

# High participation in joint MEADFA-ACI Africa webinar

**MEADFA**  
MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA  
DUTY FREE ASSOCIATION

**ACI AFRICA**  
AIRPORTS COUNCIL  
INTERNATIONAL

**AIR TRANSPORT  
IN THE NEW  
NORMAL**  
HOW AIRPORTS  
AND TRAVEL RETAIL NEED TO ADAPT

**THE  
SPEAKERS**

**Welcome address**  
**Sherif Toulan**  
MEADFA - President

**Ali Tounsi**  
ACI Africa - Secretary General

**Economic Importance  
of Duty Free in Africa**  
**Ilia Lioutov**  
ACI - Director Economics & Policy

**Economic impact on airports  
commercial revenues in Africa**  
**Peter Mohn**  
M1nd-set - Owner & CEO

**Advocacy perspectives (Q3 & Q4)**  
**Rita Chidiac**  
MEADFA - Board Member & SG AWG

**Managing Airport retail in today's  
World - How things have changed?**  
**Ramesh Cidambi**  
Dubai Duty Free - COO

**The New Day of Travel - How digital  
innovation makes technology your  
commercial best friend**  
**Sean Doherty**  
Coforge Technologies - VP Innovation

More than 300 participants from 60 countries took part in the joint webinar put on by MEADFA and ACI Africa titled, “Aviation in the new normal.”

This virtual event — the first joint webinar between these two entities — had a high turnout among airports, retail and brands. Representatives took part from across the entire Middle East and African region, from companies of all sizes.

The webinar was moderated by John Hume, Managing Partner of Hume Brophy. The five speakers included Ilia 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. The speakers discussed the damage wreaked by the pandemic, examined the new normal of retailing in a post-COVID world, and explored new technology and other innovative solutions to allow the industry to rebuild stronger than ever.

After thanking ACI Africa for their contribution, MEADFA President Sherif Toulan 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: “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.”