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## Introduction

The Narrative PR Summit was launched as an initiative in October 2016 to later become a regular annual summit taking place in Egypt, bringing under one roof the country's most powerful brand leaders with the aim of creating a positive brand image for Egypt.

**Joining forces to create a strong country brand to regain control of Egypt's narrative**

The way a country is expressed and perceived can significantly contribute to the success of its business, trade and tourism efforts, as well as its diplomatic and cultural ties with other nations.

Egypt's story is currently being told by others, which makes it more necessary that the country be in charge of its own narrative. The most effective way to do so is through employing a comprehensive nation-branding strategy that goes far beyond showing tourism potential a global communications campaign.

Egypt's Ministry of International Cooperation has worked to secure grants and funding to finance Egypt's nation branding-related projects

## Measuring nation brands

The 2017 Nation Brands report, published in October by Brand Finance, shows that France is amongst the top 20 most valuable nation brands in the world, and has continued to significantly increase its brand value this year. This is put down to the French government's efforts to develop and bolster its nation brand worldwide.

To measure the value of nation brands, Finance has created a nation brand strength index, which takes into account a wide range of criteria of investment conditions including training and skills, social environment, corruption level, quality of life, as well as market conditions for goods and services.

In a global marketplace, a strong nation brand has become a principal asset for any country. The key aspect making a nation brand strong is addressing all

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appealing segments of the country by encouraging foreign investments, boosting value of exports, attracting tourists and drawing global consumers.

- We have compiled a considerable input provided by 39 speakers who took part in the 2017 Narrative PR Summit which had a special focus on nation branding. A committee of experts has been set up to look at recommendations put forward during the summit and examine ways to carry them out. These members include: Lamia Kamel - Strategic Communication Expert – CC Plus, MD & Narrative PR Summit founder, Hany Mahmoud - Administrative Expert – former Minister of Administrative Development & former Minister of Communications and Information Technology – Chairman Vodafone Egypt, Ibrahim EL Manesterly - Industry Expert – Head of the Industrial Control Authority (ICA), Ehab Mostafa -Technology Expert – former ETIDA Head – GM Business Unit Dell Metra, and Sherif Abdel kader - Branding & Marketing Expert - MSc International Marketing & Nation Branding, University of Strathclyde, UK”

Below are the corporate image of Egypt and the factors affecting it (controllable as opposed to uncontrollable factors):

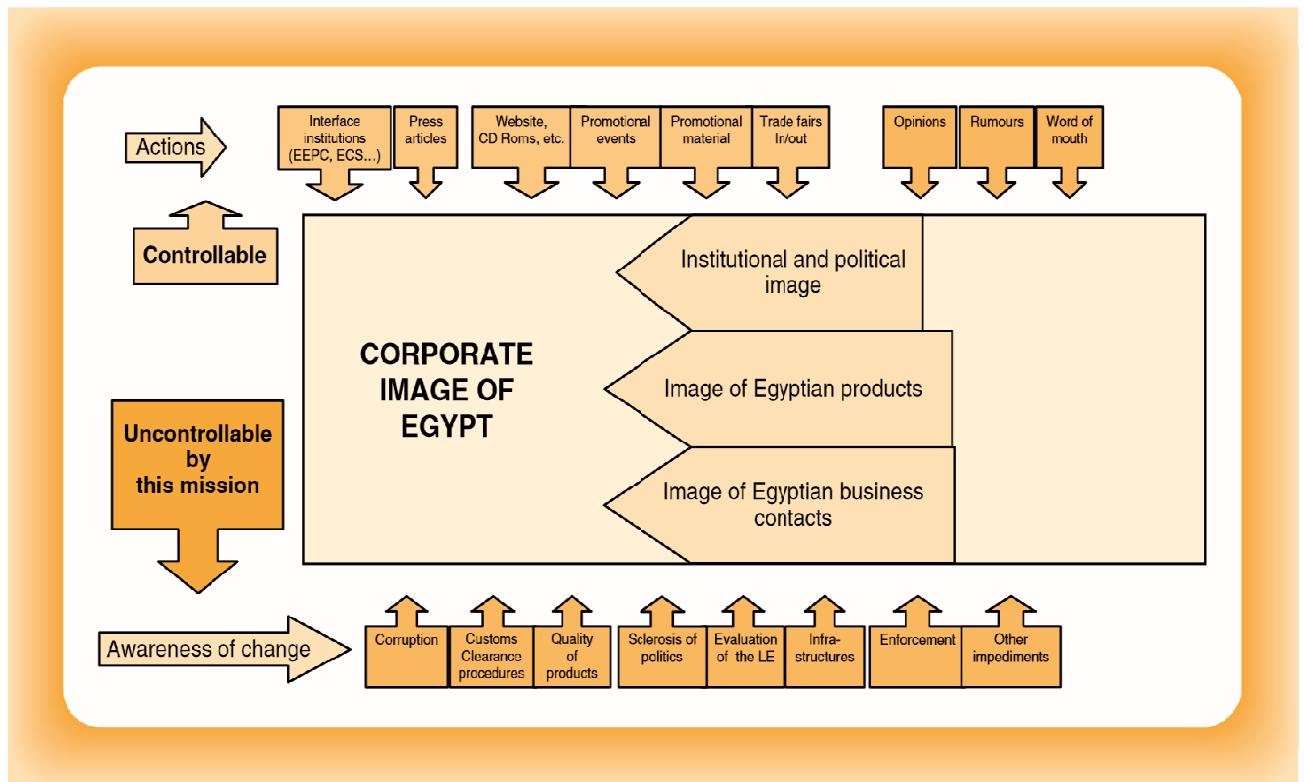
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Egypt's business image – components and contributing factors, from Keith Dinnie's book 'Nation Branding'

Effective marketing concepts and techniques constitute an integral part of any strong nation brand. The Narrative PR Summit committee aimed to introduce an innovative approach for putting together a process for creating a strong nation brand for Egypt. This process is broken down as follows:

### Key aspects – First Steps:

Phase 1: Make a brand promise – what does the Egypt brand offer to international visitors?

Phase 2: Identify the target segment of international visitors - who would visit and why?

Phase 3: Create an international brand tracker for Egypt to measure ongoing communication and improvements.

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Phase 4: Identify golden opportunities to generate motivation – international events (Youth Olympics 2023) and conferences (International Expo 2027).

According to Keith Dinnie in his book 'Nation Branding', Egypt represents an interesting example of a country that has attempted to brand itself largely on the basis of one high-quality product, Egyptian cotton. Marketing one aspect of the country constitutes an enormous challenge, by placing emphasis on a single product as a defining aspect of the nation, there is the risk of pursuing a strategy that is too narrowly focused and not fully representative of the nation as a whole. Also, if cotton market conditions worsen, the nation brand will be dragged down as a result.

Therefore, the Egyptian government should instead focus on developing a full-fledged nation-branding strategy involving multiple areas including investment and governance.

Nation branding expert Simon Anholt offers six dimensions of national competence to explore a country's image: **investment, exports, governance, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, people, and tourism.**

Such a strategy provides excellent KPIs for public and private sectors to seek as well as centralised control and management of vision and overall strategic direction.

## **Leading brands capitalize on 'truths' – Egypt's 'truths' show enormous potential:**

- GDP grew more than 4 per cent over the past two years, compared to half the figure following the Arab Spring
- Number of tourists expected to return to pre-uprising levels, from as low as of 5.3 million in 2016, to over 10 million visitors.
- Scale: Egypt's large population and big economy means it is an influential regional powerhouse
- Youth: 65 per cent of population under 30; this represents a major asset for investors
- Arts and culture: heart of popular Arab culture

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- Religion: home of Al Azhar and the most important voice of moderate Islam today
- Sports: National team qualified for World Cup; dominant force in both African and Arab sports

Egypt boasts a great story, one the world is eager to hear. That story and further can be effectively told through a strong and comprehensive nation branding and communications strategy.

When it comes to branding, we need to adopt a bottom-up approach to tell Egypt's story while considering matters from a macro prospective. This requires dividing Egypt's story into smaller messages and setting out minute details when explaining our case. We have an unparalleled story founded by unmatched history. We need to develop simple messages to effectively promote our story.

## Key steps:

- Develop and communicate a vision for Egypt's branding:  
"Egypt will be perceived as the best destination for business, investment and tourism"
- Re-brand Egyptian program sponsored by PM:  
"Egypt, Land of Opportunities"
- Create a national program sponsored by the president to change negative nation-related behaviours. This will be a five-year program aimed at changing the top 10-15 negative culture behaviours in Egypt, and the biography of the right Egyptians reflecting the greatness of Egypt and its heritage
- In a global marketplace, a strong nation brand has become a principal asset for any country.

The key aspect helping make a nation brand be strong is to address all appealing segments of the country, encourage foreign investments, add value to exports, attract tourists and draw consumers abroad.

## Where are we today?

The '**Where It All Begins**' motto is aimed at promoting the Egyptian know-how and the beautiful country worldwide:

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In the past few years, the Ministry of Tourism launched many inspiring campaigns to promote the diversity of tourism in Egypt. But as we have seen with my Dominican example, a tourism motto is not easy to apply on goods and services.

In 2016, the Ministry of Industry launched a campaign to promote Egyptian-made products and boost Egyptian brands under the 'Proudly Made in Egypt' label, which was swiftly dismissed on social media.

Against the backdrop of a foreign currency crisis, the challenge these initiatives face is not only to successfully promote local products as being cheaper, but also as being of a higher quality.

From this perspective, **textile products** are undeniably a key asset the Egyptian nation brand can leverage. For years, Egypt has been recognized worldwide for its textile products, best known for the premium quality of its cotton and popular brands like Cottonil or Mobacco Cottons. And more recently, new businesses like Kiliim Egypt, which has revived the once-vanishing kilim-making industry in Fuwa.

Cotton is certainly not the only industry that shows off Egyptian talents. The **call center industry** is one of the most powerful sectors. As many French companies like Tele Performance or Naos do, Orange Egypt employs thousands of young, multilingual and well-educated Egyptians to support international customers worldwide.

A promising **Egyptian start-up ecosystem** has started to emerge, unleashing Egyptians' potential for risk-taking and entrepreneurship. Egyptian startups like Instabug can count on the support of efficient incubators, like innovation hub Flat6Labs which was launched in Cairo in June 2011.

Meanwhile, Egyptian companies started to break into new markets such as smartphones and the automotive industry. An Egyptian entrepreneur, Ahmed Said el Feki, spearheaded an ambitious project to produce a 100% Egyptian-made car, which will be the Egyptian version of the tuktuk (auto rickshaw), yet more secure and comfortable.

Egyptian company 'Sico' is manufacturing Egyptian-made smartphones in their factory in Assiut, targeting the local market as well as African countries.



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Government initiatives, like the Silicon Waha industrial zone, come to foster those industrial projects.

All these initiatives need to be reinforced by a strong Egypt nation brand that can promote Egyptian products and services abroad and bolster the country's economy as a whole. The main challenge for this brand will be to embrace the diversity of the Egyptian economy and promote not only the price, but also the quality of Egyptian products and services, from tourism and call centers to premium textile and innovative startups.

At a time of globalization and increased international competition, countries must rebrand themselves so as to be able to grow further. It is now the time to create, or rather, recreate the nation brand Egypt deserves.

## **The role of tourism & Culture in Nation Branding**

### **Tapping into technology to draw tourists**

Technology is a key instrument of boosting and promoting tourism nowadays. It's no longer an option but rather a requisite. Technology significantly contributes to cutting advertising costs, reducing manpower and guiding tourists to choose the right destination.

In a highly competitive global tourism industry, and given that tourism is a main pillar of national incomes of countries, a coherent, fully-fledged plan for tapping into technology should be developed to draw tourists by improving the performance of personnel, enhancing services provided to tourists and ensuring greater promotion of tourist spots.

### **Establish partnership between Egyptian Tourist Authority (ETA) and global event management firms**

It is significantly important that Egyptian Tourist Authority goes into partnership with global event management agencies to encourage them to include Egypt in their programs. These companies act as the gateway to Egypt's target audience in foreign markets. This will help promote tourist attractions in Egypt and position them as major destinations sought by tourists from all over the world.

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Such companies must deliver a message that Egypt boasts a wide array of tourist attractions and entertainment activities and that the country offers first-rate services to all types of visitors, while focusing on key factors making Egypt a favorite holiday destination, including its beautiful weather and low cost of travelling that make it a great choice for budget travelers.

## How to deal with tourists

First thing tourists talk about when they are back to their home countries is the manners of the country's locals, delivering either a positive or negative impression about that country. This makes it significantly important to master the art of dealing with tourists. Tourists need to feel safe and invulnerable. Fixed prices should be set for tourist products, safe and easy transportation should be provided and maps and guide books should be offered to spare tourists the time and effort of searching for locations they seek to visit themselves. Also, pre-set routes for tourist visits should be followed to steer clear of giving tourists a negative impression about some locations or behaviors.

The behaviour of locals towards tourists is one of the things that encourage them to return back. Egypt needs to offer training programs on how to deal with tourists in a friendly and pleasant manner. The better the country's reputation is the higher the number of visitors it can draw.

An inspiring example of how good manners can promote a positive image of the country abroad is Olympic champion Mohamed Rashwan who won a silver medal in Judo at the Los Angeles Game in 1984. Rashwan was on the verge of clinching gold had he played on what he deemed the weaker side of his Japanese opponent who had been favoring his right leg after an injury. Following that incident, the number of Japanese tourists visiting Egypt rose three-fold.

Also, Egypt and Liverpool star Mohamed Salah's role in promoting Egypt's international image is believed to be tantamount to efforts made by a whole cabinet or millions of Egyptians.

## Create arts and cultural content

It is particularly important to create arts and cultural content that best portrays Egypt and its ancient history. Culture best expresses countries' history and

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identity, drawing an image of the past and present, traditions, customs, values and experiences gained by the population. Culture plays a key role in shaping the national identity and Egypt boasts the richest and most important culture in history that needs to be promoted and rebranded in a manner befitting the present time and one that can easily reach our target audience.

Egyptian individuals, independent organizations and the government must work towards consolidating our culture and arts by preserving and handing down our cultural heritage from generation to generation through support from religious institutions (Al-Azhar and the Coptic Orthodox Church), schools curricula and cultural seminars, cultural centers, media (TV, radio and print), and the entertainment industry (films, plays, series, exhibitions).

## **The role of industry in promoting Egypt as an investment-friendly country**

### **Local marketing:**

1. The Egyptian government has drafted a law to facilitate procedures of obtaining licenses in a bid to develop local industries.
2. A new mechanism is being developed to facilitate issuing licenses for service and maintenance centers of local factories.
3. The government has taken a number of binding decisions to monitor production materials and spare parts.
4. The new investment law creates a one-stop shop which makes it easier for investors by allowing them to finish all procedures needed to establish a business at one stop. Also, a number of benefits are provided to investors, including training personnel.
5. Draw up an industrial investment map that introduces investors to all available investment opportunities, industrial complexes and their locations.
6. The Ministry of Industry provides training to personnel, including, for instance, at the Industrial Modernization Centre.
7. All authorities in charge of promoting exports to be included in one entity.
8. Facilitate customs regulations in place to guarantee that exporters receive outstanding payments from the government easily.
9. Print, radio and TV campaigns should be carried out to raise awareness amongst citizens, workers and investors about the importance of boosting industry locally and overseas.
10. Advertising campaigns should be organized for national industries such as carpets, clothes, spinning and weaving, marble, etc, as well as

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competitive industries such as cables, agricultural pumps, wafers and chocolates, etc.

11. Raise awareness among producers and small producers of the importance of relying on Egyptian resources in production as well as the limited use of imports.
12. Promote feeder industries even if they have a higher production cost than imports and encourage large factories to work with small factories.
13. Set up a central supervisory authority to monitor the quality of Egyptian exports and compliance with standards. The body will be concerned with inspecting exported goods prior to exporting and attach the "Egyptian made" label to conforming products in order to enhance global confidence in Egyptian products.
14. Set up a research department at the Ministry of Industry to work on linking Egyptian products to each other by studying imports and replacing them with local products in order to achieve internal integration between various industries. Also, new laws must be drafted to require factories to use finished products of other local factories as raw materials.

## **International marketing:**

- Measures taken by the Egyptian government to enhance the quality of Egyptian products and boost local production will create a positive image of the significant improvement in the quality of Egyptian products in the eyes of foreign consumers.
- Cutting imports will serve as an indication of the improvement of the quality of Egyptian products and their potential to meet local market's needs.
- Prevent exporting any products that harm the reputation of the Egyptian industry will prompt international consumers to trust Egyptian products.

## **How local marketing affects Egypt's international image:**

- The image of the local investment climate and all facilities provided in this regard will encourage foreign investors to put money in Egypt
- The importance of the Egyptian market and the strategic location of Egypt will attract investors who seek to serve the local market as well as export overseas.
- Focus on tapping into natural resources and industries with competitive edge will attract foreign investors to draw on these resources.

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- Integration between all domestic industries and dispensing with imports in some feeder industries will prompt investors to put money in new industries in Egypt – such as electronics, a field that Egypt boasts natural resources for (silicone).

## **Women and Contemporary Art and in Egypt:**

We will be looking into two cultural and business factors that the government and the public can help improve in order to enhance Egypt's nation brand. These include: Women in Egypt and contemporary art.

Egypt was voted the worst country in the Arab world for women in 2013 by a poll conducted by Thomson Reuters. Cairo was also ranked the “most dangerous megacity for women” in mid-October 2017. Such reports focused on how well women are protected from sexual violence and harmful practices and whether they had access to finance, healthcare and education. The government must work towards cleaning up the country's image with regard to how women are treated.

In a January ministerial reshuffle, two new female ministers were named for the portfolios of culture and tourism, bringing the number of female ministers in Egyptian cabinet to six, or 20 percent, for the first time.

The art community of any country reflects its culture of expression and cultural innovation. Mainstream art in Egypt has followed the national ideologies of successive political regimes of the Egyptian state.

As the Egyptian contemporary art scene remains vividly responsive to political, cultural and social changes, a question arises of how these changes have influenced the country's new art scene.

When it comes to trade, almost every country is judged on its economy and trade performance.

As reported by local media on 16 November 2016, the Ministry of Trade had drawn up a strategy to develop the date industry with the aim of boosting Egypt's date exports from 38,000 tons to 120,000 tons over the next five years as well as increasing the price per ton to \$1,500 from \$1,000.

It would also make use of date and palm residues to maximize the sector's added value; given that Egypt is the world's biggest date producing country,

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producing 1.4 million tons of dates a year which accounts for 17.7 percent of the global date production. The strategy also aims to create new job opportunities.

The Trade Ministry's Industry Council for Technology and Innovation in collaboration with the Khalifa International Prize for Date Palm and Agricultural Innovation has organized a festival sponsored by President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi.

The festival aims to shed light on the Egyptian date industry and boost coordination between state institutions, research centers and international organizations to promote the sector and solve challenges faced by date producers and manufacturers.

## **Suggested PR Strategy:**

### **WOMEN**

As shown by reports on the status of Egyptian women cited above, Egypt is depicted as a society where women are objectified and denied fundamental rights, freedoms and respect granted to women in western countries.

To change this perception, the Egyptian government needs to work towards improving the status of women by heralding them as inspiring leaders and dynamic members of society.

The Egyptian government should appoint women in leadership positions across the country's professional and political spectra, select women to be speakers at key conferences and representatives in international panel discussions. This, besides highlighting improvement in women's education and empowerment in the country, can significantly help generate publicity to this end. This will also help change the West's perception of Egypt and combat the negative coverage Egypt has received when it comes to women's status.

The Egyptian art scene is vibrant, cutting-edge, revolutionary and politically relevant, a diversity the Egyptian government must leverage.

Creating an award-granting scheme whereby awards and recognition will be granted to artists in Cairo and Alexandria will indicate the support the Egyptian authorities offer to artists as well as efforts to preserve artistic freedom of expression. This will help promote an image of Egypt as an innovative country

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in the Middle East.

Selecting contemporary artists from the country to be members of a delegation of a carefully curated exhibition in some of the world's art capitals (including London, Paris or New York) will showcase Egyptian talents and help the global art community get introduced to Egyptian artists and engage with them.

In order to pursue the aforementioned strategy (promoting women's leadership in Egypt), the government should support leaders in innovative sectors such as technology with the aim of showcasing the pool of talents the country boasts.

### **Our Recommendation in Conclusion:**

According to the Nation Brand Value, Egypt is expected to become one of the world's top 20 nation brands in 2025. How will that happen?



This can be done through proposing an authority wherein there would be greater coordination between state institutions and public bodies to adopt an effective plan aiming at strengthening Egypt's nation brand and boosting the country's image worldwide.

Mission – Vision – objective

### **Vision:**

**Egypt will become one of the top 20 countries on the Nation Brand Index by 2025**

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This requires developing a coherent vision as well as ensuring high-level coordination by leveraging all elements of the country's soft power. Improving the country's investment, political, social and cultural conditions at a local level will greatly contribute to creating a positive image of the country worldwide.

## **Mission:**

Intensify efforts between government institution and independent organisations to carry out an effective plan to boost Egypt's brand worldwide and promote a positive, compelling brand image of the country.

Egypt's Ministry of International Cooperation plays a key role in securing grants and funding to finance Egypt's nation branding-related projects.

Below is the Narrative Summit Committee's authority structure we are proposing:

## **The Egyptian Executive Authority for Nation Branding Development**



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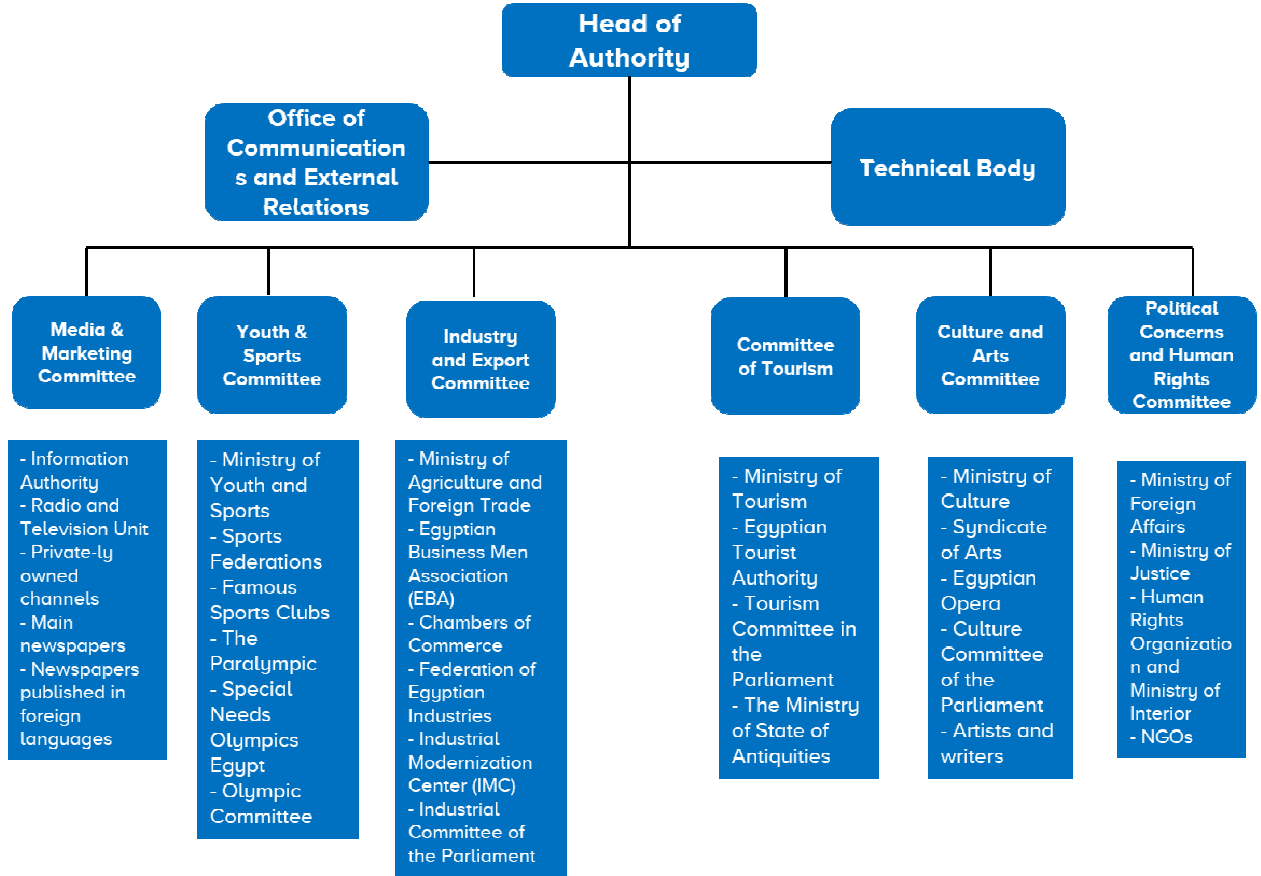


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With the above-mentioned strategies and through joining forces with the Egyptian government, we expect that Egypt's nation brand would be placed among the world's top country brands.

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