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DUNKIRK: IMPROVED SERVICES TO ASIA

The shipping companies **CMA CGM (FAL3 service)**, **China Shipping Container Lines (AEX4 service)** and **UASC (AEC7 service)** have just announced the setup of a cooperation called **OCEAN THREE** in all East-West services. The aim of this cooperation is to adjust to the rate of growing volumes, improving and optimising the use of ships by the three largest container shipping companies in the world.

The new services, which will start during December 2014, will include a link between Asia and northern Europe, in which Dunkirk will be served as a priority in Europe at import.

The improved transit times will allow the Port of Dunkirk to provide an even better service to its clients in northern France: **sailing times will be 7 days shorter** than at present.

The ports of call include the major Chinese ports of **Tianjin, Dalian, Qingdao, Shanghai and Yantian**, a South Korean port (**Busan**) and Malaysia's **Port Kelang** for transshipments in Southeast Asia. The services will also call at **Beirut** in Lebanon and **Jeddah** in Saudi Arabia.

Stéphane Raison, Chair of Dunkerque-Port's Executive Committee, welcomes this announcement: *«With this new alliance, three shipping companies that rank among the world's Top 20 have shown confidence in Dunkirk and its container terminal for their panel of services, and Dunkirk will regain a competitive position at import for all the major accounts and the SMEs and SMLs of the region. This announcement means that importers will gain in terms of productivity and cost. I wish to thank the three partners of the OCEAN THREE Alliance for responding positively to requests by the many importers and exporters in the region and beyond. Thanks to this innovative operational alliance, which offers more points of origin and more destinations, Dunkirk can position itself on the Asia-Europe axis with favourable transit times at import and competitive times at export. The fact that three leading worldwide shipping companies have included Dunkirk as a main port of call on one of their services confirms the relevance of the Port of Dunkirk as a major natural port of the Nord-Pas de Calais region, for import and export.»*

And **Jean-Charles Le Gall, President of the Maritime and Commercial Union (UMC) of Dunkirk**, is delighted with this news: *«The improvement of Dunkirk's maritime services will certainly boost the volume of traffic through France's third-largest port. The whole port community welcomes this announcement with enthusiasm.»*



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France's third-ranking port, Dunkirk is well known as a port handling heavy bulk cargoes for its numerous industrial installations. It has also built its reputation in other sectors such as cross-Channel RORO traffic to Great Britain, containers, fruit, etc. Classified as the seventh port of the North Europe Range which extends from Le Havre to Hamburg, Dunkirk is also the leading French port for ore and coal imports, France's leading port for containerised fruit imports, and the country's second-ranking port for trade with Great Britain.

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