



## Press Review City, Mobility, Environment – February 2023

### Urban Development

#### *Development of the city center*

The Higher Council for Urban Planning, composed of the Ministers of Defense, Culture, Tourism, Local Development, Environment and Planning, decided to redevelop several areas of the city center: the Corniche on the Nile in Shubra and Maadi, Ramses Square, and Dar al-Salam. Some people are concerned that this form of urban renewal will lead to the relocation of the poorest inhabitants and the deterioration of buildings with high architectural value. The monorail project, mentioned in the statement on the [Facebook page](#) of the Council of Ministers, raises concerns of further housing destruction, in line with what has been done in recent years.

The Council also approved the Egyptian sovereign wealth fund's request to turn the Mogamma in Tahrir Square into a 450-rooms hotel complex (see [Summer 2022 Press Review](#)) which should be called "Cairo House." The project is estimated at \$200 million. The former Ministry of the Interior building should become an "integrated services complex." The governor of Cairo emphasizes unprecedented efforts to revive [Khedival Cairo](#) while members of Parliament denounce a [return of street vendors](#) to Wast el-Balad.

Several renovated architectural monuments were inaugurated in the Al-Khalifa district of Cairo. In addition, a new tourist path with a unified entrance ticket for 12 monuments (60 EGP for Egyptians and 120 for foreigners) is being developed in [Darb el-Ahmar](#).

#### *Green spaces*

New green spaces are under threat in Cairo. A 7,000 m<sup>2</sup> portion of the Medinat Nasr International Park is to be auctioned off to allow for its development by the private sector (another 7,000 m<sup>2</sup> was sold to the private sector a few months ago). These portions are in the corners of the park and, according to the development plan, they should host cafes and restaurants. The International Park is the largest garden in the Cairo Governorate, with an area of 55 feddans. An [Mada Masr](#) article retraces the history of the garden and of green space management in Cairo.

#### *New Administrative Capital*

[60% of the first phase](#) of the New Administrative Capital is reportedly completed. President Abdel Fattah al-Sissi emphasized that the New Administrative Capital is part of a project to build 24 smart new cities. The government's goal is to urbanize 12% of the country's surface area within the next 10 years, in a context of population growth and of high housing demand. The President explained that 800,000 young people get married every year, which creates an annual need for 600,000 homes. The governor of Cairo announced that the city had exceeded 25 million inhabitants.

The Ministry of Housing seeks to attract large international companies to the New Administrative Capital. To this end, NAC's CBD is expected to include about 20 towers.

Prime Minister Mustafa Madbouly granted [financial incentives](#) to employees who will work in the New Administrative Capital. He also asked the Ministry of Transport to inform these employees of [transit options](#) to their new workplace. Fourteen departments, including the [Ministry of Transport](#), are set to be transferred by March 1st.

### *Others*

As part of its development (see the [September 2022 Press Review](#)), clearing operations took place on the Moqqatam “corniche.” Street vendors and informal cafes were asked to leave. Despite the protests, a 3-meter-high concrete wall was built along the corniche, depriving the cafes of their city view. The project is expected to last five years and threatens around 500 jobs. An article in [Al Manassa](#) discusses fears that the area will be privatized and exclude the working class.

New protests took place on [Warraq Island](#) after three residents were arrested (see the [Summer 2022 Press Review](#)).

Egypt will host the [12th edition of the World Urban Forum](#) (WUF) organized by the United Nations in 2024.

## **Transport**

President Abdel Fattah al-Sissi points out that the development of the transport sector costs 2 trillion EGP.

### *Railways*

The Minister of Transport visited the construction site of the [New Administrative Capital station](#). With an area of over 1.1 million m<sup>2</sup>, it will be one of the largest in the Middle East. It will also house a shopping mall of over 70,000 m<sup>2</sup>. In Cairo, he visited the construction site of the [Upper Egypt Station](#), a project that covers more than 239,000 m<sup>2</sup> and is expected to accommodate 250,000 passengers per day.

The [Talgo luxury train](#) (see the [January 2023 Press Review](#)) made its first trip from Cairo to Luxor, serving Giza, Asyut, Sohag, and Qena. The 10 hours trip costs between 400 and 600 EGP. Several other lines are projected, including the Cairo-Alexandria line, which is expected to be operational in December 2023.

The 660-kilometer Ain Sukha-New Al-Alamein-Matrouh electric high-speed train line is expected to create [15,000 to 18,000 jobs](#).

### *Metro*

The Council of Ministers approved a 1.8 million Euro EU grant for the [rehabilitation of Cairo's second metro line](#). The House of Representatives approved an agreement with France to finance the [Abu Qir metro line in Alexandria](#).

The Minister of Transport, who told the public that the [price of metro tickets](#) would not increase, later announced that the price of the ticket would be [raised from 10 to 12 EGP](#) for trips of more than 25 stations.

### *Others*

After the Minister of Transport presented his report to Parliament, a parliamentarian pointed out that Egypt is one of the countries with the highest number of [road accidents](#) in the world (see the [May 2022 Press Review](#)).

## **Tourism and cultural life**

A residential area dating back to Roman times was discovered after the destruction of the [Andraos Palace](#) in Luxor (see the [Summer 2021 Press Review](#)).

The twelfth edition of the [Luxor African Film Festival](#) was held early February and featured 50 films from 31 countries.

The government denied [rumors](#) that the Tahrir Square Egyptian Museum would close after the opening of the New Grand Museum. The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities said that the Grand Museum is actually in [full development](#). Guided tours are already possible in the [New Museum in Giza](#), even though the collections are not yet visible.

## **Environment**

### *Combating pollution*

Environment Minister Yasmine Fouad held talks with World Bank officials about the implementation of the [Greater Cairo Air Pollution Management Project](#). Egypt did secure a \$200 million loan (see the [September 2021 Press Review](#)).

The Ministry of Local Development reported on a [new municipal solid waste treatment system](#). In particular, new facilities were implemented in [Menoufeyya](#).

### *Planting trees*

The Ministry of Local Development announced the [planting of 4,347,000 trees](#) at 9,900 sites throughout the country. [Port Said](#) received 70,000 trees and [Damanhour](#) 130,000. 200 trees were also planted in the [Montazah Park in Alexandria](#) as part of the Get Green initiative (اتحضر للأخضر).

Florian Bonnefoi