

# Melloula Duty Free unveiled as first border duty free shop in Tunisia and North Africa



From left: Mr Tarek Hamila, CEO, YKH Holding, Mr René Trabelsi, Minister of Transport; and Mr Laroussi Sfar, CEO Hamila Duty Free and Melloula Duty Free



A shot of the exterior of the new Melloula Duty Free store

Hamila Duty Free recently inaugurated Melloula Duty Free, a border store located between Tunisia and Algeria. The store officially opened July 17 and Mr Tarek Hamila, a well-renowned businessman with a thriving duty free operation, was in attendance.

The inauguration ceremony was also graced by the presence of His Excellency, the Prime Minister Mr Youssef Chahed, together with the Minister of Transport, Mr Hichem Ben Ahmed, and the Minister of Tourism, Mr René Trabelsi. Speeches were made by Mr Tarek Hamila, Mr Laroussi Sfar, General Manager, Melloula Duty Free, and Youssef Chahed, the Prime Minister.

Melloula Duty Free is a border shop located on the Tunisian/Algerian border, less than 20 minutes' drive from the famous tourist village of Tabarka, known for its Jazz Festival, beautiful landscape, magnificent beaches and vacation resorts. The new operation is important because it is the first border duty free shop in Tunisia and North Africa.

#### Important border location

Melloula Duty free is a 2,000 square meter commercial complex designed to fulfil the specific needs of border passengers. The complex has many facilities, including a 500 square meter duty free shop, where alcohol, cigarettes, wines, tobacco, perfumes, cosmetics and confectionery are available at very competitive prices.

Also part of the complex is a restaurant and coffee shop offering a very wide range of snacks and hot meals; a rest and fun area; and a number of other facilities, such as rest rooms and praying rooms.

The terminal of Melloula is the biggest border location between Algeria and Tunisia, welcoming 2.5 million passengers annually, of whom 70% are Algerian. Melloula Duty Free is a significant addition to the terminal, as it is the first border duty free shop in Tunisia and the whole of North Africa. Hamila Duty Free was awarded a 10-year concession to build and manage the duty free shops and restaurants in this area. The commercial complex was built in less than six months and opened its doors officially on July 17. Melloula Duty Free employs 60 staff, most of whom come from the region of Tabarka.

“We think that this project will create a new dynamic in the region of Tabarka and motivate business opportunities between Tunisia and Algeria,” says Mr Laroussi Sfar, General Manager, Melloula Duty Free. “It is also an open door for local suppliers to promote their products, especially artisanal products, and promote them in the Algerian market, as our duty free shop will be their promotional window,” he tells *Gulf-Africa Duty Free* in an exclusive interview.

#### Duty free leader in Africa

With an expertise spanning more than 30 years, Hamila Duty Free is one of the leading African duty free retailers. In its many stores, the travel retail specialist carries a wide range of premium products ranging from fragrances to cosmetics through designer clothing, jewelry, accessories, leather goods, wines and spirits.

Hamila Duty Free has a successful sales operation onboard the flights of the Tunisian airlines Tunisair, Tunisair Express, Nouvelair and Jasmin Airlines, the ferry boats of the Tunisian Navigation Company, as well as the duty free shops at all the Tunisian airports in partnership with the international operators ATU and Gebr Heinemann.