

Tanger Med port eyes higher traffic as Middle East tensions reroute shipping

Morocco's Tanger Med, Africa's largest container port, expects a potential increase in vessel calls as rising tensions in the Middle East force shipping lines to divert services around Africa, the port authority's managing director said.

By [Ahmed El Jechtimi](#) 1 Apr 2026



Source: Reuters | Cars, made in Morocco and intended for export, wait to be shipped at Tanger Med Port, on the Strait of Gibraltar, east of Tangier, Morocco June 6, 2024. REUTERS/Abdelhak Balhaki/File Photo

Major carriers, including Maersk, Hapag-Lloyd and CMA CGM, announced this month that they are rerouting vessels via the Cape of Good Hope.

“This rerouting would add an additional 10 to 14 days of transit time for vessels diverted via the Cape of Good Hope to reach Tanger Med,” said Idriss Aarabi, managing director of Tanger Med, in an email to Reuters.

The port, located on the Strait of Gibraltar, is focusing on “capacity management and the prevention of congestion,” Aarabi added.

“The full impact on cargo flows is not expected to be visible until mid-to-late April 2026,” he said, noting that no cancellations have been reported so far.

Fuel and geopolitical tensions drive adjustments

Ships have avoided the Suez Canal and Bab el-Mandeb Strait since late 2023 due to Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping. Recent US and Israeli strikes on Iran and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz have reinforced this shift.

Longer voyages around the Cape of Good Hope have raised fuel costs, increasing freight rates. “Carriers have introduced war-risk, emergency conflict and deviation surcharges of between \$1,500 and \$3,300 per standard container, rising to \$4,000 for specialised equipment,” Aarabi said.

Tanger Med continues strong growth

Tanger Med handled 11.1 million containers in 2025, up 8.4% from a year earlier, and maintains connectivity to more than 180 ports worldwide.

The port’s performance and route flexibility position it to benefit from shifts in global shipping patterns, while authorities monitor congestion and ensure smooth operations.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Reporting by Ahmed El Jechtini; Editing by Susan Fenton.

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