

# Splash

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## Just one 45-year-old ship seen venturing into Syrian tumult

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MarineTraffic / Plague Christian

A small, 45-year-old, Tanzania-flagged general cargo ship is the only vessel venturing into Syrian waters today.

The Turkish-owned *Omorfi* is headed to the port of Tartous, while the rest of international merchant shipping gives the Middle Eastern nation a wide berth, letting the uprising that saw Bashar al-Assad toppled as leader over the weekend settle down before recommencing calls at the war-torn country.

In the days since Assad fled to Russia, neighbour Israel has set about demilitarising the Syrian successor state before it has even formed.

The port of Latakia, in which CMA CGM has a concession, was among the many strikes carried out by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) this week. UK maritime security consultants Ambrey observed video footage and imagery which showed multiple explosions and fires at both the port's container terminal and the military port. Ambrey is advising vessels to stay clear of Syrian territorial waters.

Across Syrian ports, commercial activity has come to a standstill with international companies waiting to see who comes to power and whether sanctions are removed.

Broker Braemar notes that if sanctions are removed, this could allow Syria to purchase oil from global markets to meet demand for the country's two operational refineries in Homs and Baniyas, amid fuel shortages.

Data from Oceanbolt shows Russia was the largest source of seaborne cargoes to Syria in the year to date, followed by Iran, Turkey, and Egypt.

"Assad's allies, Iran and Russia, are likely to lose much of their influence in Syria in the ensuing scuffle for power," Braemar suggested in a new tanker report.