



## MEADFA PRESS RELEASE

جمعية الشرق الأوسط وأفريقيا للأسواق الحرة  
MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA  
DUTY FREE ASSOCIATION

For immediate release  
June 30, 2021

### Aviation in the new normal – A joint webinar from MEADFA and ACI AFRICA



Today MEADFA and ACI AFRICA hosted the first joint webinar with more than 300 participants from 60 countries with widespread participation from all sectors of the industry, in what was considered a huge success for the regions' travel retail industry with a new record for a MEADFA online event.

The high level of support for this event clearly shows the popularity of these partnerships between MEADFA and ACI AFRICA, especially given the high turnout amongst the airport, retail and brands community.

It was particularly encouraging to see such diversity in the airports and retailers that were represented, with representatives from companies both big and small, and hailing from across the entire Middle East and African region.

The webinar was moderated by John Hume, Managing Partner of Hume Brophy, who was then followed by five excellent speakers. Iliia Lioutov - Director, Economics and Policy, Peter Mohn - CEO M1nd-set, Rita Chidiac - Secretary General of MEADFA Advocacy Working Group, Ramesh Cidambi - COO of Dubai Duty Free, and Sean Doherty, VP Innovation from Coforge assessed the damage from the pandemic, looked at the new normal of retailing in a post-covid world, and examined new trends and experiences, technology and innovative solutions that will allow us to build back stronger.



MEADFA President Sherif Toulou thanked ACI Africa for their contribution in organising the webinar, in the context of defending the Airports non-aeronautical revenue, he stated: "it is obvious that regulatory and business threats are fast hitting our industry, reinforcing increased cooperation between our two organisations is essential to reach to a strong unified voice. Together, we are more efficient in creating awareness and in keeping regulators and decision-makers informed and updated. We need to concentrate our efforts, first, on the recovery of our industries; second, on our ability to build relationships with decision makers and eventually reach to the momentum that the duty free industry is one of the safest secured channel in the world. Working together is key, we will continue to help our members adapt to the new Normal and hopefully get things back to a sustainable business in the near future."



Ali Tounsi, ACI Africa Secretary General concluded the workshop by reiterating: "Stakeholders in these regions have shown exceptional adaptability and we will continue to foster the recovery process through cooperation across the region. Commercial revenue will be critical to getting our airports up and running again, so events like these are invaluable in promoting cooperation, understanding and innovation in our common interest"

Participants were also reminded that the MEADFA conference will take place this year as a Hybrid event. It is scheduled to take place in Dubai from November 21-23, kindly hosted by our friends in Dubai Duty Free.

ENDS

**For further info please contact:**

Micheline El Ammar Enkiri, Middle East & Africa Duty Free Association (MEADFA) FZE - P.O. Box 54394, Dubai -United Arab Emirates  
Tel. +971 4 299 66 63, Fax. +971 4 299 66 30 – Email: [info@meadfa.com](mailto:info@meadfa.com)