

DRAFT

The 7th Mediterranean Tourism Forum – 14th JUNE 2022

MEDITERRANEAN BRAIN

BUSINESS RESEARCH AND INNOVATION NETWORK

VENUE: INTERCONTINENTAL ARENA CONFERENCE CENTRE, MALTA

0815hrs Registration

0900hrs Andrew Agius Muscat, Secretary General Mediterranean Tourism Foundation

0905hrs MINISTER OF TOURISM CLAYTON BARTOLO (Malta)

0915hrs PRIME MINISTER DR ROBERT ABELA (Malta)

0930hrs **CONFERENCE OPENING SHOW - BRAIN**

0950hrs Introduction by Moderators Rajan Datar, BBC Broadcaster and Journalist (confirmed), and Nikoletta Kritikou, Euronews Journalist (confirmed)

1000hrs **THE POWER OF THE BRAIN - CONVERSATION WITH MICHAEL HADDAD (LEBANON), a MEDICAL WONDER, CLIMATE ACTIVIST, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR, AND PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE, BUT ABOVE ALL ELSE A MAN ON A MISSION.** (confirmed)

1015hrs **DISCUSSION: LEADING IN A TIME OF INESCAPABLE EXPOSURE TO DISRUPTION**

Disruption is today an inescapable challenge for all industries. And when companies face it, they typically make cautious moves. They raise barriers to entry instead of extending themselves outward. They rely on what's worked for them in the past, in lieu of seeking deep change on the inside. But while these are instinctual and understandable choices, they don't work. They keep companies in survival mode and away from actively shaping their future. In fact, playing it safe amid disruption is very risky. This Panel of experts will address how can today's companies chart a successful future? Whilst addressing the latest challenges the world is facing, we will seek to understand how this situation is accelerating the need for radical change – the need to rethink the way we do things with long term impact in mind.

The Technologist: Preben Wik, Chief Tech Evangelist (confirmed)

The Economist: Lahcen Haddad, Politician and expert in human and social development (confirmed)

The Strategist: Aradhana Khowala Global authority on the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. (to be confirmed)

The Community Leader: George Hatzimarkos Governor of the region of South Aegean Islands, Greece (confirmed)

1115hrs **COFFEE BREAK**

1135hrs **THE POWER OF THE BRAIN - CONVERSATION WITH PROFESSOR DIMITRIOS BUHALIS (GREECE), PROFESSOR OF SMART TOURISM AT BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL AND VISITING PROFESSOR AT THE SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT, THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY.** (confirmed)

1145hrs **DISCUSSION: TOURISM AS A CATALYST FOR GOOD**

In the days leading up to Covid-19, *over-tourism* was the travel sector's 'buzzword' and bugaboo. International travel then came to a virtual halt due to Covid-19 in 2020. But as the desire for international travel will recover, over-tourism related issues will resuscitate, hence remaining a critical theme affecting future profitability. Indeed, at this moment, the travel, tourism and hospitality sector has a unique opportunity to rechart its course, to rewrite the rules and to rebuild more responsibly to the benefit of the places we visit and the people who live there. The Panel Speakers here will therefore be invited to discuss the options available to the tourism industry in the year ahead, and how we might collectively build a more sustainable and balanced future. The discussion will address key emerging trends and insights from across the industry to identify what may impact the future of tourism, and the role that the industry can play to ensure a transformational future.

Filip Boyen, Forbes Travel Guide Ambassador (confirmed)

Gavin Gulia, Chairman, Malta Tourism Authority (confirmed)

Istvan Ujhelyi, MEP Deputy President European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism (confirmed)

Susanna Harkonen, Registered Counsellor InnerWork (confirmed)

1230hrs **THE POWER OF THE BRAIN - CONVERSATION WITH ANDREA BOCELLI (ITALY), THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR LIVING TENOR AND A BEST-SELLING CROSSOVER ARTIST.** (confirmed)

1240hrs **DISCUSSION: HOW TO BOLDLY BREAK AWAY AND INNOVATE FOR NEW EXPERIENCES**

Companies are creating new value and gaining brand loyalty not by focusing on specific product features or design, but by reimagining the broader experience of how customers use their products. Car service Uber didn't change the vehicle or retrain the drivers; it fundamentally changed how you order, meet and pay for rides. Airbnb didn't redesign the travel portal or the

hotel; it completely rethought how people can find the room they need. The list goes on. But *experience innovation* is challenging for many reasons - it requires a different mind-set. The Panel Speakers here will therefore be invited to discuss on how innovative experience can drive loyalty, preference and create better margins. The discussion will address how new concepts such as metaverse, new hotel and restaurant designs and fresh social media marketing trends need to be confronted by travel, tourism and hospitality entrepreneurs, event planners, destination marketing organisations, convention bureaus, and smart city leaders.

Celine Vadam, Founder and CEO – Hotel Of Tomorrow We(I) Think (confirmed)

Daniel Surya, WIR Group Executive Chairman & Co-Founder – Metaverse Expert (confirmed)

David Camilleri, Founder Cyberselves – Connecting humans to robots (confirmed)

Pasi Tuominen, Senior Lecturer, The Box - Hospitality of Tomorrow, Haaga Helia University (confirmed)

1325hrs: **TOURISM LEADERS' FORUM; BRAIN – THE NEXT CUTTING EDGE**

We believe tourism can, and must, play a key role in achieving a sustainable future for our world; so through the MTF newly launched initiative the Business Research And Innovation Network (BRAIN) we will be convening key players, including MEPs, CEO's Ministers, Mayors, Academics, Artists, Innovators, Consultants and others during the days leading to the FORUM to explore how we might collectively build a more sustainable and balanced future. The aim is to become a driving force to help everyone explore our world in a way that protects both people and places and secures a positive future for destinations and local communities for generations to come. A report bringing together the key conclusions addressed during the Forum and endorsed by the participants in this exercise will be presented in the form of declaration to the members in this panel as representatives of leading authorities in the field of the travel, tourism and hospitality sector. *This part of the Forum will be led by Chief Innovator at Cornell University Jill Hellman, and Film Director Mehmet Binay with the participation of present Ministers of Tourism, MEPs and other BRAIN stakeholders. Includes Conversation with MTF President Tony Zahra, Minister Clayton Bartolo, (other Ministers of Tourism being confirmed) and other VIP personalities (to be confirmed) + Bodrum Mayor Ahmet Aras and Minister of Tourism Mehmet Nuri Ersoy (Turkey)*

1415hrs **Concluding Remarks Conversation with Former President of Croatia HE Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović**