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Salalah Announces New CMA CGM Service Calls

Salalah, Oman – The Port of Salalah, a major Arab Gulf region gateway port and transshipment hub on the Arabian Sea, has announced that French-based CMA CGM, the world's third-largest container shipping line, will add two new weekly services to East Africa, and Europe, beginning the first week of December: the Noura Express and the EPIC service.

The Noura Express service, on the East Africa trade lane operates four vessels of up to 2,755 TEU capacity, linking the ports of Jebel Ali (UAE), Khor al Fakkan (UAE), Mombasa (Kenya), Mogadishu (Somalia) and Salalah. At Salalah, transshipment is available to CMA CGM's Europe Pakistan India Consortium (EPIC) Service, which links ports in South Asia, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, and North Europe. The EPIC Service is operated with eight vessels of up to 9,400 TEU capacity.

"The introduction of the EPIC service to the Port of Salalah provides our growing customer base in Salalah with an additional opportunity for export to Europe, the Mediterranean and North Africa, as well as for imports from the Indian Subcontinent" said Port of Salalah CEO David Gledhill, adding "the Noura Service call leverages the strategic location of Salalah to provide a new, fast cargo connection from East Africa to Europe, which can potentially be also used to accommodate Omani imports from Kenya and Somalia."

Part of the APM Terminals Global Terminal Network, the port of Salalah is now undergoing an expansion which will double the quay length, and increase dry bulk capacity to 20 million tons, and liquid bulk capacity to 6 million tons annually. The Port of Salalah, in which APM Terminals operates and holds a 30% share, handled 3.03 million TEUs in 2014, along with 7.9 million tons of bulk cargo. Salalah was tied for 5th in the Europe, Middle East and Africa region of the JOC Group Productivity Study for 2014 with 96 MPH with a vessel alongside. A "2030" initiative includes plans for \$15 billion in infrastructure investment in the Salalah Free Trade Zone by 2028 to create a larger regional shipping and commerce center for the region, and a Port Phase 3 expansion including three new container berths.

"These new services reflect our ongoing efforts to provide diverse options to the growing Salalah shipping community; the Port of Salalah shall continue to explore opportunities both with shipping lines and logistics providers to offer enhanced supply chain solutions to our valued customers" said Port of Salalah Deputy CEO Ahmed Akaak.

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