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Remarks: ANSI-EOS Memorandum of Understanding
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1,048 words, approximately 8.5 minutes

Good morning, everyone... and thank you for the warm welcome.

It's great to join you here in Cairo to stress the importance of cooperation between Egypt and the United States in the standardization arena. When we talk about standardization, we mean standards and demonstration of compliance to those standards.

Today, we have gathered to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Egyptian Organization for Standardization and Quality (EOS) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

We are coming together to make a commitment to cooperation, and establish a path forward for growth and the advancement of trade between Egypt and the U.S.

America's trade relationship with Egypt is healthy and growing. Just listen to the numbers... Bilateral trade in merchandise goods has increased exponentially in the past twenty years – U.S. exports to Egypt have grown nearly 250%, and Egyptian exports to the U.S. have increased by more than 500%. In 2007 alone, Egyptian exports to the U.S. totaled nearly 2.5 billion dollars and U.S. exports to Egypt totaled over 5 billion dollars¹.

(pause)

In our fast-paced global economy, there's no question that standardization and trade are linked. Dozens of studies from the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Egyptian Ministry of Trade and Industry, and the World Trade Organization back up the statement with data.

Those who understand how to effectively influence and address standardization and compliance issues have the greatest success in the international marketplace.

¹ Figures taken from the U.S. Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Statistics page: <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c7290.html>

In total, 80% of global commodity trade is impacted by standards and conformity assessment programs. If we aren't all on the same page, the international community experiences a lot of duplicative effort and incurs a lot of unnecessary cost.

The *United States Standards Strategy* strongly supports the concept of “one standard – one test – accepted everywhere.” That is what industry in every part of the world seeks. This means that companies, nations, and regions must work together to expand awareness of international standardization. We must make every effort to minimize conflict and duplication in our standards development activities. And, we must jointly recognize those groups who perform conformity assessment and testing activities, so that their evaluations of competence can cross borders. One could argue that the principles of the *United States Standards Strategy* are equally applicable for the international community... ANSI will continue to serve as a staunch advocate for globally-relevant standards, tests, and marks.

Building upon existing working relationships between ANSI and EOS, this MoU recognizes the critical importance of a public/private partnership in the development of effective standards and conformity assessment-based solutions.

By signing this document:

- We pledge to facilitate trade between the U.S. and Egypt by encouraging greater efficiencies in conformity assessment practices.
- We pledge to facilitate dialogue between the standardization communities in our two countries, and wherever possible, to share informational materials and education and training content.
- We pledge to exchange views on international standardization activities, working cooperatively with EOS as Egypt's member body to the International Organization for Standardization and the International Electrotechnical Commission.
- And we pledge to encourage and support industry activities and initiatives in Egypt and the U.S.

Through increased transparency and mutual understanding, our approaches to standards, conformity assessment and technical regulations will move closer together, incorporating the best practices of each country.

(pause)

One of the greatest strengths that ANSI brings to our new relationship is the richness of a public sector - private sector partnership. Under the ANSI umbrella, government representatives work side-by-side with private-sector stakeholders, bringing resources from both worlds to achieve shared objectives.

Because ANSI facilitates this partnership, we are able to acquire and share vital information that is not centrally available from other resources.

We speak as the U.S. voice in standardization forums around the globe. And our activities cross all industry sectors from technology to services, and from consumer safety to protection of the environment.

(pause)

There are many opportunities for cooperation where American and Egyptian interests intersect.

Egypt's chief global exports include crude oil, petroleum products, and natural gas, but you've also seen development in alternative energies such as hydrogen. We are each participating members of the ISO committee on hydrogen technologies and will play important roles in the development of international standards in this area. Renewable energy is an area of special interest to many of ANSI's company members, so we launched in 2007 a standards coordination initiative to address biofuels and alternative energy resources.

Another issue of shared interest is identity theft. ANSI's Identity Theft and Identity Management Standards Panel presented a report earlier this year that recommends ways for businesses and retailers to arm themselves against one of the fastest-growing marketplace problems in the world. As U.S. firms outsource critical services that entail the transfer of personal and financial data, the identity theft problem crosses national borders. We must do what we can to stop identity theft on an international scale, not just within our respective countries.

A third — and very important — example of how Egyptians and Americans are alike is our shared focus on the safety of consumer products and the integrity of the global supply chain. In light of our recent experience with extensive recalls of toys, food, and other consumer goods, ANSI is working in partnership with many other trade organizations and a federal task force to reinforce the consumer product safety system and make sure that only safe goods can be found on our shelves.

While the recall situation has not been as pronounced in Egypt as it has been in the U.S., I know that consumer safety is a key priority for you as well.

(pause)

Trade and economic development . . . consumer protection and safety . . . these are just a few examples of where our interests and priorities overlap.

There is no denying that Egypt is an economic power—not just in the Middle East but worldwide. On behalf of the American National Standards Institute, I'm proud to join you as we make this pledge of cooperation in support of increased economic growth and trade between our two countries.

I look forward to working with you to make this vision a reality.

Thank you.