



# Khaled El-Enany



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Khaled Ahmed El-Enany Ali Ezz, born in 1971, is a leading figure recognized for his expertise and commitment across diverse fields including teaching, scientific research, culture, tourism, management, public service, and international relations. A former Egyptian Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, he currently holds the position of Professor of Egyptology at Helwan University, where he has been a faculty member for over thirty years. His teaching, focused on the civilization, archaeology, and epigraphy of Ancient Egypt, is not only taught in Egypt but also at prestigious international institutions. As a mentor, he has enabled thousands of students and researchers, both Egyptian and international, to benefit from his in-depth knowledge and vast experience. Through his scientific talks and presentations across nearly twenty countries, he has shared his expertise, enriched academic discourse and encouraged access to knowledge, while promoting intercultural dialogue. His proficiency in Arabic, French, and English demonstrates his communication skills, a key asset for fostering international cooperation.

After beginning his career as a tour guide, a profession that sparked his curiosity and appreciation for cultural diversity, he completed his master's degree at Helwan University on the temples of Ramses II in Nubia, which truly ignited his passion for research and his admiration for UNESCO. Holding a Ph.D. in Egyptology from the University of Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3 in France, he has been invited as a visiting professor eight times between 2006 and 2023 at this institution. He also collaborated for approximately fifteen years with the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology in Cairo (IFAO), demonstrating his significant contribution to scientific research and his commitment to building the capacity of young researchers. His publications, in renowned international journals and collections, have been widely recognized by the scientific community. He was also chosen Honorary Member of the Société française d'égyptologie and Corresponding Member of the German Archaeological Institute, in recognition of his dedication to strengthening cultural and scientific ties.

His influence extends to academic positions, notably at Helwan University as Director of the Open Learning Center, Head of the Department of Tourism Guidance, and Vice-Dean of the Faculty

of Tourism and Hotel Management. He also played a key role in developing master's programs focused on cultural heritage, museums, and tourism, in collaboration with international academic institutions. More recently, he was appointed as a member of the Board of Trustees of the French University in Egypt, as well as other universities in Cairo, reflecting his influence in the academic world.

After leading the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, he was appointed Minister of Antiquities in 2016, where he was distinguished by his ability to combine scientific rigor with pragmatism, while promoting a culture of transparency and accountability. In 2019, following the integration of the Ministry of Tourism into his portfolio, he successfully oversaw the merger of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Antiquities, which have been separate since 1966. He also led the development of the National Sustainable Tourism Strategy and the Rebranding Strategy for Egypt, demonstrating his vision and commitment to long-term planning.

At the helm of six authorities under the auspices of the Ministry and managing an annual budget approaching the equivalent of five hundred million USD, he has shown exemplary leadership by mobilizing financial resources, securing sponsorships, and forging successful partnerships with the private sector and civil society. Driven by a strategic vision aimed at fulfilling the Ministry's financial needs, he enacted a law in 2022 establishing a fund to support tourism and antiquities. This initiative quadrupled resources, ensuring substantial, diversified and sustainable funds dedicated to tourism promotion, as well as the preservation of cultural heritage. He also initiated major legislative reforms aimed at strengthening the protection and management of cultural heritage and museums, as well as stimulating growth of the tourism sector, a key driver for Egypt's socio-economic development.

With a team of nearly thirty-five thousand employees under his leadership, he oversaw the management of more than two thousand archaeological sites, around forty museums, and thousands of hotels and private tourism establishments, directly impacting over one million people in the tourism industry.

Renowned for his on-the-ground engagement, he conducted regular visits to archaeological sites, museums and tourist destinations, maintaining direct engagement with employees and local communities, reinforcing their involvement in heritage preservation and the development of sustainable tourism.

During his ministerial tenure, he supervised the construction and renovation of more than twenty museums, including the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, developed in collaboration with UNESCO, and the Grand Egyptian Museum, one of the largest museums in the world, with an estimated cost of approximately one billion US dollars. More than fifty restoration projects have been successfully carried out on archaeological sites, monuments, palaces, and historic religious buildings, including Al-Azhar Mosque, Coptic churches and monasteries along the "Journey of the Holy Family" route, as well as Jewish monuments such as the Eliyahu Hanavi Synagogue in Alexandria. Thanks to his proactive approach, he has led over three hundred Egyptian, joint, and foreign archaeological missions representing twenty-five countries, which contributed to significant discoveries, notably at UNESCO World Heritage sites. Furthermore, as the Chairman of the National Committee for Repatriation of Antiquities, he oversaw the return of thousands of illicitly trafficked cultural artifacts, from more than twenty countries.

He has played a key role in strengthening Egypt's international relations through his cultural diplomacy skills, collaborating closely with a multitude of countries, academic institutions, and international organizations. He has hosted and chaired major conferences and concluded memoranda of understanding with various countries. In his quest to promote intercultural exchanges as means of fostering peace, he has successfully organized nearly fifteen temporary exhibitions of Egyptian antiquities in ten countries, including the record-breaking exhibition "Tutankhamun: Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh" in Paris in 2019, which attracted over 1.4 million visitors.

Among his most notable achievements are high-profile cultural events that garnered international exposure and engagement, such as "Luxor: The Avenue of the Sphinxes" and "The Pharaohs' Golden Parade." The latter, a historic procession in which the royal mummies crossed the streets of Cairo in a dazzling display, became an iconic symbol of his ministerial tenure. These innovative initiatives celebrated Egypt's millennia-old heritage, captivated millions of viewers worldwide, and significantly boosted tourism. Furthermore, these events raised awareness among Egyptians, particularly younger generations, leading to a significant increase in the number of local visitors to archaeological sites and museums.

He has launched innovative projects by integrating technologies into the cultural heritage sector, encouraging its use in archaeological missions' work. He has also introduced new

digital tools to enhance the visitor experience, often in partnership with the private sector, while improving the Ministry's digital presence. An online booking platform for archaeological sites and museums was created, along with a dynamic database for tourism sector employees, providing support to vulnerable groups during tourism sector crises.

Deeply committed to human rights principles, he has consistently worked to promote inclusion and equality. He has tirelessly worked to make culture accessible to all, particularly children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Under his leadership, comprehensive educational programs were implemented for young audiences in archaeological sites, museums, and schools. At the same time, he developed initiatives to enhance the capacities of Ministry staff, tourism sector professionals, and local communities, while making gender equality and youth empowerment at the heart of his priorities.

He was also distinguished by his crisis management skills, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. He swiftly and effectively implemented strict health and public safety protocols. Thanks to his unwavering support, seventeen thousand Ukrainian tourists stranded in Egypt received exemplary assistance until their return to Europe. The policies implemented under his leadership during these two crises provided comprehensive social and economic support to the tourism sector and its workforce, contributing to a fast and robust recovery of tourism in Egypt by the summer of 2022.

Khaled El-Enany was named Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters from France in 2015, honored with the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland in 2020, and awarded the Order of the Rising Sun by Japan in 2021. In September 2024, he received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3. In November 2024, he was chosen Special Ambassador for Cultural Tourism by UN Tourism and, more recently, designated Patron of the African World Heritage Fund.

His candidacy for the post of Director-General of UNESCO, announced by Egypt in 2023, was endorsed by the African Union and the League of Arab States in 2024, and publicly supported by numerous other countries. If elected, he would become the first Director-General from the Arab world and the second African since UNESCO's establishment eighty years ago.

He is married and a father of a son.