

**HRH Prince Raad** of JORDAN is determined to give his full support to make the **1<sup>st</sup> MENA-ENAT (Euro-Arab) Dead Sea Accessible Tourism for All and Jordan 4 All Forum & Expo** a success and a platform for a positive change to happen in Jordan.

The event will mark a new chapter in the promotion of measures to support disabled citizens in Jordan and cater for visitors with access requirements, building on the country's acclaimed policies and actions in support of the rights of people with disabilities.





King Abdullah II of Jordan receiving the eighth Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award on behalf of his country at a ceremony at the United Nations on Wednesday, 23 March 2005. One of the first Middle East countries to enact disability legislation and introduce building codes aimed at accessibility

The Award is given out by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the World Committee on Disability. It recognizes outstanding action in support of the United Nations World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in 1982 (resolution 37/52).

**<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2005/note5926.doc.htm>**



HRH Prince Raad Bin Zeid, Chamberlain to the Royal Court of Jordan and President of Jordan Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities (JHCD), chaired in Amman on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013 a preparatory meeting for the 1st MENA-ENAT (Euro-Arab) Forum & Expo at the JHCD headquarters. HRH called for the meeting to announce the date

of the 1<sup>st</sup> Euro-Arab event, which will take place from 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> October 2013, at the Crowne Plaza Dead Sea Resort & Spa.

The objectives of the event are :

- To promote inclusive design and accessible tourism for all in the Arab region and Jordan in particular
- To exchange best practices between Europeans and Arab partners, in order to serve tourists and travellers of both markets with disabilities, elders and other customers with access needs
- To support ENAT-MENA members to establish the 1<sup>st</sup> Arab-Network for Accessible Tourism (ANAT)

The event will be organised in cooperation between Jordan MICE and MENA-ENAT Regional Representative.

The meeting was attended by a number of public, private and NGOs tourism stakeholders including the Director of Jordan Tourism Board, Chairman of Jordan Tour Guides Association, Royal Jordanian Airlines Public Relationship Department, Chairman of Jordan Association of Friends of Archaeology & Heritage, Director of Jordan Museum, the Regional InterContinental Hotels Group IHG, Jordan Hotels Association, Jordan Federation for Tourism Associations, Commissioner of Investment & Tourism of Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), Tourism Police Department, the Dead Sea Development & Free Zones Commission and a number of Jordanian and Arab media TV and news agencies.



**HRH Prince Raad Bin Zeid chairing the preparatory meeting for the 1st MENA-ENAT (Euro-Arab) Forum & Expo at the JHCD headquarters on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July.**



**Preparatory meeting, 1st MENA-ENAT (Euro-Arab) Forum & Expo at the JHCD headquarters.**

The meeting began with a short speech by Mahmoud Jarah-Chairman of Jordan MICE, to thank HRH Prince Raad for hosting the meeting and Jordan MICE & ENAT appreciations for HRH to be the patronage of the event and concluded with a brief on the event message and objectives.

This was followed by a speech by HRH Prince Raad, who clearly and strongly voiced the right of persons with disabilities for access and free movements globally and shared his personal experience on the challenges he faces visiting hotels and other tourism facilities including historical and heritage sites and called on the commitment of all the meeting participants

to support the success of the event and said Jordan should seize this opportunity to develop its own accessible tourism for all strategy for the coming 5 years and concluded by welcoming ENAT cooperation in the event and its efforts in promoting accessible tourism in the region and warmly welcomed on behalf of Jordan to host an ENAT-MENA Regional Office in Amman.



**Mr. Ibrahim Abu-Helil, Jordan. ENAT Representative in the MENA Region**

The meeting ended with a presentation by Ibrahim Abu-Helil, MENA-ENAT Regional Representative, who has shed light on the importance of the development of the accessible tourism market for Jordan, indicating economic and employment benefits in all aspects and the correlation between accessible tourism and the Dead Sea as a medical tourism destination. He emphasised the growing number of aging population in the Arab region and the importance for establishing the networking within the region and an Euro-Arab platform for exchanging best practices in planning and developing access information, communication, marketing and infrastructure for the future; to make both regions accessible for its people and tourists, and also offer top services (rights) for people who need access, involve people with disabilities in society and integrated them in employment. He concluded that both regions should designate a strategy to work together closely, because the Arab region has more than 50 million and Europe has an accessible tourism market estimated at more than 133 million persons, including persons with disabilities and other access needs and the total of the 183 million people would be all potential travellers and tourists if they would be provided with accesses along the chain of the tourism service providers from arrival to departure. This flow of tourists would serve the mutual benefits of the tourism markets of the two regions.

The meeting ended up with an open discussion between the participants and HRH and the following recommendations which are being taken up

1. The national museums and heritage sites will be working on making their sites accessible.



2. Expanding the current plan for more accessible restaurants in cooperation between the JHDC and Jordan Restaurants Association
3. JTB to disseminate the promotional signage film on Jordan in sign language for the hearing impaired tourists
4. Expanding the current training programs of tour guides to cover different languages
5. By the end quarter of the 2013, ASEZA will be increasing the capacity of accessible rooms in Aqaba hotels between 5-10% of each hotel and by the end of the event agreed upon hosting an accessible team of experts to visit Aqaba with purpose to assist Aqaba to be more accessible and to discuss how to be as the MENA accessible pilot project
6. Plan to develop the airport and Jordanian Airlines to work with all partners to meet the accessibility guidelines as much as possible.
7. The go ahead with the current plan, which is the implementation of the Accessibility Universal Design Guidelines into account for their pipeline project named *Dead Sea Port*.

The meeting concluded with a call for further preparation meetings with other prominent parties to set up action plan for the event in Aqaba and Dead Sea. HRH Prince Raad is determined to give his full support to make this event a success and to be a platform for positive change to happen in Jordan.

#### Press Contact

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