

## Virginia Port Authority

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### News Release

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## Virginia Port Authority Signs Memorandum of Understanding to Build Trade With Morocco

**NORFOLK, VA** – The Virginia Port Authority [VPA] on April 8 signed a memorandum of understanding [MoU] with the Tangiers Mediterranean Special Agency [TMSA] signifying a cooperative effort to build trade between the two ports.

Jerry A. Bridges, the VPA's executive director, Saïd Elhadi, chairman of the executive board of TMSA, Fouad Brini, managing director of the Northern Agency, Mohamed Arif, governor of the Fahs Anjra Province, Mortada Bejaniba, president of the Fahs Anjra Provincial Council, Thomas Wolf, VPA commissioner and Thomas Riley, ambassador of the United States to Morocco were all present at the signing ceremony.

The agreement focuses on promoting new ocean services and new business between TMSA and The Port of Virginia. It covers the exchange of information, experience and expertise between the two ports in the fields of infrastructure, maritime transportation and international trade. Further, it establishes a system of communication in an effort to improve the services that link the ports.

Bridges said the MoU will contribute to an increase of business between Morocco and the United States, particularly as a result of the Free Trade Agreement signed between the two countries that took effect in January 2006.

“Any time we can build a relationship – open dialogue -- we will, and this is a very good beginning,” Bridges said. “This is a growing port facility on the important and rapidly growing Suez trade lane.

“We want to develop key alliances with major players along the Suez route as we are the port on the U.S. East Coast that is most likely to benefit from development of that trade because of our deep water.”

The Port Tangiers Med complex is a multimodal platform that is composed of container and ro-ro terminals, a passenger terminal and a logistics free zone. The first container terminal offering a capacity of 1.5 million TEU opened last July and the opening for the second container terminal is scheduled for the end of the summer. Upon completion, the port will have capacity for 8 million TEUs.

The VPA has similar MoUs with the Suez Canal Authority, the Xiamen (China) Port Authority and the Panama Canal Authority.

### **Morocco Trade Snapshot**

The Port of Virginia’s trade with Morocco amounted to \$193 million in 2007. The port handled a total of 2,218 TEUs to and from Morocco in 2007, which was roughly 22 percent of all container trade between Morocco and the U.S. East Coast last year.

The Port of Virginia’s top trading commodities with Morocco [2007]:

Export: paper, paperboard, milk, eggs, cigars, cigarettes, plate and float glass, sunflower seed.  
Import: vegetables, tomato, beet powder, spices, sardines, anise seed, capers.

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**The Virginia Port Authority (VPA) is an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, reporting to the state Secretary of Transportation. The VPA owns and operates four general cargo facilities on behalf of the state: Norfolk International Terminals, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, Newport News Marine Terminal and the Virginia Inland Port in Warren County. The terminals are operated by Virginia International Terminals, Inc. (VIT) the non-stock, non-profit operating company. The VPA, through terminal earnings generated by VIT, is operationally self-sufficient. The VPA and correlating maritime industry is responsible for 343,000 jobs and \$41 billion in total revenue.**

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