

First Term English Exam

Part One: Reading and Interpreting

(14pts)

Read the text and do the following activities

In the wake of the Arab Spring, corruption has become one of the Arab World's most talked about problems. Islam strictly prohibits corruption and there are undoubtedly many in the Arab World who take the Quran's injunction seriously. Corruption continues, however, to be a fact of life across the Arab World and has been a key trigger for the popular protests that have swept the region since 2011. Several countries have since stepped up efforts to fight it although with mixed results. In the United Arab Emirates, for instance, a federal anti-corruption law has been drafted and is expected to be ratified soon. The law expected to call for the establishment of a Federal Authority for combating corruption and for measures to protect whistle-blowers.

Though the initiatives are notable in a region that has long tolerated corruption, still there is a hidden force in Arab society, which is called *Wasta*. Often jokingly referred to as "vitamin W", *Wasta* is described as "as an intrinsic part of culture that smooths the way to jobs, promotions, university places and much else in business and government. Those with *Wasta* can jump the queue and, with the right connections, can solve almost any problem. While *Wasta* may have a positive side whereby it humanises bureaucracy, it also hinders economic development and impacts business by providing unfair advantage, yielding decisions based on connections instead of merit and reducing productivity in the Arab world.

Consequently, when doing business in the Arab World, it is critical to be attuned to the invisible hand of *Wasta* by strengthening integrity systems and conducting extensive carefulness. *Wasta* remains a challenge when doing business in the Arab World, but, by recognising and addressing the issue through in-depth carefulness – rather than accepting it as an unavoidable risk of conducting business in the region – one can mitigate the problems associated with this cultural phenomenon.

(Rana Feghalli; the Middle East site, 2014)

A/ Comprehension:(7pts)

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1. Say if the following sentences are true or false. (2pts)
 - a) Corruption is not talked about in the Arab World.
 - b) No one takes into account the Quran's instructions.
 - c) Corruption in the Arab World is the root cause of the popular protests.
 - d) "Wasta" helps economic prosperity.
2. Answer the following questions according to the text. (3pts)
 - a) When has the concept of corruption become most discussed in the Arab World?
 - b) Why is "Wasta" considered to be a bad phenomenon?
 - c) What is the best way to handle the problem of corruption and "Wasta" in the Arab World?
4. In which paragraph is it mentioned : (1pt)
 - a) "Wasta" can be reduced in the Arab World by admitting its existence?
 - b) Corruption initiated several of the Arab World demonstrations ?
5. What or who do the underlined words refer to in the text?(1pt)
 - a) it (§1)
 - b) those (§2)

