

Halal integrity achieved in 2020 despite 'on-site' assessment challenges – IHAF Secretary General

DUBAI, UAE, March 1, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- • Digital adaptation enabled IHAF's members from 35 countries to continue halal trade amid supply chain disruption

- Accreditation bodies moved to remote assessment to ensure products adhere to safety, quality and halal standards

The International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF) has announced that halal integrity among its member countries has been achieved in 2020 despite the 'on-site' assessment challenges faced by accreditation bodies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

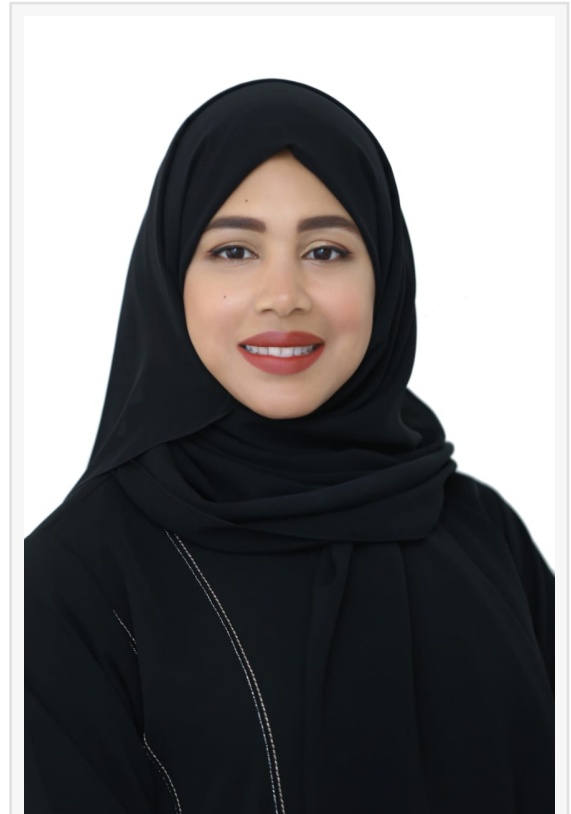
Her Excellency Dr. Rehab Al Ameri, Secretary General of IHAF, made this statement in her keynote address at the Global Trade Review (GTR) Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 2021 Virtual.

Dr. Al Ameri said this was made possible by adapting digitalisation, which enabled IHAF's members to continue halal trade amid supply chain disruption.

"IHAF's members have set an example on how to resolve the challenges by overhauling traditional business models towards digitalisation to ensure that the products adhere to safety, quality and halal standards," she said. The world's first halal international accreditation network currently has 38 accreditation body-members from 35 countries across six continents.

In response to the reduction of staffing levels, social distancing measures and the disruption of supply chains, accreditation bodies have shifted from on-site to remote assessments and audits of halal products and systems.

"The swift adaptation to digitalisation has allowed our members to continue halal trade despite



Her Excellency Dr Rehab Al Ameri, Secretary-General of IHAF

the challenges faced by the industry. In fact, the top five nations exporting to Organisation of Islamic Cooperation countries are IHAF members, reflecting our members' commitment in guaranteeing halal integrity in the global marketplace despite the adverse impact of the pandemic," she said.

The top five nations exporting to OIC countries are Brazil at \$16.2 billion; India at \$14.4 billion; USA at \$13.8 billion; Russia at \$11.9 billion; and Argentina at \$10.2 billion, according to the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report 2020-2021— an annual study produced by US-based research company Dinar Standard and supported by Dubai Islamic Economy Development Centre. These countries are all members of IHAF.

Dr. Al Ameri added that the halal industry's vital role in global economic progress has been further amplified at the onset of the crisis, especially as consumers become keener to pursue sustainable alternatives to safeguard their health.

"Many consumers have turned to halal products as the pandemic has led the world to have a renewed focus on improving health and immunity," she added.

"This COVID-19 situation allowed us to be more inclined to use technology, especially in the new normal that casts several restrictions on halal trade. We have been adopting up-to-date innovative solutions to support our member states and thereby facilitate ease of trade in the sector," added the Secretary-General.

Early this year, IHAF unveiled its new digital infrastructure which consists of a digital-friendly website, an automated members' management system and members' web application.

The members' application, which can be accessed through www.ihaforum.ae, allows interactive communication between IHAF's members in real-time.

Members can efficiently process all their requests digitally, while prospect members can apply online with ease. The new website and web application will also include an automated voting system that will approve all submissions, helping speed up the process of new memberships as well as requests from existing members.

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