



MEADFA PRESS RELEASE

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

Oct 06, 2021

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR MEADFA CONFERENCE 2021

Registration is now open for this year's MEADFA Conference taking place in Dubai from 21st to 23rd November. Managed by TFWA and hosted by Dubai Duty Free, the MEADFA Conference will be held at the Jumeirah Creekside Hotel near The Irish Village.

The conference will open on Monday 22nd November with welcome addresses from Sherif Toulan, MEADFA President; and Colm McLoughlin, Executive Vice Chairman and CEO of Dubai Duty Free.

The morning session will feature a panel session of leading industry figures in the Middle East and Africa, who will address the issues the industry faces in the post-pandemic world. Joining the panel will be Ray Hernan, CEO of Aer Rianta International; Ramesh Cidambi, COO of Dubai Duty Free; Frédéric Chevalier, Chief Operating Officer - Europe, Middle East and Africa at Lagardère Travel Retail; Isabel Zarza, Chief Operating Officer – Central and North Europe, Russia and Africa at Dufry; and François Bourienne, Chief Commercial Officer at Abu Dhabi Airports.

The theme of the 'new normal' will continue in the afternoon session, with Kamil Al Awadhi, IATA Regional Vice President Africa and Middle East, and Airports Council International Africa Director General Ali Tounsi offering insights into the shape of the recovery in international travel in the Middle East and Africa. Day one will conclude with a presentation from Bassam Al Wardi, Chief Executive Officer & Board Director of Bahrain Duty Free, who will discuss the retail offer at Bahrain International Airport's new terminal, one of the Gulf's most exciting new aviation developments.

Day two of the conference will begin with a look into what lies ahead for tourism in the Middle East from the perspective of Basmah Al-Mayman, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Middle East Regional Director, followed by a talk from Delta Air Lines Regional Director Manoj Kuriakose on the lessons the airline has learned during the global crisis. A panel session will then address the issues facing African aviation and related industries, led by Africa Airlines Association Secretary General Abderahmane Berthe; Chief Executive Officer of Abidjan International Airport (AERIA) Aka Manouan; Africa Tourism Association CEO Naledi Khabo; and Dufry General Manager Africa Isaias Diaz.

The final conference sessions will see Rita Chidiac, chair of the MEADFA Advocacy Working Group, and Sandra Uwera, COMESA Business Council CEO, highlight the latest advocacy work being done on behalf of the duty free and travel retail industry in the Middle East and Africa. In addition, Dr Jennifer Cords, Director Corporate Affairs, Business Compliance & Corporate Responsibility of Gebr. Heinemann, and Richard Gray, CEO of ARI Middle East, will examine how brands and retailers can meet growing consumer demand for sustainability and digitalisation.

Attendees will have the chance to meet and discuss business with industry professionals during networking coffee breaks and lunches, while Sunday's Welcome Cocktail and Monday's Gala Dinner will provide further opportunities to catch up with friends and colleagues.

Delegates wishing to visit the MEADFA Conference in person are advised to book early as physical attendance will be limited due to capacity restrictions in line with health & safety measures, which will be in place during the event to ensure the wellbeing of attendees. More information on [these health & safety measures](#). Those unable to travel to Dubai will have the opportunity to follow the conference through a paid livestream service hosted on the TFWA 365 digital platform.

For further info please contact:

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MEADFA and TFWA would like to thank all sponsors of this year's MEADFA Conference, including Dubai Duty Free, Pernod Ricard, Nestlé, Imperial Brands, Swedish Match, Japan Tobacco International, Mazaya and Beam Suntory INC.

For more information and to register for the event, please visit [the MEADFA Conference page](#).

“With many prominent industry leaders joining us in Dubai, this year's MEADFA Conference is shaping up to be a vital event that will help reconnect the duty free and travel retail market during these extraordinary times. We're looking forward to much lively debate and discussion during the conference, which will present the latest trends and solutions that will help the regional industry in Africa and the Middle East prepare for a brighter future ahead.”

Sherif Toulan, MEADFA President

“We're proud to once again lend our support to the MEADFA Conference, which serves as an important forum for debate and exchange in the dynamic Middle East and Africa travel market. With interest expected to be high, we'll be streaming the entire conference live on TFWA 365 to ensure no-one misses out on the ideas and insights shared by this impressive line-up of speakers.”

Jaya Singh, TFWA President

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