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CMA CGM to run Cuban logistics hub

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The world's #3 container line, CMA CGM, announced Monday that it had made a deal with the government of Cuba and Cuban company Almacenes Universales to build a logistics hub at Mariel port as part of a huge infrastructure investment.

CMA CGM will help run the hub, which sits 30 miles west of Havana, for the warehousing of import and export goods, distribution of shipping containers and storage of both full and empty containers at the port.

Funded by the Brazilian government, the first section of the port opened early last year, and received 57 ships carrying just 15,000 containers during its first six months of operations. The port is equipped to handle today's super-sized post-Panamax ships, the ones that will only be able to pass through the Panama Canal once it is widened in December 2015.

The Mariel port will ultimately include about 130,000 square feet of warehouse space and 177 cubic feet of refrigerated storage.

"The platform of Mariel's is a first step in Cuba's land logistics development," Mathieu Friedberg, a vice president with CMA CGM, said in a written statement.