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## **MSC prepares for post-coronavirus recovery in freight services demand**

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Swiss container shipping giant Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) has developed a Suspension of Transit (SOT) container shipping programme to prepare for a recovery in demand for freight services once the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic eases.

The programme includes container yard storage in six transshipment hubs across Asia, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas.

Specifically, yard storage will be provided at major strategic points around the world — Bremerhaven in Germany, Busan in South Korea, King Abdullah Port in Saudi Arabia, Lome in Togo, Rodman PSA Panama International Terminal in Panama, and Tekirdag Asyaport in Turkey.

As explained, SOT builds on MSC's ongoing efforts to ensure business continuity and the maintenance of vital container carriage services. The new initiative is focused in particular on a resumption of demand of a wide variety of goods from Asia.

While positive signs of recovery have begun to emerge in Asia and factories have restarted production, major ports of destination may still not be ready to discharge containers, according to the company.

MSC said the programme is aimed at all shippers for containers from Asia and all types of cargo, except refrigerated cargo, dangerous goods and project cargo.

The company further explained that the programme provides potential cost savings for clients faced with high warehousing storage costs at destination, demurrage, per diem and other charges. SOT would also free up space at origin factories and warehouses and avoid excess inventory at site, bringing cargo closer to destination markets and alleviating the risk of congestion or closure at ports of discharge.

What is more, the lead time will be reduced once operations resume at destination ports, and the programme will also add storage for beneficial cargo owners (BCOs) and non-vessel owning common carriers (NVOCCs), that would otherwise reach their full capacity.

MSC's shipping line sails on more than 200 trade routes, calling at over 500 ports.

***(World Maritime News)***