

## **Demand for Citizenship by all People**

**By Nader Riad**

There is no doubt that Egypt's history is full of facts that will remain in the nation's memory and post. Perhaps the most important is the unity of the nation from all its sects without discrimination. Any violation of this unity is equal to treason that needs to be confronted.

There are terms such as 'harmony between the two components of the nation' or 'national unity' that can be considered modern. This gives the impression that this 'harmony' comes after a 'national split', which has never happened in the history of Egypt. Another example of this includes the term 'minorities', which is used out of context, thus confusing the meaning and content to the extent of making crucial mistakes.

The term 'minority' in the international context is represented in the exodus of a group settling in another country, for example, the exodus of the Armenians who then claimed rights, which are known as the 'rights of minorities'.

This is why the term "Minority" and "rights of minorities" don't exist in this homeland nor has it represented a component of this homeland since the early age.

Egypt's Copts, Nubians, residents of the oases, Sinai Bedouins, and Upper Egyptians are all Egyptians. It is unacceptable to call them minorities, because this runs counter to reality and history. The most prominent evidence of this reality is Egypt's Coptic Christians stand against successive Crusaders,

who falsely raised the cross to achieve their own malicious goals. Yet, the Coptic Christians raised their national cross and joined the ranks of their fellow Muslims to defend their homeland and protect its sacred soil.

As for the term 'the rights of the citizen', it is a term used to equalize all citizens so long as they hold Egyptian nationality. This also includes persons who have recently obtained Egyptian nationality.

They are all the same under law. Most of these rights even include those who reside in the homeland without claiming to be a national, or those who stay in the country permanently or temporarily. All of them have the same rights, except the right to run for legislative elections and employment in State-run institutions, according to the laws of all countries without exception.

Citizenship does not allow discrimination between persons based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, religion or appearance. We may need a legislation to explain this to whoever does not understand it, so that he/she may stop using wrong terms, or whoever considers it a favor or a gift granted by those who do not have it to those who have it by the force of law.

I believe the State's introduction of the term "citizenship" in the last constitutional amendments is one of the tools needed by a modern State to go forward to the future and make up for what was missed in the past. We, Egyptians, are proud of being Egyptians.

The evidence is that we all are looking forward to seeing our modern country an example. Some who have a vision for Egypt's future say that it is qualified for this. This is in thanks to many positives, including its people, who have knowledge, ambition and desire to keep abreast with the developments of the age and making up for the missing opportunities.

The State reform program, with its social, educational, legislative and structural axes, provide economic reform to make Egypt the progressive country we look forward to.

If our priorities placed economic progress on the top, it was not wrong, because the economic progress is a demand by all countries. This progress is what makes a country's policy strong and tangible within the international arena.

So, we welcome the legislative amendments and the powers demanded by any minister to make his ministry achieve its plan of action. This is inevitable for all social, educational, labor and legislative reforms in order to achieve the economic capabilities needed by the country to take its place in the developed world. This can be achieved by the honesty of the people of this country.

Egypt has always been the 'mother of the world'. It has never allowed any of its people to mix the facts and constants that are deeply rooted in the minds and conscience of the nation's memory and history. Nor has it allowed anyone to make dim religious or sectarian categorization.

Long live Egypt!