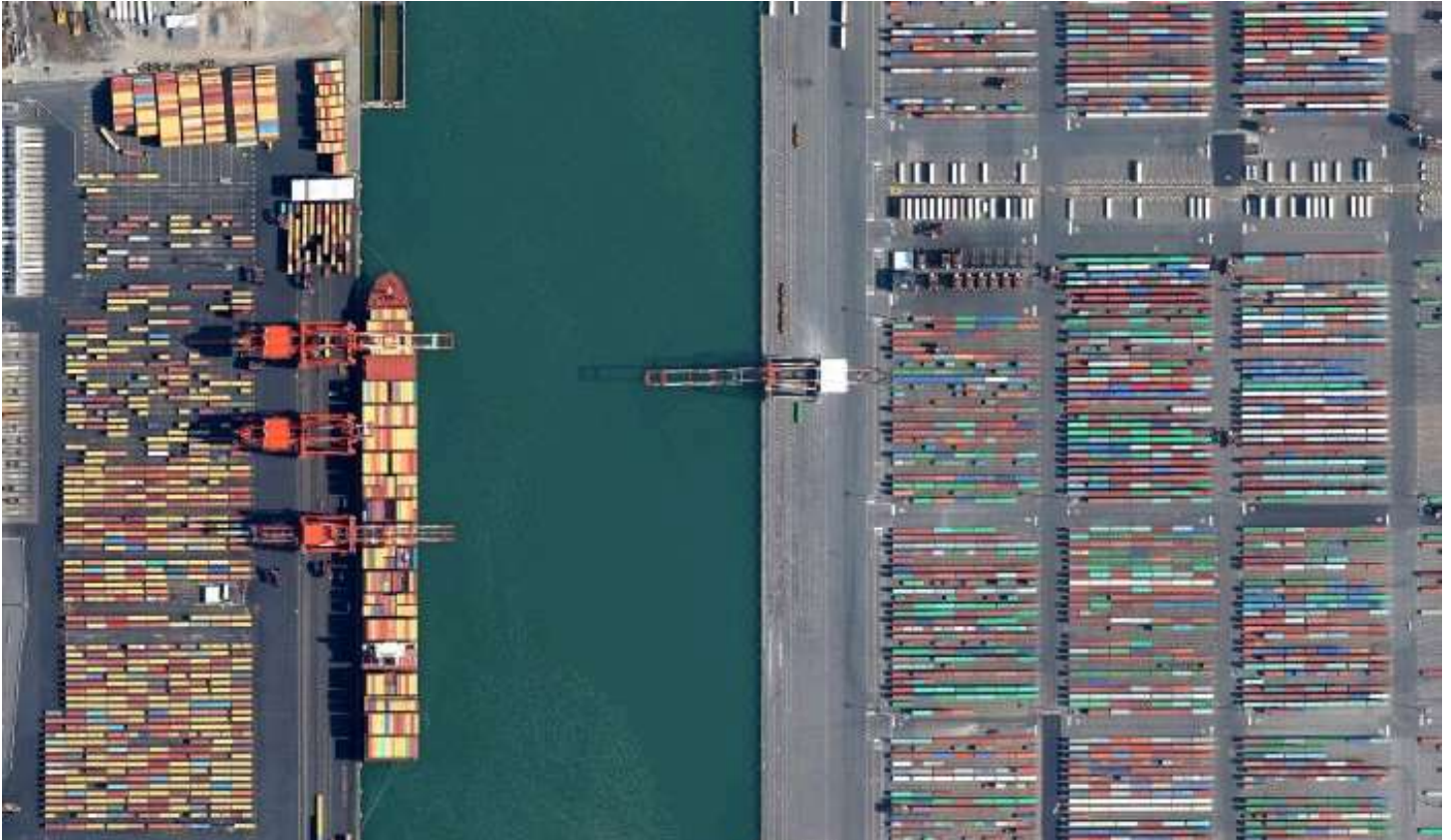


ILA, USMX contract talks set for Jan. 7 restart ahead of strike deadline: sources



The issue of what protections dockworkers will have against automation is the final bone of contention remaining in port contract talks. Photo credit: Faysal06 / Shutterstock.com.

Michael Angell, Senior Editor | Dec 31, 2024, 5:22 PM EST

The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) are set to resume talks for a new master contract on Jan. 7, sources said Tuesday.

The scheduled resumption of negotiations leaves a small window before the current

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While the ILA and USMX have come to terms on wages for a new master contract, the formal negotiations have stalled since mid-November. The union and maritime employers remain stuck on what provisions the new master contract will include about port automation.

The ILA has taken a hard line against automation technology at ports under its jurisdiction. It singled out semi-automated rail mounted gantry cranes (RMGs) as a technology that it wants to bar from further implementation at East and Gulf coast ports under the new contract. The USMX countered that technology, including RMGs, boosts port productivity and creates more opportunities for longshore workers.

Progress on the talks have been further complicated by the attention of President-elect Donald Trump, who sided with the ILA's stance against automation.

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