

# **Mersin International Port is the Vital Point of Turkey in the Mediterranean... Denizhaber, 26.01.2011**

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## **Turkey's Vital Point in the Mediterranean: Mersin International Port**

Mersin International Port General Manager John Phillips stated that Mersin uses the natural advantages of its location on maritime trade and acquires an important place in the international sector. However, Mersin should be analyzed the strengths and weaknesses in order to increase its market share between the rival ports. Therefore, new projects such as "Logistics Base Project", which accelerates the trading volume, should be carried out with all dynamics of Mersin. In order to achieve this goal, it is important that the quality of service and economic transportation solutions should be presented.

Mr. Phillips indicated that providing rail links will increase our chances of competing with other ports in the region. At the same time, it will enable Ankara customers to choose Mersin port. MIP works on solution-oriented projects in order to expand international hinterland and receive the deserved level of market share.



One of the projects is to establish the railway line between MIP and Samsun port in order to provide access to Black Sea markets via Mersin, said John Phillips:

Then, MR. Phillips continued that "This project will provide economic benefit for outgoing cargos to Russia and the Turkic Republics. Following the recovery of global economy, MIP added new direct weekly service in cooperation with the important container operators such as HANJIN, YANG MING, HYUNDAI, UASC.

Ro-Ro service (twice a week) between Mersin and Trieste (Italy), which started last year, has provided significant advantages to road freight transport vehicles. This service offers a convenient route for cargoes originating from Italy, Germany, and Austria etc. to Central & Eastern Anatolia destination and to Iraq, Syria. In addition to this, Mersin port is the connection point on international trade with Ro-Ro Services which has been started with Libya& Lebanon and signed the agreement-in-principle with Egypt."

## **We can compete according to special incentives**

GM John Phillips stated that "Business volume will increase after International Logistics center is established in Mersin. However, Mersin port has the necessary equipment, infrastructure and workforce in order to meet this increasing business volume. While we as MIP makes necessary investment in order to increase the business volume of Mersin port after being privatized, we try to support these projects which are planned for the region and provided an added-value to the development of the sector."

Mr. Phillips indicated that when increasing capacity studies of MIP is completed, Mersin port will reach the sufficient cargo capacity to meet the needs after these developments. Then, he paid attention to costs that Ports should work effectively and give uninterrupted 7 days 24 hours services with all associations. Furthermore, input costs (such as

electricity and fuel) should not be above the world standards whereas special incentives should be given as other port states. Otherwise, these costs will be reflected to prices of unit cargo. Thus, the chance of competition will decrease for us and ports will not reach more potential.

Handling is done carefully in the berths which are within the boundaries of breakwater of the port. Health, Safety and Environment departments serve 7/24 in order to avoid any influence of a substance to the sea. Moreover, MIP has necessary equipments to intervene immediately in emergency situations.

Occurring dust due to the loading and discharging facilities has been minimized with the environmental, occupational health and safety measures at the port. Becoming polluted of the berths and sea has been prevented with these measures. Cargos are being transferred to the vessels by means of poured into place have been abandoned. Loading of Belt conveyor caused to dust have been cancelled, Mr. Phillips said.

#### **Phillips told about the environmental, occupational health and safety measures:**

"Private vehicles have been taken for using at loading facilities in order to decrease the dust during the dry bulk cargo handling. Necessary regulations have been published in order to be used these vehicles accurately. These regulations are being implemented meticulously. Take for an example that canvas are stretched between the vessels and berth in order not to being fallen the bulk cargos. Bunkers are being made in order to make the loadings more safety. Water pulverization systems are being made in order to prevent the dust through these bunkers during the discharging of bunkers. MIP conforms to the environmental legislation for all the port operational studies. Additionally, MIP shows sensitivity in order to keep the all legal necessities. Studies are also made in order to prevent the environmental pollution at the port area."

#### **We have advantageous facilities**

Consequently, Phillips said that "Mersin port is the major container port in the East Mediterranean gate of Turkey. With only this feature, Mersin port is the gateway to the entire Eastern Mediterranean strip - Middle Anatolia - the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions and Middle East, Iran, and Commonwealth of Independent States.

"Mersin's geographical location and commercial sources also make a difference. Mersin Port has the advantageous opportunities with its proximity to Mersin Free Trade Zone, rail link, strong truck fleet, 69km away to Airport, its past logistics culture and advanced human resource structure. Mersin port, which has a large hinterland and able to turn the opportunities to advantages, is one of the vital points of Turkish economy in the Mediterranean"