

Center *for*
Intercultural Dialogue
And Translation

Narrative Report 2012

Cairo, March 2013

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Summary

A goal set for Arab-West Report, published by the Arab-West Foundation in the Netherlands and prepared by the Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Translation, is to reach an academic standard in its work that is worthy of incorporation into JSTOR, the online scholarly journal archive. In order to achieve academic credibility, AWR is working toward a standardized citation format, enforcement of strict academic guidelines for report composition and developing a transliteration system that is both comprehensible and user-friendly. In meeting the JSTOR standard, AWR's circulation among academics in universities and research institutions will increase significantly, thereby furthering our goal of a better understanding between the Arab world and the West.

To increase the visibility of AWR, it is important that it develops its online presence. Using social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter can help improve visibility – and is something we will continue working on in 2013 – but the main challenge is to improve our Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to ensure that we are really fully visible to search engines such as Google, Bing and the like. The new Drupal based system, which has been in operation since beginning of 2010, allows CIDT to assign each article extended key words and search engine visibility. Transfer of all data to a new and faster server hosted by the French company OHV per 8 August, 2010, facilitates this process.

It will be an additional challenge to also apply this function on our archived material already in the database to give it enough visibility on search engines.

On this Report

This report has been compiled by Sawsan Gabra, Diana Maher Ghali, and Cornelis Hulsman. It describes developments within CIDT over the reporting period 01 January 2012 – 31 December 2012 and puts **them in the context of CIDT's targets and monitoring conditions as previously formulated.** This text has been updated until March 2013.

About CIDT

The Organization: In 1997 the Dutch sociologist Cornelis Hulsman and his Egyptian wife, Sawsan Gabra Ayoub Khalil, founded the electronic magazine *Arab-West Report* (AWR) in response to frequent misreporting they encountered in various Western media about Egypt, which contributes to tensions in Egypt. This later resulted in the foundation of the Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Translation – in 2005. In 2012 CIDT was reincarnated as a Limited Liability Company.

Method: Research and reports are descriptive in their methodology; no political advocacy is carried out. We operate with the view that understandings of humans and cultures are different and that such differences should be respected. Research is aimed at providing context and correcting factual inaccuracies that often surface in reporting on Egypt and on Arab-West relations.

Track record: *Arab-West Report*, with its 15 years of experience and the publication of over 30,000 articles and reports and additional activities, has become a trusted source of information. The electronic magazine and database is supported and **it's** development is further facilitated by the Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Translation. However, ownership of Arab-West Report lies with the Dutch-based Arab-West Foundation under ISSN: 2210-3597. *Arab-West Report* is a major source of information for student interns and of thousands of users outside of our organizations, in addition to being an important source of information for lectures and workshops. For impact, we need to move the AWR database to a different hosting system, make it meet academic criteria, improve the layout and search functions, and use more images.

Guiding principles: With a standpoint of objectivity and non-partisanship – our focus of research is on intercommunal and interfaith relations in Egypt and the wider Middle East.

This is represented in the **company's** mission statement:

To be a non-partisan organisation that contributes with an electronic database and investigative reporting for the peaceful coexistence of religious groups in Egypt.

On the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan

CIDT's Strategic Report of October 28, 2010, was the basis for our 2012-2014 plans and activities. The revolution in January 25 2011, with unrest and uncertainties has slowed down this process, but we have nevertheless steadily moved in the direction that was then formulated. It was necessary to find qualified staff as well as make changes to the organizational structure in order to be able to carry out plans in this direction.

We have further developed our content and have seen the strong impact this has had on people and organizations that are now aware of our production. Prof. Dr. Christof Sauer, for example, informed us he made substantial use of *AWR* for his PhD. Prof. Wolfram Reiss, working on a network between the University of Vienna, Austria, and academic institutions in the Arab World invited CIDT to take part in **an International Conference on "The Contribution of Religious Minorities to the Society"** at the University of Vienna in July 2013.

The plans for 2012-2014 show a yearly increase in production figures without additional staff or income. We have succeeded in increasing our production throughout 2012 despite great challenges.

In June 2011, we presented a three-year plan that specified the following goals for 2012-2014:

- Development of content and search-ability of our database that helps journalists and researchers place conflicts and tensions in a wider societal context.
- Developing and maintaining the database is the core of all our work. It was initially built without the use of a stable platform by Egyptian developers because of lack of investment. In 2011, our data was transferred to a Drupal platform, which was expanded in 2012. Projects we carry out are linked to this database.

Achievement of Goals

GOAL	INPUT	OUTPUT
<p>Development of content.</p> <p>Present and discuss background analysis of Muslim - Christian relations with intellectuals, students, media, religious leaders, and governmental official in order to increasingly influence the conversation for mutual understanding in Egypt and between Egypt and the West.</p>	<p>Database building with summary translations from Arab media. Initially done in weekly issues.</p> <p>Production of analytical reports, media critique and other investigative reports which highlight media distortions.</p>	<p>Creation of awareness among users of <i>AWR</i> that one should be cautious with claims made in media reports, and that the reality is more complicated then reported. This was in particular important in 2012 with a widespread usage of Egyptian and non-Egyptian media to advocate partisan positions.</p>
<p>Make data in our database better available for (re) search.</p>	<p>Continuing development of our Drupal based database.</p>	<p>Increased number of hits and visits to our database.</p>
<p>Diversify, expand CIDT/<i>AWR</i> sources of revenue.</p>	<p>Improving the financial administration of CIDT as prerequisite for potential new funders.</p> <p>Presenting project and funding requests to new organizations.</p>	<p>Adel Rizkallah has made a major impact on improving the financial administration of CIDT.</p>

Development of Content

In 2011, we discussed with Prof. Dr. P.A. van Doorn-Harder, professor of Christian-Muslim Relations at the Free University of Amsterdam, about a research project on the declining proportion of Coptic Christians in Egyptian society

Substantial research was carried out in 2012 on Coptic population statistics. The Dominican Oriental Institute published major findings in MIDEO 29, 2012, which appeared in February 2013. Other reports were published in *AWR*.

A study about the heated discussions between conservative Muslims, liberal Muslims, and Christians over Article 2 of the Constitution, which stipulates that **Shari'ah is the source of Egypt's legislation**, was carried out with the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) which resulted in the 2012 book published in Arabic. A thousand copies were distributed in Egypt. A translation was made of this text, chapters written by interns which resulted in a publication in December 2012.

Following the publication of research on Article 2 and the Constitution, we moved on to work on a second book on Islamist Movements in Egypt for *Anwendungsorientierte Religionswissenschaften* which we hope will be published in 2014. These publications greatly increase the academic credibility of *Arab-West Report*.

When we started work with *Arab-West Report*, our main focus was on Muslim-Christian relations with media critiques on bias reporting. Following the January 25, 2011 revolution, our focus has been widened to Islamist non-Islamist relations.



Production results in categories and numbers

By publishing/posting daily articles that incorporate a broad range of Egyptian and Arab views, along with a rigorous Media Watch system for selected subjects (this limitation in the selection is due to our available budget), CIDT/AWR is introducing its readers a balanced and critiqued snapshot of the current intercommunal debate taking place in Egypt and the wider Middle East.

We produce the following products:

- Systematic summary translations and press reviews of selected Arab media
- Background analysis of Arab media reporting.
 - In general:
 - Provide chronological overview of the development of a tension or conflict. Clearly mention where information received was contradictory and identifying the parties that provide contradictory information.
 - Describing Muslim-Christian tensions as reported in Arab media, but placing reported tensions in the wider context of developments in society with concrete examples that illustrate the background of these tensions.
 - Overviews of what various media report on one subject, highlighting the differences between Western and Arab reporting.
 - Media critique; showing where reporting was biased. Distinguishing between rumours and facts, explaining why a certain claim is a rumour, and what the evidence is for this.
- Rapid response reporting following conflicts
 - Similar to media critique, but including rapid dissemination to a wider public in an effort to reduce escalations based on misreporting.
- Interviews
 - Transcripts of interviews with well-informed people who can provide a good insight into the background of developments that have taken place.
- Investigative reporting
 - Reports that make use of background analysis, distinguishing between rumours and facts, using interviews, supplemented with information from contacts on location. It should be clarified that investigative reporting is the most time consuming. This is partly done with the help of supervised interns.
- Newspaper clippings
 - Using our content selection criteria to select English and Arabic articles that could be uploaded to our database untranslated. Keywords will be added to aid later searches for these articles.

The targets were intended to increase from year to year. Our 2013 production results are largely in line with the targets for 2012, but growth in production was only partly achieved due to the substantial amount of time involved in restoring our database and limited staff.

Table 1: Production Results: 1 January – 31 December 2012

Production Results: 1 January – 31 December Compared with annual targets	Total
Summary Translations and Press Overviews (Target: 2,000)	3,394
Background Analysis: Muslim-Christian Relations in Egypt and the Middle East (Target: 50)	71
Background Analysis: Egyptian reporting on Muslim/non-Muslim events in Europe (Target: 2)	4
Media Critique of Reporting Related to Middle East (Target: 20)	38
Rapid Response Reporting on Current Events (Target: 10)	33
Interview Articles/Reports by AWR (Target: 12)	20
Investigative Reporting (Target: 4)	4
Lectures (Target: 10)	9
Social Media Followers Added: Twitter	592
Social Media Followers Added: Facebook	50
Mini Press Reviews: Abridged Review on Daily Reporting (Target: 50)	4
AWR Website Hits – including bounce rate	239,802
AWR Website Visits	101,189

Preparations for Future Projects

Several discussions have taken place with curriculum developer Lori Lawson and representatives of Cairo University, American University in Cairo (AUC) and Future University on building a summer school based on the activities of AWR. The aim is to bring students from outside and inside Egypt together in one study program. CIDT will need cooperation with a university in order to realize its plans. The summer school should be cost neutral and perhaps, when interest grows, also bring some income for CIDT.

Dr. Enan Galaly asked Cornelis Hulsman to prepare a new book on the Holy Family tradition since the book *Be Thou There; the Holy Family Journey in Egypt* (AUC press 2001) is sold out and will not be reprinted since this is outdated.

AWR in Western Media Reporting

Cornelis Hulsman and the CIDT staff continue their efforts to report in the Western media as opportunities present themselves

Administration and Finance

Contract partner Kerk in Actie indicated they preferred working with a limited liability company instead of a tawsiya basita (sole proprietorship) which they found an uncertain structure. Sawsan Gabra, Cornelis Hulsman, Hany Labib and Amr Sherif Ahmed founded a **“limited-liability company” with initially Sawsan Gabra/Cornelis Hulsman as “General Limited Partners” (30% each) with Hany Labib and Amr Sherif Ahmed as “Limited Partners” (20% each). This was a lengthy and complicated process involving substantial time and effort by our Financial Manager, Doug May, and costs of lawyers and accountants. The structure of CIDT as a limited liability company had to be changed after the General Authority for Finance and Investment (GAFI) decided in November that Hulsman could not be a General Limited Partner. This was not motivated by, but later we found that the lawyer had filed this with GAFI shortly before the residence permit of Cornelis Hulsman was expiring. He should have waited until **after renewal of Hulsman’s residence permit. Furthermore, Hany Labib and other partners agreed he would relinquish his share. The consequence of this is that as of 1 January 2013, Sawsan Gabra has 80% of the shares and Amr Sherif Ahmed has 20% of the shares. Sawsan Gabra is ready to give up part of her shares to other partners and talks are underway with potential candidates.****

CIDT Management Structure - 2012

- Office Manager: vacant* – oversight of CIDT office and company budget, contracts, overview of Arabic website, secretary of CAWU and liaison to Ministry of Social Solidarity. NB: The managing director position was held by Hany Labib until 31 December 2012. *Position will be filled by Adel Rizkalla as of 1 May 2013.
- General Director and Editor-in-chief of Arab-West Report: Cornelis Hulsman – database development, investigative reporting, academic supervision of interns, liaison to Cairo University and other institutions.
- Sawsan Gabra – budget and financial monitor, indexing
- Douglas May – International Coordinator and Financial Manager

CIDT Staff:

- Diana Maher Ghali – Executive Secretary.

- Dieter Mueller-Ehrhard – IT consultant from Germany, monitor for Hosam and Nevine.
- Hosam Dergham - IT programmer
- Nevine Naguib - IT administrator
- Vivian - Secretary for Arabic website
- Amr Sherif Ahmed, translator (freelance)
- Jenna Ferrecchia – English language Editor

Main achievements in 2012

- **The NEW CIDT became officially a reality as a “limited-liability company” in August 2012.**
- **Hany Labib’s MEPI project was completed, but accounts have not been closed.**
- Ashraf Shaban is auditor for CIDT and has written tax and social insurance schedules.
- Bill Gallo remained responsible for iContact newsletters and Facebook until december 2012 when intern Eline Kasanwidjojo took over responsibility for the newsletters.
- Jayson Casper continues as a researcher/writer for AWR on a freelance basis.

Finance

CIDT experienced severe cash flow problems in 2012. With the instability of BOTH the Egyptian Pound AND the Euro, financial projections have been difficult to make. CIDT had to offset a near Euro 20,000 projected budget deficit related to salaries: International Coordinator, Intern Coordinator, Arabic language Editor and IT Programmer. These much needed positions were left out of the budget in order to make the budget for 2012 match. Production for the Maryknoll Society contributed over Euro 5,000 that helped to offset first-half year deficits. Payments from Kerk in Actie and second-half payment from Misereor were not received until August with the formation of the CIDT limited liability company and its new bank accounts.

CIDT extended its efforts to diversify funding sources to offset unbudgeted salary costs and increase project income. Managing Director, Hany Labib, did succeed in earning funds with the MEPI (Middle East Partnership Initiative) for a study of the much disputed Article II of the Egyptian Constitution that **stipulates that the shari’a is the main** source of legislation. But special projects are irregular and very undependable sources of extra income.

Although the MEPI Project was completed in May 2012, the accounts are still not completely closed taxes need to be paid on earnings. In our financial report 2012 we will thus estimate the tax still to be paid. Other projects are being considered mindful of **CIDT’s** funding and staff constraints.

Ref: Annual Account Statement Report for Specifics. Full-year salaries costs were budgeted in 2011 **for 2012 at Euro 100,087 “uncovered” salaries of Euro 22,774, that is salaries for positions CIDT wished** to fill but for which no funding was available. An international coordinator was hired in February 2012 to help increase project funding. In addition, an English-language editor and an office man were added to the salary schedule. There were some significant reductions made in salary costs AND some significant increases, most notably involving the Managing Director, Hany Labib, who increased his

own salary and IT project manager, Hosam, who was budgeted for in the first half of 2012 only for lack of sufficient funding. Due to ongoing needs for his quality work, he was contracted to remain with CIDT. CIDT had, three years previously, also agreed to a bonus upon completion of his three year period which raised his salary costs when it was paid. These salary costs along with CIDT acquiring income tax and social insurance obligations total Euro 96,786, slightly below the budgeted amount above. Efforts via subscriptions and solicited contributions totaled Euro 5,672 plus a gain on the exchange of Euro over the budgeted rate of Euro 1 = LE 7. This gain on exchange totaled Euro 7,063. Therefore, CIDT managed to cover extra salary costs thanks to a contract with the Maryknoll Society, infrastructural support from the Archdiocese of Cologne and an additional Euro 5,000 from Kerk in Actie. There was also the final payment from the MEPI project of Euro 5,292.

Doug May agreed in 2012 to pay from his salary over Euro 1,000 of the salary costs for language editor Jenna Ferrecchia. Doug May further agreed to work as an unpaid volunteer until 30 June 2013.

Here is a brief picture of CIDT's financial situation:

- Budgeted income from Missio, Misereor and Kerk in Actie for 2012 was Euro 89,333. Kerk in Actie increased their contract with Euro 5,000 annually in July 2012.
- Additional income from translations, tour facilitation, lectures and other income for 2012 amounted to Euro 25,527. Ref: Audit Report.
- Delays in receiving a 2012 -2014 contract from Kerk in Actie did cause financial issues for CIDT as Kerk in Actie funding only came after this contract is signed by CIDT in July. Loans were eventually covered by income from contracts with MEPI and Maryknoll Society.
- A major factor in this is that CIDT has had to set aside funds to open new bank accounts for the NEW CIDT. Minimum-balance amounts to open Egyptian Pound and USD accounts have been doubled by the Commercial International Bank (CIB) to LE 10,000, Euro 1,000 and USD 2,000. These funds are now blocked or a significant fee will be charged.

We have researched the idea of returning to subscriptions which did not appear to be "cost effective" using the available means of collecting, recording and acknowledging subscriptions.

CIDT could have ended the year without a deficit after taxes and social insurance payments were it not that Managing Director Hany Labib was paid Euro 18,286 instead of the budgeted amount of Euro 15,086 for which he had signed when the budget was made in August 2011. Hany Labib, unilaterally increased his salary on 1 January 2012 from LE 8,000 to LE 10,000 per month net. Through negotiations, a compromise was achieved of LE 9,000 month net. Since his production was lower than agreed and his managerial ability was much less than anticipated, he was notified that his contract would not be renewed after 31 December 2012. He then made a claim for two-month' **severance pay**. The consequence was that Hany Labib received Euro 3,200 more than had been budgeted for.

After Hany Labib had been notified that his contract would not be renewed, he made an unauthorized transfer to his own private account which some lawyers have termed embezzlement. He had no right to this Euro 4,437 which has been recorded thus far in our accounts as a debt of Hany Labib to CIDT.

This sum has been covered by Cornelis Hulsman to CIDT from private funds and thus Hulsman is personally guaranteeing that CIDT will not have to pay for this.

Cairo, 23 March 2013

Cornelis Hulsman
General Director

Douglas May
International Coordinator/Financial Manager