

PORT OF DUNKIRK: IN THE SERVICE OF LEADING BRANDS IN THE GREATER NORD-PAS DE CALAIS-PICARDIE REGION

Gérard Mulliez, founder of the Auchan superstore chain, visited the Port of Dunkirk yesterday where he met Rodolphe Saadé, Vice-President of the CMA CGM Group, on board one of the world's largest container carriers, the CMA CGM Vasco de Gama. The Region's President Xavier Bertrand and Patrice Vergriete, President of Dunkirk Urban Community and Mayor of Dunkirk, were also present at this meeting.

Auchan's founder Gérard Mulliez, and representatives of the Mulliez family's brands (Auchan, Boulanger, Brice, Decathlon, Kiabi, Leroy Merlin, Norauto, Picwic, Pimckie, Saint Maclou, etc), came to Dunkirk on Wednesday 24 February on the invitation of the Port of Dunkirk and the CMA CGM Group, a world leader in container shipping, to visit the CMA CGM Vasco de Gama, one of the largest container carriers in the world, during its call at the Flanders Terminal.

This was an opportunity for Rodolphe Saadé, Vice-President of the CMA CGM Group, and Gérard Mulliez to discuss the main issues at stake in world trade.

They also expressed their wish to see Grand Port Maritime de Dunkerque play an important role in the new Greater Nord Pas de Calais Picardie Region, supported by a world shipping leader such as CMA CGM, by the industrial reliability of the port community, and by the competitiveness of the region's businesses.

The visit of the CMA CGM Vasco de Gama is highly symbolic. The container carrier operates on one of the emblematic lines of the CMA CGM Group and provides the service between Northern Europe and Asia, a particularly significant trade route for many companies.

This meeting between top-ranking French economic stakeholders holding strong leadership positions in their own sectors, demonstrates both the importance of family-owned groups in the country's economic fabric, and the major role of French businesses in the world economy.

A former student of the Ecole Notre Dame des Dunes in Dunkirk, Gérard Mulliez reiterated his commitment to his region and its businesses, and expressed great interest in the maritime world in general. *"The Port of Dunkirk has considerable advantages, starting with its geography, its attractive cost and its capacity to re-balance traffic flows by developing our exports so that ships do not sail empty. Ecology must also remain a concern in maritime transport, pending the return of sailing ships as a result of current technological advances,"* he said.

Rodolphe Saadé, who is strongly committed to promoting France throughout the world, commented: *"This visit shows that French businesses, working together, have a major role to play in the world economy. It is by pooling the strengths of the retail sector such as the Mulliez family brands, those of a shipping leader such as CMA CGM, and the quality of French infrastructures such as those of Dunkirk, that we will play our part in boosting the French economy."*



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The foremost port complex in France (Boulogne, Calais, Dunkirk) in terms of total volume, Dunkerque-Port is the ninth port of the Channel and North Sea range, handling traffic of 46.6 million tonnes. It is the leading French port for imports of French-grown bananas (from Martinique and Guadeloupe) and the country's second-largest port for trade with Great Britain. In terms of containers, it is the first port of call in Europe for the CMA CGM Group's emblematic line, FAL 1.

Photo, left to right: Cdr Miclaus; Cdr Zaiane; Patrice Vergriete, President of Dunkirk Urban Community and Mayor of Dunkirk; Gérard Mulliez; Rodolphe Saadé, Vice-President of CMA CGM; Stéphane Raison, CEO of Dunkerque-Port; Xavier Bertrand, President of the Nord Pas de Calais Picardie Regional Council; and Franck Gonsse, Secretary General of the Port Workers' Union CNTPA.

About Dunkerque-Port:

The largest mainland French port in volumes of trade with Martinique and Guadeloupe for banana imports, the Port of Dunkirk is also the ninth port of the Channel and North Sea Range and France's third-largest port, and has built its reputation in many sectors: it is the largest passenger port in the world (Calais-Dunkirk hub); the largest port district in France (traffic of more than 90 MT via Calais-Dunkirk); France's largest energy hub; the largest LNG terminal; the largest port for containerised imports of fruit and vegetables; the leading French port for ore and coal imports; the country's largest rail port; the largest regional waterway port; the second-largest French port for trade with Great Britain; and the third-ranking French port for grain traffic. Dunkerque-Port is also a sustainable port. It is the trading port of the new Nord-Pas de Calais Picardie Region, the largest food industry and farming region in France, the leading rail industry region, and the leading automobile industry region. 2015 traffic was 46.6 MT.



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