

**Law No 96 of Year 1996****Concerning the Regulation and Organization of Journalism and Press Functions**

*In the name of the People and the President of the Republic of Egypt;*

*The People's Assembly shall hereby decree the following law, and it shall hereby be promulgated...*

**Section One****Freedom of Press and Rights and Obligations of Journalists****Introductory Chapter****Chapter One**

*Journalism shall represent a public power; shall hold a free-standing position; and shall perform its mission statement and functions in an autonomous and responsible manner, for the benefit of the community at large. Journalism shall give reflection to the various standpoints and directions of public opinion. Journalism shall conceivably hold a significant position to contribute to the formation and re-direction of public opinion, by means of promoting the freedom of speech; the right to criticize; and the right to publish and release news items. This shall be in consistency with the characteristics and attributes of the Egyptian Society, and pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution and the relevant laws.*

**Article Two**

*The term 'press', in the application of the provisions of the present Law, shall hereby be construed to mean all the publications issued under a single name on a regular basis, such as newspapers, magazines, etc.*

**Chapter One – Freedom of Press****Article Three**

*Journalism shall seek to fulfil its mission statement on autonomous basis, and shall focus on creating a free environment conducive to greater growth and advancement of the Society, as well as on providing the directions needed to identify and influence improved solutions, in a manner that shall be enlightened and informed by knowledge, for the benefit of the country, and the best interest of the citizens. The duty of journalism is to further these ends by seeking truth and providing a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues. Conscientious journalists from all media and specialties strive to serve the public with thoroughness and honesty. Professional integrity is the cornerstone of a journalist's credibility.*

**Article (4)**

*It shall not be permissible to impose any restrictions on the press. Nevertheless, in the instances of emergency or contingency, or during wartime, certain restrictions may be enforced on a limited scale on journalism and press; solely in matters related to public safety and integrity or for purposes of maintaining national security. This shall include prohibiting any news items detrimental to the national Integrity, independence, or sovereignty.*

#### **Article Five**

*No confiscation, suspension, and/or termination of a newspaper, using the administrative proceedings, may be permitted.*

### **CHAPTER TWO**

#### **Rights of Journalists**

#### **Article Six**

*Journalists shall act in an autonomous and independent fashion, and may not be subject to any authority, other than such power and authority prescribed under the rule of law.*

#### **Article Seven**

*The safety and security of journalists may not be compromised or jeopardized on account of the viewpoints, input and/or valid information they shall provide. Journalists shall be protected against forced disclosure of confidential sources of information or any coercion to reveal the identity of their own sources, in compliance with the relevant laws.*

#### **Article Eight**

*Journalists shall reserve the right to access information, statistical information, and news items made available and accessible according to applicable laws, from both public and/or government sources. Journalists may publish such news items and information that they obtain.*

#### **Article Nine**

*It shall not be permitted to impose any restrictions or limits which may impede flow of, and accessibility to, information; which may interfere with the right to equal access to information for all newspapers; or, which may undermine citizens' ability to gain knowledge and information; notwithstanding the requirements associated with national security and supreme interests.*

#### **Article Ten**

*Without prejudice to the provisions stated under the two previous articles, a journalist shall reserve the right to request or solicit information, statistics, etc, except in such instances where such information, statistics or data shall be deemed confidential or classified, by default, in compliance with the provisions of applicable laws.*

## **Article Eleven**

*In performing their professional responsibilities and duties, journalists shall reserve the right to attend conferences, orientation sessions, and public meetings, as deemed appropriate.*

## **Article Twelve**

*Individuals involved in any act of assault, wrongdoing, or insult against a journalist, on account of his/ her professional duties, shall be subject to the statutory sanctions and penalties that apply in instances of assault or offence against a civil servant, as spelled out in Articles (133), (136), and (137/37), of the Penal Code, and as duly appropriate.*

## **Article Thirteen**

*In the event that a substantial change or shift in the overarching policy of a newspaper shall emerge, or in case the initial terms and conditions of the employment contract cannot be maintained, journalists may opt to terminate or rescind their employment contract with the respective newspaper organization, at their sole discretion, provided that they shall provide a prior notice of three months at least, before the date of the termination; notwithstanding the rights reserved by the respective journalists to an appropriate compensation.*

## **Article Fourteen**

*The relationship between a newspaper organization and a journalist shall be subject to a contract agreement that shall clearly specify the term of the contract, the scope of work and mandate assigned to the respective journalist, the pay level agreed upon between the two contractual parties, and other benefits, in a manner that shall not conflict with the rules and regulations set forth in the Labour and Employment Law, whether severely or jointly, if any.*

## **Article Fifteen**

*The Journalist Syndicate Board shall reserve the right to conclude and sign collective employment agreements, with proprietors of newspaper trade organizations and news agencies, on the domestic, regional and international levels, and which shall be based on specific terms and conditions, in favour of journalists.*

*The Syndicate Board shall enter, as a party, into contracts and agreements, as per the provisions prescribed under the previous Article, and consistent with the First Paragraph of the current Article.*

## **Article Sixteen**

*Newspaper organizations and newspaper administration and management staff shall hereby undertake to fulfil the rights of journalists, as stipulated in applicable laws, as well as the employment contracts concluded therewith.*

## Article Seventeen

*The employment contract of a journalist may not be terminated unless after notifying the Journalist Syndicate. This notification shall be accompanied with an explanation about the reasons and rationale for such termination. In the event that the Syndicate shall exhaust all the means to mediate or facilitate a satisfactory settlement between the respective newspaper organization and the journalist, the provisions set forth under the Labour Law shall hereby prevail, with regard to the termination of the employment contract.*

## CHAPTER THREE

### Obligations of Journalists

*Pertinent to all publications, journalists shall hereby abide by the guiding principles and values established by the Constitution, as well as the provisions of applicable law, and shall, in performing their professional duties, remain committed to common standards of journalism ethics, including standards of integrity, honesty, truthfulness, and professional code of ethics, in a manner that shall maintain and uphold the societal values and ideals. In doing so, journalists shall undertake to maintain the rights of citizens; without prejudice whatsoever to their freedoms. Ideals must be sustained and upheld, and publications repugnant to these should be stopped.*

## Article Nineteen

*Journalists shall hereby demonstrate full and earnest commitment towards the professional code of ethics. Journalists, who fail to perform their duties, as spelled out in the present Law or the professional code of ethics, shall be held accountable for their actions, and shall be subject to a disciplinary action.*

## Article Twenty

*Journalists shall refrain from publishing news which is contemptuous or disrespectful to caste, creed, nationality and religion of any individual or the community or the country. For upholding national unity, communal prejudices and feelings of hatred and malice shall be discouraged. Journalists shall refrain from showing partiality in favour for, or against, a racial call instigating hatred or promoting intolerance and bigotry against certain segments in the Society.*

## Article Twenty One

*A journalist may not jeopardize or interfere with the private life of citizens. S/he may not address or deal with issues related to the demeanour of a public servant, prosecution personnel, or public employees, unless such dealing is closely related to their duties and responsibilities, and is aimed at realizing the public interest.*

## Article Twenty Two

*Individuals who violate the provisions prescribed under the two preceding Articles shall be subject to a maximum term of imprisonment of one year and/ or payment of a fine no less than 5,000 ₱ and up to 10,000 ₱.*

### **Article Twenty Three**

*Newspapers may not address or deal with the processes undertaken by investigation authorities or courts, in a manner that may interfere with the integrity of investigations or cases under trial, or that may jeopardize the status of individuals subject to certain background investigations or legal actions. The respective newspaper may publish decisions stated by public prosecutor, as well as the wording of the final judgment of the court, whether during the course of investigations or the trial. This may be combined with a brief explanation of the grounds and reasons warranting the institution of a legal action; exclusively in such instances where a case shall be dismissed by the court; evidence rejected as inadmissible or unsubstantiated; or accused acquitted or absolved.*

### **Article Twenty Four**

*Editors-in-chief or concerned editors shall hereby, if an aggrieved party so requests, respond to such requests by publishing a corrigendum or a correction to a news item or certain facts or merits of a case published at a former stage, within the course of three days following the receipt of the request, or otherwise in the first issue to be published of the respective newspaper, including all the editions thereof, whichever shall be earlier.*

*It shall be the obligation of the newspaper to publish such correction or corrigendum on the same page, using the same font, as the initial article, news item, or press materials that is the subject of the request for correction.*

### **Article Twenty Five**

*A party requesting for a rejoinder or a corrigendum to be published shall do so by sending a certified mail to the editor-in-chief, or the acting editor, of the respective newspaper, accompanied with all the supporting documentation.*

### **Article Twenty Six**

*The respective newspaper may opt to not publish any corrections, corrigenda, or rejoinders as requested by the respective party, in any of the two following cases:*

- 1. In the event that a request for correction, corrigendum or rejoinder of certain news items shall be received by the newspaper after the lapse of thirty (30) days, following the date of publication.*
- 2. In the event that a correction or corrigendum of a certain news item shall be made by the respective newspaper, before the receipt of the request for correction.*

*By all standards, it shall be prohibited to publish any correction that may involve a criminal act, or in the event that the content of such correction shall contravene with the public order or public morality.*

### **Article Twenty Seven**

*In the event that no correction or corrigendum shall be published, as per the provisions specified under Article (24) of the present Law, a notification shall be sent by the aggrieved party to the Supreme Council of Press, via certified mail, requesting that the necessary actions shall be taken in this respect.*

### **Article Twenty Eight**

*In the event that no correction or corrigendum shall be published as per the provisions specified under Article (24) of the present Law, the party (ies) refraining from taking the necessary action (s) shall be subject to a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of three years, and/or payment of a fine no less than 1,000 £ G.P and up to 4,000 £ G.P.*

### **Article Twenty Nine**

*A legal action or a proceeding instituted against the editor-in-chief or the editor (s) refraining from the publication of the respective correction shall be ceased or terminated, in the event that the respective newspaper shall publish the respective correction or corrigendum before a motion is filed to proceed with an adjudication of conviction against the party (ies) accused.*

### **Article Thirty**

*A journalist or a newspaper organization may not accept any donations, contributions, subsidies, and/or benefits from a foreign entity, whether directly or indirectly. Overcharging for advertising services by the respective newspaper shall hereby be deemed as an indirect benefit or subsidy.*

*Newspapers acting in conflict with this provision shall be subject to a maximum term of imprisonment of one year, and/or payment of a fine of no less than 500 £ G.P and up to 2,000 £ G.P. In addition, the court shall require that the delinquent newspaper would pay two times as much the donation, contribution, subsidy, and/or benefit received thereby. Such payments shall be deposited in the Journalist Syndicate Retirement Pension Fund.*

*A journalist or a newspaper organization shall be enjoined from receiving any government subsidies or contributions, whether directly or indirectly, unless otherwise pursuant to the governing rules established by the Supreme Council of Press.*

### **Article Thirty One**

*Newspapers shall be enjoined from publishing advertisements; the content thereof would contradict the common values, ethics, and/or ideals of the Society, or contravene the mission statement, goals and objectives of journalism. Editorial content and news reporting shall be fully kept separate from promotional advertising. Interaction and affiliation of journalist texts and advertisements shall not be permitted.*

### **Article Thirty Two**

*Journalists may not be recruited or assigned to promote the advertising business of a newspaper; may not under any capacity receive direct or indirect payments or benefits as a result to their engagement in publishing certain advertisement; and, may not sign off on any advertising content.*

### Article Thirty Three

*All press organizations and news agencies shall hereby undertake to publish their budgets within the first six months following the end of the fiscal year. The Central Audit Organization (CAO) shall carry out regular checks and reviews of the financial books and records of individual news organizations to verify and validate the integrity of the monetary, administrative, managerial and legal systems thereof.*

*All news organizations and press agencies shall undertake to provide the Central Audit Organization with a copy of their closing accounts within the first three months that follow the end of the fiscal year. Such organizations and institutions shall be under the obligation to enable the CAO auditors to review and validate the respective records and books. The Central Audit Organization shall undertake to develop status reports on the findings of such checks and reviews. Any violations or offences against the established regulations shall be escalated to the Public Prosecutor, and shall be reported to the Supreme Council of Press.*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Article Thirty Four

*No disciplinary action may be imposed against a journalist, unless such shall solely be taken by the Journalist Syndicate.*

*The provisions set forth under the Journalist Syndicate Law shall hereby apply, without prejudice to the provisions included herein.*

### Article Thirty Five

*Subsequent to deliberations and reviews with the Syndicate Board, the Chairperson of the Journalist Syndicate shall undertake to refer the journalist allegedly involved in, or charged with a disciplinary offence, to an investigation panel. The investigation panel shall conduct the required investigations within thirty (30) days, following the date of the referral. In the event that it shall be deemed necessary to extend the investigation period, the respective panel shall secure permission to that effect from the Syndicate Board.*

### Article Thirty Six

*The membership composition of the Investigation Panel, provided for under the previous Article, shall be as follows:*

- (A) Deputy Chairperson of the Journalist Syndicate*
- (B) A counsellor/ judge from the State Council, to be identified and selected by the State Council*
- (C) Secretary-General of the Journalist Syndicate or a sub-syndicate, as dully appropriate*

### Article thirty Seven

*A disciplinary board of first instance shall be convened, pursuant to Article (81) of the Journalist Syndicate Law, and shall consist of:*

- (A) *Three (3) members selected and designated by the Syndicate Board from among the members thereof, during the Syndicate's first session;*
- (B) *One (1) member from the Supreme Council of Press to be designated by the Syndicate Board from among the members thereof; and,*
- (C) *One (1) counsellor/judge from the State Council to be identified by the State Council*

*Legal proceedings shall be instituted before the Disciplinary Board, pursuant to a resolution/ verdict made by the Investigation Panel. An indictment shall be filed by the Head of the Investigation Panel before the Disciplinary Board.*

### **Article Thirty Eight**

*Appeals against resolutions and verdicts reached by the Disciplinary Board of First Instance may be filed before a Disciplinary Appeal Board defined, as defined under the provisions of Article (82) of the Journalist Syndicate Law.*

### **Article Thirty Nine**

*Without prejudice to the right to institute a criminal or a civil proceeding before the court, complaints or charges against a journalist may be filed before the Egyptian Supreme Council of Press.*

*The Supreme Council of Press shall hereby conduct investigations with regard to the respective complaint, and shall report the findings to the Journalist Syndicate, in the event that adequate and substantiated evidence shall be verified, as proof for such allegations.*

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Penal Liability against Newspapers involved in Criminal Acts**

#### **Article Forty**

*In the event that criminal proceedings or legal actions shall be instituted before the Court of Misdemeanour against a newspaper, a journalist allegedly involved in, or charged with a criminal act, shall reserve the right to be represented by a legal attorney before the court, unless that s/he shall be summoned to appear in person before the court.*

#### **Article Forty One**

*No temporary detention pending investigations shall be permitted in criminal acts involving newspapers, with the exception of the crime defined under Article (179) of the Penal Code.*

#### **Article Forty Two**



*It shall not be permitted to hold or use the documents, information, and/or papers in the possession of a journalist as evidence to justify the filing of an indictment against him/her, unless otherwise such documents/information shall warrant an investigation, or constitute grounds for a legal action.*

*Without prejudice to the provisions set forth under Articles (55), (97) and (199) of the Penal Procedures Code, such items listed under the previous Paragraph, if seized or requisitioned, shall be returned to the respective journalist, as duly appropriate, promptly after the purpose for which they are seized is served.*

### **Article Forty Three**

*A journalist may not be arrested or detained on account of a criminal act allegedly involving the newspaper, where is employed, unless such detention or arrest shall be ordered by the Public Prosecutor.*

*The Chairperson of the Journalist Syndicate may opt to attend the investigations, whether in person or through a representative from the Syndicate Board. The Syndicate Board may request copies of such investigations, at no-cost basis.*

### **Article Forty Four**

*No sanctions or penalties may be imposed in consequence of the publishing of certain news items on the conduct of a civil servant, a parliamentary representative, or a public employee, if the publishing of such news items shall be made on a bona fide basis, and with good intentions, and provided that such allegations shall be substantiated by admissible evidence, in 'proof' thereof.*

## **SECTION TWO**

### **NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION AND PROPRIETERSHIP**

#### **Chapter One – Newspaper Publication**

#### **Article Forty Five**

*Pursuant to the applicable laws, political parties and legal entities, whether public or private, shall be eligible to publish newspapers.*

#### **Article Forty Six**

*Parties and individuals demonstrating an interest in publishing a new newspaper shall be required to submit a written request to the Supreme Council of Press. The respective request shall be duly signed by the legal representative of the newspaper, and shall include the title, nationality, and place of residence of the proprietor of the newspaper; the name and periodicity thereof; the language in which the newspaper shall be published; the business sector and organizational and editorial structure, the budget breakdown and sources of funding thereof; the name of the editor-in-chief; and, the mail address of the printing house that shall be used to publish the respective newspaper.*

#### **Article Forty Seven**

*The Supreme Council of Press shall review and decide on the requests brought to its attention regarding the newspaper publication, within a maximum of forty (40) days, following the submission thereof, accompanied with all information described under the preceding Article.*

*In the event that the respective request shall be declined or excluded, the decision reached by the Supreme Council of Press, accompanied with specific justifications warranting the exclusion or disqualification thereof, shall be transmitted to the concerned party. In the event that the Supreme Council of Press shall not make a decision regarding the respective request, after the lapse of the specified period of forty (40) days, this shall be deemed as acceptance by non-rejection.*

*In the event that the Supreme Council of Press shall disapprove a request submitted to publish a news newspaper, the concerned parties may appeal against that decision before the Court of Administrative Adjudication. To this end, the concerned party shall submit a petition to the Department of Clerks, at the said court, no later than thirty (30) days following the date of disapproval.*

## **Article Forty Eight**

*In the event that the respective newspaper shall not be published or released within a period of three (3) months, following the date on which the license is granted, or if the newspaper shall not be released on a regular basis during the course of the initial six months of the publication thereof, the license shall be considered void and null.*

*Any deficiencies in the frequency or regularity of the publication of a newspaper shall be substantiated and validated by a decision from the Supreme Council of Press. This decision shall be transmitted to the concerned party.*

## **Article Forty Nine**

*It shall be deemed a special privilege to receive a licence approving the publication of a newspaper. By no means shall this licence be transferred, assigned, or disposed of to another party.*

*Any disposition of the respective licence, in violation of the provisions stipulated under the present Article, shall constitute grounds for the annulment of the respective newspaper publication license.*

*By acting in violation of the provisions included herein, the licensee shall be subject to the payment of a fine no less than 500 ₱ and up to 1,000 ₱. The newspaper license shall also be annulled.*

## **Article (50)**

*Individuals prohibited by the rule of law from exercising their political rights may not own a newspaper, or engage in the publication thereof, in any form.*

## **Article (51)**

*In the event that certain changes shall be made in the data or information included in the application request for a newspaper license, after the issuance of the respective license, a notice shall be transmitted in writing to the Supreme Council of Press to this effect, at least fifteen (15) days before the date on which these changes shall take effect, unless otherwise such change(s) shall arise unexpectedly. In this case, the Supreme Council of Press shall be notified within eight (8) days at a maximum following the date on which such changes come into force.*

*By acting in violation against the current Article, the legal representative of the respective newspaper shall be subject to a maximum term of imprisonment of six (6) months, and/ or payment of a fine no less than 500£.G.P and up to 1000£.G.P.*

## CHAPTER TWO

### Proprietorship of Newspaper

#### Article Fifty Two

*Newspapers may be owned by political parties and private and public legal persons, pursuant to applicable laws.*

*Newspapers published by private legal persons, with the exception of political parties, labour unions, and federations, shall necessarily take the form of co-operatives or joint stock companies, provided that in both cases the shares thereof shall be solely held by Egyptians, and that the paid-in or contributed capital shall be no less than one million Egyptian pounds (1,000,000£.G.P) in case of daily newspapers; no less than two hundred and fifty thousand Egyptian pounds (250,000£.G.P), in case of weekly newspapers; and no less than one hundred thousand Egyptian pounds (100,000£.G.P), in case of monthly newspapers. The total capital shall be deposited in full at an Egyptian bank, prior to the publication of the respective newspaper. The Supreme Council of Press may provide exemptions in certain instances, from some of the aforementioned requirements.*

*The individual ownership of corporate capital by a person and his/ her relatives of the first and second degree, including both spouses and underage children, may not exceed ten percent (10%) of the overall corporate capital.*

*Limited partnerships may be established for the publication of monthly magazines or regional newspapers. The previous requirements shall hereby apply to this type of partnerships.*

#### Article Fifty Three

*The Supreme Council of Press shall hereby develop templates for the memorandum of association of newspapers that shall take the form of a limited partnership, a cooperative association, etc.*

*The memorandum of association shall define the purposes served by the newspaper, the names of the chairperson and members of the interim board, which shall be convened from among the constituency of shareholders.*

*The interim board shall serve for a maximum term of six (6) months, as of the date on which the memorandum of association shall be finalized. Meanwhile, the permanent board of directors shall be elected, as per the internal statutes established under the memorandum of association.*

#### Article Fifty Four

*Individual newspapers shall have an editor-in-chief, who shall be mandated to provide oversight on the content materials published therein. In addition, a newspaper shall have a number of editors assigned to oversee individual sections in the newspaper.*

*It shall be stipulated that the newspaper editor-in-chief and editors shall be registered in the Employed Journalist Register, at the Journalists Syndicate.*

*The provisions stated under the two preceding Articles shall not apply to the specialized newspapers and magazines published by scientific institutions, as well as other newspapers and magazines published by certain authorities, as specified by the Supreme Council of Press.*

#### **Article Fifty Five**

*Acting in violation of this provision shall subject the respective newspaper to suspension for a period that may not exceed six (6) months, at the request of the Supreme Council of Press. In the event that the respective newspaper shall fail to address this violation during the specified period, the licence shall be deemed as void and null.*

## SECTION THREE

### National Newspapers

#### Chapter One – Ownership

*In the application of the provisions of the present Law, the term 'national newspapers' shall hereby be construed to mean such newspapers presently or prospectively published by press trade organizations, news agencies, and distribution companies owned by the state. The Shura (Advisory) Council shall reserve the right to exercise the rights of ownership and proprietorship on such newspapers.*

*The national newspapers shall hold a free-standing and autonomous position, from the Executive Branch, as well as all the political parties. The national newspapers shall provide a free national platform for all political voices and trends and key actors at the societal level.*

#### Article Fifty Six

*The relationship between the national press associations, on one hand, and their respective employees, journalists, and administrators, on the other hand, shall be regulated and standardized by individual employment contractual arrangements, as stipulated under the Labour Law.*

*A journalist may opt to move from one national press organization to another organization, with the prior consent of the journalist, and after obtaining an approval from both organizations. This may not compromise the physical, material, or moral rights to which the journalist shall be entitled, whether such rights are authentic or complementary.*

*This provision shall apply to all the employees of national press organizations.*

#### Article Fifty Seven

*Fifty percent (50%) of the profit proceeds generated by national press organizations shall be allocated to the employees working therein, whilst the other half shall be assigned for expansion and reform projects, amongst others.*

*The Supreme Council of Press shall decree the rules and regulations in relation to the management of national press organizations, the development of annual budgets, and the distribution and allocation of profits generated thereby.*

*The Central Audit Organization shall undertake to provide regular financial audits and reviews to verify and validate the financial, administrative and legal procedures carried out by the national press organizations. The national organizations shall hereby be under the obligation to enable the Central Audit Organization to conduct such financial reviews.*

*The CAO shall develop and submit status reports on the findings of such financial reviews and audits to the Supreme Council of Press and the Shura Council, for discussion and review.*

#### Article Fifty Eight

*Each national press organization shall maintain a legal status, and shall be eligible to perform all the legal rights and functions entrusted to them, in a manner that shall help to fulfil the purposes thereof and functions thereof. Individual national press organizations shall be represented by the chairperson of the board of directors.*

## Article Fifty Nine

*Each national press organization, upon the approval of the Supreme Council of Press, may establish companies and corporations to carry out certain business activities, in relation to advertising, publishing, printing, and/ or distribution. The Supreme Council of Press shall undertake to develop the governing rules and regulations with regard to the establishment of such companies. Each national press organization, in their respective sector, shall be permitted to engage in importation and exportation, as per the rules and regulations laid out by the Supreme Council of Press.*

*Such rules and regulations germane to the mother companies shall hereby be extended to the affiliated corporations, including becoming subject to oversight and review by the Central Audit Organization.*

## Article Sixty

*The provisions stated under Law No 62 of 1875 on Illicit Gains shall hereby apply to the employees of national press organizations and affiliated companies established or operated by the respective national press organizations, as described under the provisions of the previous Article.*

## Article Sixty One

*The statutory age of retirement for employees of national press organizations, including journalists, administrators, and labourers, shall be sixty years of age.*

*Nevertheless, the default retirement age may be extended, on a year-by-year basis up to the age of sixty-five; as decided by the Shura Council for board chairs; by the Supreme Council of Press for editors-in-chief; and, by the board of directors of the respective press organization for other employees.*

## CHAPTER TWO

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Article Sixty Two

*The general assembly of a press organization shall hereby be headed by the chairperson of the board of directors thereof, and shall be composed of the following:*

- 1. Fifteen (15) members representing journalists, administrators, and employees of the press organization; the election whereof shall be held by secret ballot. Candidate employees shall be required to have at least five years of experience in the business of journalism. Members of each constituency shall elect five (5) representatives from among themselves.*

2. *Twenty (20) members shall be identified and selected by the Shura Council from among the constituency of writers, intellectuals, and other individuals interested in the sectors of culture, journalism and media, provided that four (4) of these members shall be from the same press organization.*

*Such elections and designations shall be undertaken every four years.*

## **Article Sixty Three**

*The general assembly of a national press organization shall undertake to:*

1. *Approve the budget estimates and the closing accounts;*
2. *Appoint and approve financial auditors and reviews;*
3. *Approve the political and financial policy of the respective press organization; examine and review the proposed projects; or approve the liquidation or dissolution of existing projects, as appropriate, based on the annual status reports submitted by the board of directors;*
4. *Approve the draft remuneration and compensation schemes developed by the board of directors, provided that such shall abide by the minimum wage limits prescribed by the Supreme Council of Press;*
5. *Discuss and confer on reports developed by the Central Audit Organization;*
6. *Consider and review other matters and issues brought to its attention by the board of directors; and,*
7. *Propose a motion to the Supreme Council of Press to dissolve the board of directors, in case that the latter shall fail to perform the professional duties thereof*

*The Executive Regulations shall standardize the process associated with inviting or calling on the general assembly to convene, as well as the requirements associated with the quorum needed for the legal validity of the general assembly meetings and the decision-making process.*

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **BOARDS OF DIRECTORS AND EDITORIAL BOARDS**

## **Article Sixty Four**

*The board of directors of a national news organization shall hereby consist of thirteen (13) members, as follows:*

- (1) *The chairperson of board of directors; to be selected and designated by the Shura Council*
- (2) *Six (6) employees from the respective press organization to be selected through elections held by secret ballot; with two members representing each of the three groups of journalists; administrators; and labourers, respectively*
- (3) *Six (6) members identified by the Shura Council, provided that at least four representatives of this category shall belong to the respective press organization*

*The board members shall serve for a renewable term of four years.*

*The decisions shall be made by the majority vote of the present members. Should this process result in a tie vote, the president shall have the casting (tie-breaking) vote.*

*No member shall be allowed to hold a dual membership in more than one board of directors at the same time.*

## **Article Sixty Five**

*An editorial board shall hereby be established in each national press organization. Each editorial board shall consist of five (5) members, at a minimum, and shall be chaired by the chief-in-editor to be selected and identified by the Shura Council. The rest of the four (4) members shall be selected and designated by the respective board of directors.*

*The members of the editorial board shall serve for a renewable term of three years.*

## **Article Sixty Six**

*The editorial board shall undertake to develop and monitor the execution of the editorial policies, as part of the overall policy framework established by the board of directors of the press organization.*

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SUPREME COUNCIL OF PRESS**

## **Article Sixty Seven**

### **Formation and Membership Composition of Supreme Council of Press**

*The Supreme Council of Press shall maintain a free-standing, autonomous position, and shall hold a legal status. The Supreme Council of Press shall be headquartered in Cairo. The Supreme Council of Press shall perform the functions thereof, in a free and autonomous manner, and shall execute the entrusted powers, in consistency with the characteristics and circumstances of the Society. In doing so, the Supreme Council of Press shall seek to safeguard the national unity and realize the social peace, in a manner that shall secure the citizens' rights to access knowledge, by means of providing accurate information and objective opinions and commentaries.*

*The membership composition and powers associated with the Supreme Council of Press, as well as the relationship between the state authorities and the Journalists Syndicate shall be as follows:*

## **Article Sixty Eight**

*The President of the Republic shall issue a decree on the formation and composition of the Supreme Council of Press, as described hereunder:*

- (1) *The Speaker of the Shura Council, as the Chairperson of the Supreme Council of Press*



- (2) Chairpersons of boards of directors from the national press organizations
- (3) Editors-in-chief of national press organizations (each press organization shall be represented by one editor-in-chief to be identified by the respective board of directors)
- (4) Editors-in-chief of political newspapers published in accordance to the Law on Political Parties (each political party shall be represented by one editor-in-chief to be identified and designated by the respective political party, as appropriate)
- (5) The Chairperson of the Journalists Syndicate, as well as four of the former chairpersons or regular members of the Journalists Syndicate, to be identified and selected by the Shura Council
- (6) The Chairperson of the Labour Union of employees working in the sector of journalism, printing, media, and publishing, as well as four of the former chairpersons or regular members of the respective Labour Union, as identified and selected by the Shura Council
- (7) Two (2) journalism professors from Egyptian universities, as identified and selected by the Shura Council
- (8) Two (2) legal experts, as identified and selected by the Shura Council
- (9) A number of public figures interested in journalism, who shall represent the various trends of the public opinion, to be identified and selected by the Shura Council, provided that the number of this category shall not exceed the total number of representatives mentioned in the previous paragraphs

*The members of the Supreme Council of Press shall serve for a renewable term of four years.*

## Article Sixty Nine

*The Supreme Council of Press shall form the executive board thereof, which shall consist of the chairperson, two deputy chairs, secretary-general and assistant secretary-general.*

*The membership elections of the Executive Board of the Supreme Council of Press shall be held by secret ballot, with the exception of the Chairperson thereof.*

## Chapter Two

### Functions of Supreme Council of Press

## Article Seventy

*Besides the additional functions prescribed under the provisions of the present Law, the Supreme Council of Press shall carry out the following functions and duties:*

1. *Provide input and insight in the whole range of draft laws and bills, in relation to journalism;*
2. *Take the actions and measures necessary to support, develop, and leverage the performance of the Egyptian journalism, in keeping with the current developments and trends in the industry of journalism around the globe; in conjunction with the specialized academic institutions and domestic and international technical organizations, and via the establishment of a center for information and research;*

3. *Facilitate the documentation of the chronological evolution of journalism in Egypt;*
4. *Work collaboratively with comparable and corresponding councils, organizations and boards, around the globe, with an aim to share experiences in matters related to the areas of jurisdiction and specialty of the Supreme Council of Press;*
5. *Facilitate a concerted approach among the press and news organizations in the economic, technological, and administrative sectors, as well as in the areas of training and rehabilitation;*
6. *Provide close monitoring on the economic performance of the national press organizations, based on a review and discussion of the performance status reports developed by the Central Audit Organization; and take the actions and measures necessary to improve performance;*
7. *Provide the resources required to facilitate the publication of newspapers, and address the challenges and difficulties that encounter the press and news organizations;*
8. *Determine the shares of printing papers allocated to each newspaper; specify the standard prices and spaces of advertisements published by the government, public organizations, public sector, and business sector, in a manner that shall not conflict with the space allocated for the editorial content, in consistency with the internationally recognized standards;*
9. *Safeguard the journalistic work; secure the rights of journalists; and ensure that journalists perform their professional duties and obligations, as specified in the present Law;*
10. *Release the code of ethics developed by the Journalists Syndicate;*
11. *Monitor and follow through the content materials published by different newspapers; and release regular status reports on the degree of compliance by such newspapers towards the professional code of ethics and guiding principles. Newspapers shall undertake to publish such reports;*
12. *Secure the right of newspapers and journalists to provide corrigenda and rejoinders;*
13. *Review the complaints filed by aggrieved parties against newspapers or journalists, in relation to the extent of compliance with the professional code of ethics, standards and practices; especially in terms of the publication of issues that may compromise the private life of persons;*
14. *Ensure the application of the minimum wage limits for journalists and employees of press organizations;*
15. *Specify a certain percentile, on an annual basis, off the revenue collections generated from the advertising business in news and press organizations for the benefit of the two funds on pension retirement and subsidy, at the Journalists Syndicate and the Labour Union of those employed in journalism, advertising business, and the media;*
16. *Receive decisions and resolutions made by the Registration Committee, at the Journalists Syndicate; the results of the Syndicate elections; and, the decisions and resolutions reached by the General Assembly of the Journalist Syndicate;*
17. *Approve the requests submitted by journalists regarding their interest to work for non-Egyptian news agencies or organizations, whether outside Egypt or beyond, based on an approval by the employer; and,*
18. *In performing the functions and duties thereof, as determined herein, establish a fund to support the newspapers, and shall develop and release the guiding principles of such funds*

## Chapter Three

### Internal Statutes of Supreme Council of Press

#### Article Seventy One

*The Supreme Council of Press shall develop the rules, regulations and internal statutes thereof and shall determine the formation and membership composition of the subcommittees emanating wherefrom.*

#### Article Seventy Two

*The Chairperson of the Supreme Council of Press shall represent the Supreme Council before the judicial and administrative authorities, among other entities, and shall oversee the functions and performance of the Council. The Chairperson of the Supreme Council shall chair the meetings of the Executive Board.*

*The Chairperson may delegate certain responsibilities and functions to any or both of the two deputy chairs, and may assign one of them to preside over the meetings convened by the Supreme Council of Press.*

#### Article Seventy Three

*The Secretary-General shall execute the decisions made by the Supreme Council of Press, and shall develop meeting agendas, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Supreme Council of Press.*

#### Article Seventy Three

*The Supreme Council of Press shall hold an ordinary meeting on a bi-monthly basis, and may call for the convening of an extraordinary meeting, at the request of the Chairperson, or otherwise at the request of one third of the members thereof.*

#### Article Seventy Four

*The President of the Republic may call on the Supreme Council of Press to hold an extraordinary meeting. In this event, the President of the Republic shall chair such a meeting.*

#### Article Seventy Five

*The Supreme Council of Press shall be entitled to submit requests soliciting data and information from the official authorities, in a manner that shall enable the Supreme Council of Press to perform its functions and duties, within the limits of the provisions prescribed under the present Law.*

#### Article Seventy Six

*The Supreme Council of Press shall maintain an autonomous budget, and shall be allocated a single code in the State Budget.*

*The internal statutes of the Supreme Council of Press shall delineate the process associated with the development, review, and approval of the annual draft budget of the Council; the financial reporting and accounts audit and review process; the development, review and approval of the closing accounts, without observance to the government regulations.*

#### **Article Seventy Seven**

*The Supreme Council of Press, upon a motion proposed by the Executive Board thereof, shall hereby develop the regulations applicable to the members of the Supreme Council of Press and the General Secretariat.*

#### **Article Seventy Eight**

*The Supreme Council of Press shall submit annual status reports to the President of the Republic. Such reports shall detail the overall conditions and circumstances of journalism and the related issues, as well as the financial and economic conditions and performance of press organizations and news agencies.*

#### **Article Seventy Nine**

*The Supreme Council of Press shall issue the Executive Regulations of the present Law. Pending the issuance of the Executive Regulations, the current regulations shall continue prevail, inasmuch as consistent with the provisions of the present Law.*

### **CHAPTER FIVE**

#### **PROVISIONAL REGULATIONS**

#### **Article Eighty**

*Newspapers that continue to be held and managed by their proprietors, in the application of the provisions of Article (49), Law (148) of Year 1980 regarding the Powers of Journalism, shall continue to engage in their respective functions and activities, until the death of their owners. In the meanwhile, such newspapers may opt to adjust their conditions and status, pursuant to the provisions of the present Law.*

#### **Article Eighty One**

*The present Law shall hereby be promulgated and published in the official Gazette, and shall be enforced as of the date on which the Law shall be promulgated. Article No 148 of 1980 on the Powers of Journalism, and other legal texts that may contravene with the provisions of the present Law, shall hereby be repealed.*

*The present Law shall hereby be stamped by the official stamp of the State, and shall hereby be enforced.*

*The present Law is issued at the Presidency of the Republic on June 30, 1996.*

*President Hosni Mubarak*