

Press Release

Prime Minister Dr. Ahmed Nazif Witnesses the Signing of Global IT Partnership Agreements

Cairo – October 31st, 2005

H.E Dr. Ahmed Nazif, Prime Minister of Egypt witnessed the signing of several international partnership agreements in the IT sector. Also present were H.E Dr. Tarek Kamel, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, H.E. Dr. Ahmed Darwish, Minister of State for Administrative Development, and Mr. Steve Mills, IBM Vice President who is visiting Egypt for the first time. This visit comes as part of the efforts being exerted to reach alliances with major international firms aiming at developing the Egyptian IT sector.

The Rational Initiative Project agreement was signed between the IT Development Authority's Center for Evaluation and Accreditation of Software and IBM. This project aims at developing the skills of Egyptian programmers in IT firms in the field of designing and testing software, in addition to providing the advanced tools necessary to achieve that.

An E-commerce agreement was also signed between the Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Center and IBM. This agreement will offer e-commerce services to users of the Eternal Egypt Portal. It was also announced that the portal will be hosted in-country. Worth mentioning is that this portal is the fruit of three years of continuous efforts at the Center, and cooperation between the Higher Authority for Antiquities and IBM in order to provide online information about Egyptian civilization to the entire world.

Two agreements were also signed with the Ministry of Administrative Development. The Service Oriented Architecture agreement entails providing a comprehensive infrastructure to the government's online portal which will enable government agencies to provide a better quality of service to citizens, in addition to increasing management efficiency as well as the ability to handle any new requirements. Those agreements will allow the Ministry of Administrative Development to better coordinate and unify existing management systems.

An agreement related to the family card was also signed. This agreement will build a system to support government decision making in several ministries using a database composed of citizens' files. This is an important element in maintaining accuracy and coordination of databases as well as providing information to decision makers through several historical and statistical channels.

IBM will assist the ministry in building a unified database to store information that can be used in undertaking studies utilizing smart data analysis tools. This will facilitate:

- Faster and more accurate decision making
- Total control over access to citizens' files
- Better cooperation between ministries
- Functions to aid analysts who collect information about citizens
- Better utilization of government resources

At the signing ceremony, it was announced that the staff at the Cairo Technology Development Center would be expanded by 40%. Worth mentioning is that the Center is one of the largest software development centers in the Middle East and North Africa, and 99% of its products are exported. Research and development was also emphasized with several patents by Egyptian scientists currently in the process of being registered. The Technology Center has also received a Level 5 CMMi certification (Capability

Maturity Model Integrated Project), considered the highest worldwide in Software Development, and which comes as a worldwide recognition of the unique technical capabilities in Egypt.

The inauguration of the Center for Advanced Studies was also announced at the ceremony. This center aims at promoting research and development through utilizing the innovations resulting from the cooperation between IBM and government and academic institutions. This Center is considered the 14th around the world to join the family of the IBM's centers for technological research. It also gives academics an opportunity to use and develop high tech solutions to solve tangible problems facing society. The center will have two main activities: advanced R&D projects in cooperation with professors and graduate students in the fields of data mining, computer vision, and analysis of unstructured textual data. The center will also support the teaching of advanced programming in the science and computer engineering faculties at Egyptian universities. IBM will be providing teaching software to Egyptian universities in addition to a number of experts to provide technical support to students and professors. IBM will also be teaching some classes and holding seminars, and supervising students' graduation projects.

Mr. Steve Mills also toured Smart Village where he was shown around the great civilizational monument dedicated for the support and development of the Communication and IT industries in Egypt.