

# *More shipping firms avoid Red Sea despite U.S. promises to safeguard Israel-linked vessels*

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Containers are seen on the Hapag-Lloyd container ship Chacabuco at the HHLA Container

## Terminal Altenwerder, on the River Elbe in Hamburg, Germany (Photo by Reuters)

Cairo, December 23 (RHC)-- More shipping firms have decided to avoid the Red Sea although the US has created a naval coalition purportedly aimed to safeguard shipping after Yemen's retaliatory attacks on Israel-linked vessels. Earlier this week, the Norwegian shipping company Gram Car Carriers, which specializes in pure car truck carriers, said its vessels were restricted from passing through the Red Sea.

Moreover, the German container shipping line Hapag-Lloyd also said it would reroute 25 ships by the end of the year to avoid the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. The firm also vowed to take further decisions at the end of the year. The latest developments show the shipping companies' lack of trust in the US which launched a multinational operation to allegedly safeguard trade in the Red Sea.

The leader of the Yemeni Ansarullah resistance movement, Sayyed Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, said the US is trying to militarize the Red Sea, stressing that Yemeni forces will continue to target Israeli-owned and Israel-bound ships in support of Palestinians.

Yemen has said that the military units would target all ships owned or operated by Israeli companies or carrying the Israeli flag, in support of Palestinians amid Israel's onslaught on the besieged Gaza Strip.

Israel launched the war of aggression on Gaza on October 7th after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas waged the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the occupying entity in response to the Israeli regime's decades-long violence against Palestinians.

Since the start of the offensive, the Tel Aviv regime has killed 20,057 Palestinians and injured more than 53,320 others. Thousands more are also missing and presumed dead under the rubble in Gaza, which is under "complete siege" by Israel.

As Israel continues its genocidal war on Gaza despite the Yemeni retaliatory threats, maritime authorities and shipping ministries, including those of Norway and Greece, warned against sailing in the area.

Earlier, the French shipping group CMA CGM, the Belgian oil tanker firm EURONAV, the Taiwanese container shipping line EVERGREEN, the Norway-based oil tanker group FRONTLINE, the South Korean container shipper HMM, Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL) have decided to pause shipping via the Red Sea.

Those companies that made similar decisions also include the Norwegian shipping company HOEGH AUTOLINERS, the Danish shipping company MAERSK, the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), the Norwegian shipping group WALLENIUS WILHELMSEN, the Taiwanese container shipping company YANG MING MARINE TRANSPORT, and Ocean Network Express (ONE), a joint venture of Japan's Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Nippon Yusen and Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha. Some of those firms also temporarily stopped accepting Israel-linked cargo.

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