

Double Blow to Gaza Aid: Israel Intercepts Freedom Flotilla in International Waters After Sumud Raid

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Less than a week after the operation against the Global Sumud Flotilla, the Freedom Flotilla coalition says Israel boarded nine boats in international waters, detained 145 volunteers, and cut live transmissions.



In the early hours of Wednesday, roughly **120 nautical miles (\approx 222 km) off Gaza**, the **Freedom Flotilla–Thousand Madleens to Gaza** reported that **nine boats were intercepted and boarded** by Israeli naval units in **international waters** as they sailed toward the enclave carrying **medicines, nutritional supplies and respiratory equipment**.

According to the organization, the humanitarian cargo is valued at **more than US\$110,000** and was destined for **hospitals overwhelmed** by the blockade.

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  | AHORA: Las fuerzas israelíes interceptaron una flotilla de ayuda liderada por la Coalición de la Flotilla de la Libertad en aguas internacionales mientras intentaba entregar suministros humanitarios a Gaza.

Ellos fueron llevados a un puerto israelí.

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1,3 mil



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The vessels and who was on board

In its statement, the campaign identified the ships: **Abd Elkarim Eid, Alaa Al-Najar, Anas Al-Sharif, Gaza Sunbird, Leïla Khaled, Milad, Soul of My Soul, Um Saad and Conscience.**

According to the organizers, **around 145 people** were traveling aboard, including **doctors, journalists and elected representatives** from multiple countries. **“Their whereabouts are unknown,”** they said after losing contact following the boardings.

What the organizers said

- **Illegality of the operation:** “Israel **has no legal authority** to detain international volunteers in **international waters,**” said **David Heap** of the **Canadian Boat to Gaza** Steering Committee and the Freedom Flotilla.
- **Defiance of international courts:** The coalition argues the seizure “**violates international law**” and **defies binding orders** requiring **unhindered humanitarian access** to Gaza.
- **Disrupted transmissions:** The flotilla reported **signal cuts and blocked tracking systems,** as well as the seizure of phones and equipment.

Israel’s account

Israel’s **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** said the **vessels and their crews** are being **taken to a port** under Israeli control and that **deportation** processing will follow. It added that **no ship** managed to **breach the naval blockade** imposed on Gaza.

What the live streams showed

Before the shutdown, a **live feed** from the **Gaza Sunbird** and from the flagship **Conscience** showed Israeli Navy **speedboats encircling the vessels** and **soldiers boarding**. Participants were seen **wearing life jackets**, seated, and **following emergency protocols**.

In one of the final broadcasts, spokesperson **Kasim Ahtag** warned: **“The boats have surrounded us. Soldiers are approaching. Never forget us.”**



A second operation in less than a week

The episode comes **days after the raid on the Flotilla Global Sumud**, a previous mission made up of **dozens of boats** with **hundreds of activists** that were intercepted on the high seas.

According to the Sumud organization, **more than 40 vessels** were stopped in that operation and **hundreds of crew members** transferred to **detention centers** in the Negev Desert pending **deportations**.

For humanitarian groups, the **back-to-back interceptions** within a week **tighten the chokehold on aid** and send a **chilling signal** to future civilian missions.

Why it matters: humanitarian access and international law

- **Access to critical supplies:** Organizers say the cargo included **medicines, nutritional supplements and respiratory equipment** for a **collapsed hospital network**.
- **High-seas jurisdiction:** The coalitions argue that **boardings in international waters** are **illegal interceptions**, and that **criminalizing civilian volunteers** for **delivering aid** violates humanitarian obligations.
- **Alarm bells:** Support organizations highlight the **risk to journalists** and medical staff on board, and warn of the **systematic disruption of live transmissions** when boardings occur.

Next steps and demands

Support networks for the **Freedom Flotilla** are urging **governments** and **diplomatic missions** to demand:

- **Immediate information** on the **whereabouts** and **condition** of the **145 detainees**.
- **Guarantees** for the **physical safety** of the crew and their **proper consular assistance**.
- **Effective delivery** of the **humanitarian cargo** to **health centers** in Gaza.
- A **humanitarian corridor** enabling the **sustained entry** of aid.

Fuente: [El Ciudadano](#)