

# **AZA, Africa's Biggest Non-Bank FX Broker, Hires Diebold Nixdorf's Habibi in Major Expansion**

- **Meryem Habibi, former Head of Channel Operations at ATMs and financial software giant Diebold Nixdorf, becomes AZA's Chief Revenue Officer**
- **Moroccan-born Meryem will drive AZA's expansion in sub-Saharan Africa and MENA region, with new Egypt office and innovation testing in Abu Dhabi**
- **AZA has tripled staff in past year as transactions surge to \$1 billion annually**
- **Currency trading technology is opening intra-regional trade across frontier markets**

*Tuesday 1st September, 2020* - AZA, Africa's biggest non-bank currency broker, announces the appointment of Meryem Habibi as Chief Revenue Officer in a major expansion of operations across Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

AZA, which Business Insider listed this year among the top global fintech providers\*, has disrupted the costly and lengthy process of intra-African transactions going via the US dollar by creating a direct market for currency pairs across the continent using its innovative BFX and TransferZero platforms. The company has increased transaction volume exponentially to above \$1 billion annually and has tripled staff in the past year to over 150 across six regional offices.

Moroccan-born Meryem will oversee revenue growth through sales, strategic partnerships and expanded marketing. An experienced leader in finance and technology innovation, Meryem previously served as Head of Channel Operations for EMEA and APAC regions at Diebold Nixdorf, the US-based provider of ATMs and software to banks and retailers, and led marketing and communications at Samsung Electronics.

Specifically, Meryem will drive further hirings for leadership, sales and business development positions, with particular focus on Africa, the Middle East and Asia, along with strengthening existing operations in Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda and Senegal. AZA is in the final stages of establishing an office in Egypt, where it sees significant demand from partners on the ground. After being accepted last year into the Fintech regulatory Sandbox in Abu Dhabi, which provides a controlled environment for FinTech participants to develop and test innovative solutions, AZA sees strong growth

potential across the Middle East and North Africa market.

“AZA is opening up intra-regional trade opportunities in emerging and frontier markets by tackling inefficiencies that companies have typically viewed as simply too overwhelming or entrenched to confront,” said Meryem, who recently moved from Casablanca to take up her new role in London. “In Africa and beyond, there are no limits to applying AZA’s technology to intrinsically improve the way that cross-border trade happens.”

The crisis created by Covid-19 has forced individuals to look for alternatives to cash and businesses to seek ways of transacting more efficiently. “AZA has been a focused and reliable provider of liquidity throughout this difficult period, building a solid platform from which to further expand,” said Meryem.

AZA’s commitment to diversity and equity is reflected in a seven-strong leadership team comprising four women, including three Africans, and commitment to training and capacity building to promote from the inside up.

“AZA has shown incredible growth, even in the face of this year’s global economic turmoil, and Meryem is deeply committed to the level of operational excellence needed to take AZA to the next level,” said Elizabeth Rossiello, AZA’s CEO and Founder. “Her deep African knowledge and roots reinforce our commitment to recruitment in the frontier markets we serve.”

## **About AZA**

AZA is an established provider of currency trading solutions that accelerate global access to frontier markets through innovative infrastructure. By leveraging cutting edge technology in our flagship products, TransferZero and BFX, AZA is able to significantly lower the cost and increase the speed of business payments to and from frontier markets.

TransferZero is our B2B2C product, which provides both wholesale currency purchase and retail settlement via our robust API. BFX is our B2B over-the-counter platform for businesses with wholesale currency needs, especially those paying partners and suppliers. Our partners utilize our hybrid financial infrastructure and deep local knowledge to manage liquidity and send payments to dozens of bank networks and mobile money operators across Africa.

Licensed by the UK’s FCA and the Bank of Spain, AZA is a market-maker in every major African currency. Launched in Nairobi, AZA now has offices in Lagos, London, Uganda, Luxembourg, Madrid and Dakar.