EL AL Israel Airlines and Etihad Airways to deepen cooperation

Tony Douglas, Etihad Aviation Group CEO (left) and Gonen Usishkin, EL AL Airlines CEO, sign MOU agreement virtually

[EL AL Israel Airlines](#) and [Etihad Airways](#) are set to explore deeper cooperation following the signing of a virtual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU covers scope to introduce joint codeshare services between Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv, as well as on the global flight networks beyond the two carriers' hubs. It also contains plans for greater commercial cooperation in the fields of cargo, engineering, loyalty, destination management and the optimal use of pilot and cabin crew training facilities.

The MOU was signed virtually by Tony Douglas, Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Etihad Aviation Group, and Gonen Usishkin, CEO of EL AL Israel Airlines.

"Following EL AL's historic flight to Abu Dhabi, the first ever flight between Israel and the UAE, this MOU is the foundation of what we envision will be a strong ongoing relationship between Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv," Douglas said. "We look forward to examining ways in which the two flag carriers – Etihad and EL AL – can work more closely together to improve business operations and enhance the experience for our guests."

"Following the normalization of diplomatic relations between Israel and the UAE, we have been provided a great opportunity to examine the possibility of cooperation with Etihad Airways," Gonen said. "This MOU is only the start and we believe that together, the two flag carriers will be able to

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provide our mutual customers with the best possible product and service. Already, the common goals we have outlined speak for the success of our future cooperation."

In addition to codeshare operations, the teams at Etihad Guest and EL AL Matmid loyalty programmes will explore reciprocal earn and burn opportunities for its members, as well as other benefits. The airlines' destination management teams will also collaborate to encourage recipricoal inbound tourism to Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv.

Both carriers' engineering and cargo divisions are also set to begin talks about greater cooperation. These discussions would look at optimising MRO (maintenance repair and overhaul) opportunities, as well as ways to increase volumes of freighter traffic flowing into and out of Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv, and across the carriers' combined networks.

Etihad Airways announced its intention this week to commence daily services between Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv from 28 March 2021.