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Maersk and CMA CGM keep steering clear of the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden

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- by Shipping Telegraph

Despite the recent ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas, the two major shipping firms A.P. Moller-Maersk (Maersk) and CMA CGM have notified their customers that they will keep steering clear of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

The process to bring the current conflict between Israel and Hamas to an end is dependent on a multi-phased roadmap continuing to be met, and as such the predictability of the situation remains a complex challenge.

Furthermore, due to the continued tensions in the region, the security risk of commercial vessels transiting the Red Sea and Bab-el-Mandeb strait remains high.

Last week, A.P. Moller-Maersk announced it will continue sailing around Africa via the Cape of Good Hope until safe passage through the area is ensured for the longer term.

Now, another major container liner, CMA CGM said that it “will for the time being continue to prioritize alternative routes, including a significant reliance on passage via the Cape of Good Hope.”

However, CMA CGM clarified that while this approach applies to the majority of its network, adjustments may be made on a case-by-case basis depending on security and global operational conditions.

“The ceasefire allows humanitarian relief and hope for peace. Recent developments in the region suggest progress towards greater stability, which is a positive but fragile sign for the global shipping and logistics industry.”

“Yet, the safety of our seafarers, vessels, and our customers’ cargo remains the CMA CGM Group’s utmost priority,” it added.

On the other hand, Maersk said it has taken this decision to optimise stability and certainty across its customers’ supply chains.

“Returning to the area without fully ensuring safe passage could result in our networks needing to be adjusted again, which would prove complicated both operationally and indeed for supply chain management.”

Regarding the Gemini Cooperation and its East West network, Maersk pointed out that this will be phasing in via the Cape of Good Hope as planned on February 1, 2025.

“When it is deemed safe to return to the Red Sea, we will strive to provide sufficient notice of network alterations so you can plan your operations accordingly.”