

Gebr. Heinemann names new Director Middle East Africa



Bernard Schlafstein, Director Middle East Africa, Gebr. Heinemann

Gebr. Heinemann has named Bernard Schlafstein to take over the sales region Africa starting immediately. He will now be responsible for Middle East and Africa. Schlafstein has been working at Gebr. Heinemann for almost 20 years in numerous positions. For the past three years, he has been Sales Director Near East & Turkey.

This region will now be integrated into the new MEA sales division (merged with the African countries). Prior to that, he was responsible as a Sales Director for the EECA region, with its main markets being Russia, the Baltic States and Ukraine. During his time at Gebr. Heinemann, Schlafstein has established different joint ventures and built up long-term partnerships with distribution clients.

"I am very happy to now also take over the Africa business. We serve more than 32 countries in this region. Besides our joint ventures in South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt we also supply border shops and airports. It's an exciting and diverse business. Africa is the future for the travel retail business. With its 54 countries and having the youngest population of all continents, we believe that the region will develop tremendously. Therefore, it will play a big role for Gebr. Heinemann," says Schlafstein.



Stephan van Groningen, previous Director Middle East Africa

Bernard Schlafstein is taking over from Stephan van Groningen, who is taking early retirement after 38 years of successful working at Gebr. Heinemann. Schlafstein and van Groningen will ensure a professional and smooth transition over the next few weeks. van Groningen has developed and expanded the business in the Africa region. Starting as a trainee in wholesale and retail in 1984, van Groningen held several managerial positions in the family-owned company that is based in Hamburg. In 2010, he took over the then newly founded sales area Benelux/Africa. He has created reliable relationships with partners and clients and managed the challenges of the African market during the pandemic.

"We thank Stephan van Groningen for his many years of excellent work for our company and wish him all the best for the next stage of his life. We are certain that the well-established cooperations between our African partners and Gebr. Heinemann will be continued with Bernard and his team," comments Richard Hoyer, Vice President Sales.