

Press release

18 May 2018

Intermed explains the strategic position of the ports of Southern Europe in the New Silk Road

The ports of Barcelona, Genoa and Marseille call for greater cooperation among ports and administrations to facilitate maritime trade and the growth of their hinterlands' economies

Intermed Gateways Ports, the association comprising the ports of Genoa, Marseille and Barcelona, has today organised the conference entitled "The Mediterranean: where Asia, Africa and Europe meet on the Silk Road of the sea" as part of Transport Logistic China 2018, the key logistics fair in Asia, which ended today in Shanghai.

The conference was attended by the President of the Autorità di Sistema del Mar Ligure Occidentale (comprising the ports of Genoa and Savona, among others) and the President of Intermed, Paolo Emilio Signorini; the Deputy General Manager of Strategy and Commercial of the Port of Barcelona and President of the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH), Santiago Garcia-Milà; and the European Projects Manager of the Port of Marseille, Philippe Guillaumet.

The aim of the conference was to explain to Chinese and Asian ship owners, logistics operators and shippers the role played by the ports of Barcelona, Genoa and Marseille in the New Silk Road. The representatives of Intermed presented current containerised cargo flows along the main trade routes between Europe and Asia, the most important of which is the maritime route from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal, explaining that the expected growth along this route is a development opportunity for the economies of both continents. In order to deep into this relevant subject, Hercules Haralambides, Professor Erasmus University Rotterdam and Shanghai Maritime University, gave a keynote speech on "Dovetailing European Port Policy with China's Maritime Silk Road Plans: The time of the European South has finally arrived".

The three ports concerned, with their access to the great markets of Southern and Central Europe, Mediterranean distribution hubs and just a few hours' sailing from North Africa - currently in the process of economic development - represent a strategic location for Chinese operators. In addition, all three ports have undertaken considerable infrastructure investments and are fully prepared to efficiently receive the largest container ships and other vessels currently in circulation.

During the debate and presentations, moderated by Silvio Ferrando, Intermed Secretary General, on the Role of the West Med within the Belt and Road Initiative that closed the conference, the representatives of Porcelanosa, Shanghai Municipal Development and Reform Commission (SHDRC) and the Grand Port Maritime de Marseille highlighted the relevance of the new Silk road for companies and public institutions along the Road. Finally,, the especial contributions of the representatives of Shanghai International Port Group Co., Shanghai Maritime University and Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences underscored the relevance of promoting cooperation among ports and administrations to facilitate maritime trade and the growth of the economies of their respective hinterlands.

Intermed

The Intermed Gateways Ports association was created in 1997 by the ports of Barcelona, Genoa and Marseilles to share information and experiences of common interest, to act jointly in their strategic markets, such as China



and the Far East, and to contribute to the infrastructure and legislative projects and public policies of the EU institutions to respond to the needs of the ports of Southern Europe.