



The progress of Cairo University is governed by a rationalist, futuristic approach. The national challenge is to rebuild the Egyptian character to achieve enlightenment, development and establish a modern state. This can only be accomplished by changing the mindset of students and researchers who need to think rationally, critically and creatively. This will build human beings who are aware and responsible, capable of establishing a renaissance in Egypt.

An urgent need at this stage is for Cairo University to be transformed to a third generation university, whilst recovering the intellectual legacy of our founding fathers in enlightenment, rationalism, civil society, pluralism, and citizenship. This will chart new paths of progress, seeking fresh horizons in the march of world history. When Cairo University was first established, it belonged to first generation universities, which merely aim to transfer knowledge and information. Second generation universities establish a link between education and scientific research. The goal now is to belong to the era of third generation universities which link education and scientific research with the application of knowledge in the comprehensive development of the nation. This involves cultural, scientific, economic, and social development. Such development will affect minds, resources, the state, the society, and above all the individual as a whole. This will contribute to the economy and to interdisciplinary specializations, and will enhance entrepreneurship and project management, thus not only graduating employees and scholars, but entrepreneurs as well. It is vital to pay attention to research centers, administrative decentralization, governance of academic administration, work ethics, and the requirements of modernity, enlightenment, and progress as the goals of such development.

In this context, the principles governing the identity of Cairo University and its action plan will be as follows:

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This document is presented by Cairo University as an initiative in the hope that the society will participate in its adoption and dissemination in order to achieve the desired development and progress of Egypt.

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Cairo University's Document on Enlightenment

The Council of Enlightenment and Culture

Chaired by
Prof. Mohamed Othman El Khosht
President of Cairo University

1- to reentrench the fact that Cairo University is a civil institution that adopts rationalism. Freedom is one of its inherent components, whilst emphasizing the right to differ, as well as the establishment of the diversity of creative thought. This should all take place within the framework of the national state, which removes all possibilities of rigidly, defending one trend against any other. Cairo University is a home for all Egyptians.

2- to confirm the enlightened identity of Egypt, which is based on values of coexistence and acceptance of the other. This is all the more important as Cairo University is a partner in the process of formulating such an identity.

3- to define enlightenment as an intellectual exercise associated with the courage to adopt rational and critical thinking in the modernist sense.

4- to formulate a new cultural and religious discourse based on multiple rational interpretations and scientific readings of religious texts as the alternative to the narrow single interpretation and the illusion of knowing the absolute truth.

5- to establish a rational Arab movement that resists terrorism, extremism, backwardness, and fundamentalism that restrains the mind from understanding reality or reflecting on religious texts.

6- to be open to other experiences of enlightenment, global trends, history of ideas and arts, diversity of sources of information, and technological empowerment of all aspects of the university in the interest of the nation.

7- to establish an ideological system that is open, liberal and progressive to confront closed, extremist and rigid ideological systems. It is vital to resort to critical and analytical thinking, avoid ready-made molds that hinder creativity and development, and combat passivity that springs from memorization, and the belief in one absolute truth that does not accept change.

8- to build a character that is capable of creative thinking, political innovation and professional administration. This is a task to be fulfilled by the educational process in practice, as well as creative activities; education being the most effective factor in building the soul, body, spirit and heart of a balanced individual who has a sound mind capable of leading and guiding.

9- to establish an educational environment that stimulates the spirit of exploration, creativity and academic freedom, and works on eliminating a system that generates terrorism through the curricula of memorization that creates rigid minds. The educational content must motivate researchers and students to new levels of learning, freeing them from course restrictions and enabling them to conduct creative scientific research.

10- to adopt rationalist patterns, empiricist methods, analytical thinking, the scientific and practical solutions of problems, and the emphasis on “the art of dialogue that generates the truth.” This leads to the formation of minds that think in a systematic, open minded way that is capable of taking a stand, being creative, and graduating a free mature personality, capable of thinking, weighing ideas, criticizing, choosing and innovating.

11- to reconsider the methods of assessment and testing so that exams test skills, ways of thinking, and learning outcomes rather than the content of the memorization process, which results in closed minds that do not think. Those can be easily used and exploited by the terrorists who play the game of “order and obey” to impose a certain lifestyle on everyone.

12- to change the way of life towards urbanization in its comprehensive sense, consolidating the ethics of progress, and changing the system of values that govern behavior.

13- to avoid religious, racial, social, political discrimination or other grounds of discrimination that conflict with the idea of citizenship. Everyone is governed by the principle of citizenship, everyone is equal before the law, and democracy guarantees peace among all within the nation. Democracy cannot achieve its objectives without renouncing violence, terrorism, extremism and dismantling fundamentalism.

14- to discover the talents of student, open tracks for them in different fields, whether scientific, artistic, cultural, sports or others, and expand the vision and domain of student activity so that students have values of coexistence and enlightenment. This cannot simply be achieved through seminars or festivals, but through real not fake cultural and enlightened awareness.