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Current Situation in the Middle East – Impact on Sea and Air Freight

Dear Sir or Madam,

Due to the tense security situation in the Middle East, there are currently significant disruptions in international air and sea traffic affecting both passenger and cargo operations:

1. Air Freight – Severe Restrictions Due to Airspace Closure

Current Airspace Situation

Following coordinated airstrikes by Israel and the United States on Iran, several countries in the region have fully or partially closed their airspace. Among the affected countries are Iran, Iraq, Israel, Syria, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. As a result, many international airlines have suspended their regional services or cancelled overflight routes on short notice.

Airline Measures

- **Lufthansa** has cancelled all flights to several destinations in the Middle East—including Tel Aviv, Beirut, Amman, Erbil, and Tehran—until 8 March, citing safety concerns.
Additionally, Lufthansa Group has suspended flights to and from Dubai and Abu Dhabi until 4 March. The airspace of the United Arab Emirates will also not be used during this period.
- Other airlines, such as **Emirates and Etihad Airways**, have also suspended flights until further notice and are advising passengers and cargo customers to check their current flight status online.
- **Qatar Airways Group** has suspended flights to and from Doha. Some flights already en route to Israel, Dubai, or Abu Dhabi have been diverted to alternative airports.
- **Cargolux** has announced that all stopovers in the Middle East are suspended until further notice.



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- **Turkish Cargo** has stated that all booked and confirmed shipments cannot be transported until further notice. All existing reservations are affected and will not be processed for the time being.

Closed Airspaces

Until **8 March**, the following airspaces will not be used:

Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Dammam, and Iran.

Important Notice

These measures also apply to already confirmed bookings and shipments. Delays, diversions, or cancellations cannot be ruled out at this time.

2. Sea Freight – Rerouting, Congestion, and Severe Operational Constraints

Current Situation in Maritime Areas

Developments in the Middle East continue to affect maritime traffic. Due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the tense situation in the Red Sea, shipping lines are increasingly redirecting vessels around the Cape of Good Hope.

Shipping Line Measures

- **Hapag-Lloyd** has suspended all vessel transits through the Strait of Hormuz (SOH) until further notice, following the official confirmation of the waterway's closure. Ensuring the safety of crews, vessels, and cargo is cited as the top priority.
- **Cosco Shipping Lines** reports that vessels headed toward the Gulf have been instructed to reduce speed, move to safe areas, or await further instructions.
- **MSC** has suspended all bookings for global cargo destined for the Middle East region until further notice.
- **CMA CGM** has instructed vessels to seek safe harbours in the Gulf. Suez transits have been halted, and routes are being diverted around the Cape of Good Hope.
- **Maersk** is redirecting its MECL and ME11 services around Africa.



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Closed Maritime Areas

- **The Strait of Hormuz** is officially closed and deemed unsafe for navigation by several carriers and authorities. This blocks the main access route to the Persian Gulf, impacting container, tanker, and general cargo operations.
- **The Red Sea:** Vessels are widely detouring via the Cape of Good Hope due to the elevated risk in the region.

Important Notices

Last-minute **schedule changes, cancellations, and reroutings** are possible at any time even for confirmed bookings. Significant **delays** throughout the entire supply chain are to be expected. Shipping lines are introducing **conflict and emergency surcharges as well as war risk premiums**, varying by route and carrier.

We are continuously monitoring the situation and will inform you immediately as soon as new or updated information becomes available.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Your Skyline Express Team
Lage, 02 March 2026

all ways...



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