and reinforce Egypt's identity as a diverse, experience-rich destination.
- Preserve Egypt's cultural heritage by supporting traditional crafts industries such as handmade carpets and textiles, ensuring their development and sustainability.

Building Egypt's Narrative Through Art, Talent, and Human Connection

In a fireside chat moderated by Dina Ghabbour, entrepreneur and founder of the W podcast, the renowned **Mario Testino, visionary photographer, creative director, and cultural storyteller**, delivered a powerful reflection on the true essence of cultural identity and nation branding. He emphasized that while Egypt's historic monuments are unparalleled, the real heart of the country lies in its people—their warmth, resilience, and humanity. He urged that Egypt's narrative should focus not only on its ancient wonders but also on the vibrant, authentic spirit of its citizens. He also praised Egypt's rich fashion heritage and traditional dress, blending history, art, and modernity in his photography to showcase the depth and elegance of Egyptian culture.

Reflecting on his journeys across continents, **Mario Testino** spoke with emotion about the beauty of discovering what unites humanity rather than what divides it. "Through my camera, I've captured the quiet resilience, pride, and traditions that endure across cultures, whether it's the descendants of enslaved people in Latin America preserving their memories through rituals and dress, or communities in Africa maintaining their identity across generations. Every country tells its own story, but it is the common human spirit—the instinct to remember, to create, to endure—that truly unites us. We must move beyond a world obsessed with differences and find strength and beauty in our shared experiences. In doing so, we don't just tell a country's story; we weave it into the greater, timeless narrative of humanity itself."

When asked about the inevitable impact of AI, Testino regarded it as an opportunity for **reinvention and adaptability**. He emphasized that embracing change with optimism is the true key to resilience, much like buildings designed to sway during earthquakes in his native Peru. Reflecting on his career, he acknowledged the societal barriers he faced early on and how humor, humility, and a love for life helped him overcome them. Testino closed with a profound message: beyond all achievements, what matters most is to **enjoy life fully**, and to remember that true success lies not only in professional accomplishments but in living with joy, resilience, and gratitude.

In another fireside chat moderated by Lamia Kamel, Founder of the Narrative Summit and Managing Director of CC Plus, with **Hisham Kharma, the Renowned Music Composer and Producer**, he underscored music's pivotal role in expressing nations' identities. He emphasized the importance of crafting distinctive and specialized music for significant and grand events, as this can propagate internationally, creating marketing propaganda and thus bringing a lot of traffic to tourist destinations.

“We are fortunate to have an abundance of stunning historical and natural sites that provide exceptional settings for filming songs, presenting a fantastic opportunity to boost tourism. With this in mind, I advocate for simplified permit procedures to encourage such creative initiatives.” Moreover, I emphasize the importance of well-planned tourism promotion campaigns that establish He added.

Kharma also highlighted the urgent need to build a structured and sustainable creative economy in Egypt, particularly within the music and arts sectors. He pointed out the current gap between talented individuals, brands, and institutions, emphasizing that isolated, individual efforts are not enough. Instead, he called for institutional collaboration to support initiatives such as music festivals, which can significantly impact the economy and elevate Egypt’s global cultural presence. Kharma stressed that it should not be solely the responsibility of artists to chase funding, but rather a coordinated effort between brands, investors, and cultural institutions.

Recommendations:

1. Highlight Egypt’s human story alongside its historic monuments and showcase the spirit, warmth, and resilience of its people as a core part of the nation’s branding. This approach will help create a more powerful emotional connection with international audiences while strengthening Egypt’s tourism appeal.
2. Invest in artistic and cultural storytelling initiatives, such as photography, fashion, and visual arts, that celebrate shared human experiences and present Egypt as a vibrant, relatable, and culturally rich destination on the global stage.
3. Embrace AI as a supportive tool in artistic and creative production, viewing it as an opportunity for reinvention and adaptability rather than a threat, to enhance innovation and sustain cultural storytelling.
4. Ensuring streamlined permit processes for filming music videos and clips in Egypt's picturesque tourist locations to promote tourism.
5. Create a structured creative industry ecosystem that trains young talents in personal branding, royalties, music management, and intellectual property, supported by a "talent factory" model to nurture and sustain artistic careers.
6. Establish dedicated funding channels with local and international investors to finance major cultural projects and festivals, encouraging private sector leadership to drive broader institutional and governmental support.

Speech by Dr. Rania Al-Mashat, Minister of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation

Dr. Rania Al-Mashat, Egypt's Minister of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation, participated in the ninth edition of the "Narrative Summit" held under the auspices of the Ministries of Planning and Economic Development, Investment and Foreign Trade, and Youth and Sports. The summit was attended by Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports; Major General Amr Hanafy, Governor of the Red Sea; businessman and former Minister of Transport Sir Mohamed Mansour; and a wide array of private sector representatives.

In her remarks, Dr. Al-Mashat addressed the escalating global challenges that have persisted since 2020, pointing to ongoing geopolitical tensions and successive economic shocks that continue to shape the world's economic landscape.

A National Narrative for Economic Development

She noted that the Ministry is actively working to craft a cohesive national narrative for economic development, one that transitions Egypt toward a productivity-driven model focused on tradable sectors and high-value exports. This strategy centers on key priorities: attracting foreign direct investment, accelerating industrial development, localizing manufacturing, enhancing infrastructure, creating job opportunities, supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, expanding green projects, and improving the overall business climate to enable a more prominent role for the private sector.

Dr. Al-Mashat emphasized that none of these goals can be achieved without adequate financing. To that end, the Ministry spearheads efforts to unlock development financing by mobilizing domestic resources and leveraging innovative and blended finance mechanisms. She highlighted the launch of Egypt's **National Integrated Strategy for Development Finance**—the first of its kind. This strategy provides a comprehensive framework to bridge funding gaps across priority sectors and lays out a roadmap for sustainable, innovative financing. It also seeks to increase foreign direct investment, deepen partnerships with the private sector, and institutionalize governance, monitoring, and evaluation frameworks.

She stressed that macroeconomic stability remains a prerequisite for sustainable development. Since March 2024, the government has taken bold steps to implement structural and economic reforms, stabilize fiscal and monetary policy, and introduce targeted incentives to empower the private sector. These initiatives form part of an integrated policy package designed to foster a more competitive investment climate and unlock new opportunities for both domestic and international investors.

Dr. Al-Mashat concluded by affirming that Egypt possesses several competitive advantages that position it as one of the most diversified economies in the region. The

country's robust infrastructure, developed over the past decade, enhances its capacity for industrial growth and supports its emergence as a regional hub for energy and the green economy. Egypt has made significant strides in this direction by strengthening public-private partnerships, launching the first voluntary carbon credit exchange market for the private sector, and expanding access to green financing through instruments like debt swaps, green bonds, and developmental finance.

She underscored that Egypt's unique geographical location, rich natural resources, and dynamic, youthful population, with a strong spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship, are key enablers of future growth.

Speech by Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports

During the opening of the ninth edition of the "Narrative Summit" held in Soma Bay, Red Sea, Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports, delivered a keynote speech, in which he highlighted the Ministry's achievements and strategic plan to boost investment in the sports sector.

Advancing Sports Investment

Dr. Sobhy noted that since 2018, the ministry has implemented mechanisms to enhance sports-related investment opportunities, aiming to increase the sector's contribution to Egypt's GDP to 3%, an ambitious target that exceeds benchmarks in many other countries. He emphasized that sports have become one of the most attractive sectors for both local and international investment.

Competitive Advantages for Sports Investment

Dr. Sobhy highlighted Egypt's unique advantages that make it an ideal hub for sports investment, ranging from its year-round nice weather and rich cultural and geographic diversity to the major strides in infrastructure, especially the upgraded road networks across the country.

He emphasized that under "Egypt Vision 2030," the government has firmly placed sports at the heart of its national development agenda. This commitment is reflected in the sweeping upgrades to sports facilities, expanded youth engagement programs, and a significantly more attractive investment climate made possible by progressive legislation, simplified procedures, and compelling incentives.

Egypt as a Regional Sports Hub

He reiterated Egypt's ambition to become a regional hub for the sports industry in the Middle East and Africa by hosting major international events, encouraging the establishment of academies and specialized centers, and aligning the sports economy with global standards. Dr. Sobhy also underscored the importance of encouraging sports clubs and federations to establish sports services companies to ensure financial sustainability and improve marketing and management operations. He called for stronger partnerships with the private sector, particularly in developing sports medicine, a vital component in athlete preparation and performance enhancement.

He concluded by announcing the launch of the Sports Services Licensing Platform, designed to streamline the licensing process and offer a flexible, fully integrated digital environment to support sports-related businesses in Egypt. Dr. Sobhy also praised the organization of the Narrative Summit, describing it as a powerful platform to showcase Egypt's capabilities in tourism, investment, and hosting world-class events, while also elevating its regional and global presence.

Speech by Major General Amr Hanafy, Governor of the Red Sea

During his speech at the Narrative Summit, Major General Amr Hanafy, Governor of the Red Sea, emphasized the state's major achievements in recent years, especially the strategic development plan for the city of Hurghada. He noted that within a short timeframe, numerous developmental, service-oriented, and tourism projects have been completed, transforming Hurghada into a competitive global tourism destination.

He also underlined the government's strong commitment to supporting the private sector by removing obstacles to local and foreign investment across various sectors. Hanafy proudly announced that *TripAdvisor*, the world-renowned travel platform, ranked Hurghada as the second-best tourist destination in the Middle East after Dubai in 2023, based on traveler reviews. Notably, this wasn't the city's first international recognition; in 2022, Hurghada was named among the world's top 10 travel destinations and among the top 25 global spots for sun and nature lovers.

Governor Hanafy described the *Narrative Summit* as a celebration of entrepreneurship and a vital platform for connecting innovators and investors to foster economic growth. He expressed his appreciation to the summit's organizers for their efforts to project a positive image of Egypt globally and promote it as a world-class tourist destination, directly supporting the state's sustainable development goals and economic growth efforts.