

# PALESTINE OUR ROUTE HUMANITARIAN AID OUR LOAD FLOTILLA CAMPAIGN SUMMARY REPORT



**INSANI** THE FOUNDATION FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND  
FREEDOMS AND  
HUMANITARIAN RELIEF  
**YARDIM VAKFI**

# PALESTINE OUR ROUTE HUMANITARIAN AID OUR LOAD FLOTILLA CAMPAIGN SUMMARY REPORT







## Content

Introduction	<b>5</b>
About IHH	<b>6</b>
Why Gaza?	<b>8</b>
Why a Humanitarian Aid Flotilla?	<b>10</b>
Flotilla Coalition	<b>12</b>
About the Flotilla	<b>12</b>
The Conscience of the World	<b>15</b>
The Journey of the Flotilla and the Unfolding of Events	<b>17</b>
Summary of Events – Mavi Marmara	<b>20</b>
Summary of Events – Defne	<b>27</b>
Summary of Events – Gazze I	<b>28</b>
Information About the Course of the Gaza Flotilla Before the Attack and After the Attack (According To The Captain Of The Mavi Marmara)	<b>30</b>
Victims of the Israeli Attack	<b>32</b>
The Other Violations and Infringements Carried Out By Israel In Addition to the Attack, Invasion, Murder and Wounding	<b>34</b>
Witnesses	<b>36</b>
Conclusion	<b>38</b>
Appendix - Photo and video DVD about the event	







## Introduction

“Palestine Our Route, Humanitarian Aid Our Load” flotilla was a humanitarian aid flotilla that was organized as a partnership of six international foundations (*IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, the European Campaign to End the Siege on Gaza (ECESG), the Greek Ship to Gaza Campaign, the Swedish Ship to Gaza, the Free Gaza Movement and the International Committee to End the Siege on Gaza*).

There were more than 700 participants from 36 countries in “Palestine Our Route, Humanitarian Aid Our Load” flotilla, which was bringing humanitarian aid to Gaza; they had come together to ensure that the illegal siege to which the people of Gaza were being subjected should come onto the international agenda. This organization, which was completely civilian in nature, was taking 10 thousands tons of humanitarian aid to Gaza; on 31<sup>st</sup> May the flotilla was subjected to an armed attack by Israeli soldiers in the international waters of the Mediterranean. The Israeli

government carried out a terrorist attack in international waters against civilians who had come together for peaceful purposes.

As a result of the terrorist attack by the Israeli government, 9 of the participants on the Mavi Marmara died, with more than 50 being injured; all the participants of the flotilla were taken into custody, forced into the Israeli port of Ashdod, arrested and taken to the prison. The participants received physical blows and were subjected to psychological torture. The humanitarian aid and personal belongings of the participants were confiscated.

While Israel continues to distort the truth and extend disinformation, this report provides information about the purpose and content of the flotilla that set out for humanitarian purposes, the Israeli attack it was subjected to, the way in which the attack took place and the losses that came as a direct result of the attack.





## About IHH

### Establishment

Since 1992 IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation has brought humanitarian aid to those in need, without regard for nation, religion, language or race; IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation has worked to prevent the violation of human rights and liberties, to help all those who are in distress, all those who are starving or homeless, all those who are the victims of war or natural disasters, all those who have been wounded or disabled and all those who are homeless.



Beginning with voluntary activities and becoming incorporated in 1995, within a very short time IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation has formed a “bridge of charity” that allows it to carry out its functions in 120 countries and regions spread over five continents.

While fulfilling its mission, IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation has also prioritized and carried out activities throughout the world in the following areas:

- War zones and areas affected by war,
- Disaster areas,
- Countries and regions that suffer from extreme poverty.

### Our Mission

• Motivated by an awareness of the universal brother/sisterhood of humanity, it is our goal to ensure justice to mankind, the dignity of every person and to provide all who are in need or who are oppressed with humanitarian aid, wherever they may be.

• It is our goal to work towards eliminating the violation of basic human rights and liberties by preventing any policy or practice that oppresses people or makes people dependent on aid.

• It is our goal to ensure the continuation of immutable values in a changing world.

• It is our goal to ensure the continuation of aid and charity everywhere and at all times.

### Our Vision

• It is our goal to create an environment in which communities and individuals who have been affected by wars and natural disasters will be able to fend for themselves.

• By acting as a leader in aid work it is our goal to create a collective consciousness and to establish cooperation between countries and organizations worldwide.

• It is our goal to strengthen individuals and institutions in the societies that are in need of aid.

• It is our goal to reach the affected regions at the moment of crisis in the most efficient and effective way to minimize damage.

• It is our goal to produce permanent solutions with permanent projects.

• It is our goal to contribute to the elimination of poverty and to establish social justice.

### Principles of Practice

• To help everyone, regardless of religion, language, race or sect





THE REGIONS IHH WORKING

- To lead in our field
- To act as a bridge between communities
- To arbitrate
- To voice the grievances of the oppressed
- To contribute to the reconstruction of a just world that is free from exploitation
- To make the best use of donations
- To work in a transparent manner
- To bring service to the fore, not brands or personalities

**Fields of Work**

1. Emergency aid
2. Social aid
3. Sanitary aid
4. Educational aid
5. Cultural aid
6. Projects to increase awareness

**Awards**

1. Award by the Turkish General Directorate of Foundations as the foundation that has used its resources in the most efficient way – 2005

2. Award by the Turkish General Directorate of Foundations for the best projects (Projects: Ashiyana Orphanage – Pakistan, Women’s Education Institute – Somali, Mobile Clinics – Iraq – 2006)

3. Award by the Turkish General Directorate of Foundations for “Running the Best Project”. Institute for Women’s Development, Somalia – 2006

4. Award by the Turkish General Directorate of Foundations for “Running the Best Project”. “Mobile Hospital”, Iraq – 2006

5. Award by the Turkish Parliament with the Parliamentary Award of Honor – 2007

**International Memberships**

1. The Union of NGOs of the Islamic World
2. Humanitarian Forum
3. Organization of Islamic Conference Humanitarian Forum
4. Consultative membership to the U.N. Economic and Social Council
5. Turkey Voluntary Agencies Foundation (TGTV)
6. Council of International Relief Organizations Aiding Iraq







## Why Gaza?

The population of Gaza is 1.5 million; approximately 900 thousand of these people are spread throughout eight refugee camps. The health, education and other needs of these refugees is met by the UN, international aid organizations and aid sent by Arab countries.

In the 1990s, even though there was a functioning airport in Gaza, during the intifada in 2000 the Israeli bombardment of the same meant that it could not be used and it is now unusable. The only exits that open Gaza to the world, as Israel has blockaded it off by sea, are Egypt and Israel. There is no justification for the blockade under which Israel is holding Gaza. The territorial waters that stretch down the shore of Gaza and the Gaza air space belong to Palestine. This situation should be recognized by law.

The basic dimension of the problem experienced in Gaza consists of the legal dimension which includes infringements on human life. Although Israel accepted the 1993 Oslo Treaty, in which it was stated that by 1999 at the



latest it would accept the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, it did not implement any subsequent treaties. After retreating in 2005 it subjected the region to illegal inspections, holding control of all land, sea and air space. While this control allowed them to implement a variety of arbitrary acts against the Gaza people, from October 2007 on, the region was pronounced “enemy territory”, thus establishing a so-called legal basis for the legitimization of their attacks. Thus, the Israeli Supreme Court legally





approved the sanctions on Gaza; this legal perception, which is combined with military anxiety and which supports mass punishments, is at loggerheads with international legal perceptions.

The embargo that is implemented in Gaza is a first degree threat to human life. The 22-day Israeli attack that occurred one and a half years ago in Gaza has seriously damaged the already limited economic sources. The energy sources in Gaza are extremely limited, the most basic needs cannot be found, the health infrastructure has collapsed, and due to schools being targets in the last attack, education has to be carried out in tents or on the street; people who are homeless are living in tents and social possibilities are less than zero in this region which has been cut off from the rest of the world. As patients cannot be treated and food, medicine and

medical supplies are obstructed from entering, the people of Gaza are staring death in the face. The necessary building materials to rebuild social institutions like schools and hospitals in Gaza, which were destroyed in these attacks, cannot be found and the social institutions cannot function. The solution to all of these problems is the immediate lifting of the embargo.





## Why a Humanitarian Aid Flotilla?

In January of this year, the IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, which has been carrying out work geared towards Palestine for many years, carried out an international organization to lift the illegal embargo that has been inflicted by Israel on Gaza for more than three years.

The aim after this convoy via land, in which hundreds of vehicles participated, was this time to pierce the blockade by sea with 9 ships full of humanitarian aid.

The Turkish coordination of “Palestine Our Route, Humanitarian Aid Our Load” flotilla was carried out by IHH; this also included other civilian initiatives like *The Greek Ship to Gaza Campaign*, *The Swedish Ship to Gaza*, *The Free Gaza Movement*, *The International Committee to End the Siege on Gaza, 2*. *The European Campaign to End the Siege on Gaza (ECESG)*.

It was intended that a new corridor of aid be formed for the 1.5 million population of Gaza, who have been under an embargo for more than 3 years, and are unable to meet even their most basic human needs; this is a region that was totally destroyed in the 22 day Israeli attack last year. The aim was to bring some comfort, if only a little, to the people of Gaza, who have lived for many years in such deprivation.

The flotilla that carried the 10 thousands



tons of humanitarian aid, a significant proportion of which consisted of building materials, aimed to bring Gaza, which had fallen off the international agenda, back onto the agenda of decision-making states in a forceful manner and in this way to form a powerful initiative to lift the embargo in the region. With this flotilla which was heading for Gaza the basic needs of the people of Gaza would be met, patients would be treated and schools, hospitals and medical centers would be rebuilt. The homeless would be given shelter and children would be given rehabilitation centers and parks. People from South America, Africa, the Balkans, Central Asia, the Middle East and the Far East came together, people with different languages, religions and race, all came together to bring aid to Gaza with this flotilla.





“Palestine Our Route, Humanitarian Aid Our Load” flotilla was seen as an important opportunity to bring the people of Gaza a new life, to provide peace for the region and the world. It was hoped that the international peace ships would help eliminate the atmosphere of war and chaos that has so long reigned in the Middle East, and would form a softening in the region, allowing a breath to be taken which could lead to solving

the problems. More than 700 activists from 36 countries participated in the organization; the Humanitarian Aid Flotilla, which set sail in the hope of bringing humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza to give life to the people there and to bring the embargo to an end, to make a contribution to peace in the region and to peace in the world, became victim to a terrorist attack by Israeli soldiers in the international waters of the Mediterranean.





# Flotilla Coalition

The coalition partners of the flotilla of “Palestine Our Route, Humanitarian Aid Our Load” are as follows:

### COALITION PARTNERS

- 1. IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation
- 2. The European Campaign to End the

Siege on Gaza (ECESG)

- 3. The Greek Ship to Gaza Campaign
- 4. The Swedish Ship to Gaza
- 5. The Free Gaza Movement
- 6. The International Committee to End the Siege on Gaza

# About The Flotilla

SHIPS IN THE FLOTILLA			
NAME	COUNTRY	NUMBER of PEOPLE	TYPE
MAVI MARMARA	Komor	577	Passenger ship
DEFNE	Kiribati	20	Cargo ship
GAZZE I	Turkey	18	Cargo ship
ELEFThERI MESOGIOS	Greece	30	Cargo ship
SFENDONI	Togo	43	Passenger ship
CHALLENGER I	USA	20	Passenger ship
CHALLENGER II	USA	20	Passenger ship - Due to the breakdown, its passengers were transferred to Mavi Marmara.
RACHEL CORRIE	Cambodia	20	Cargo ship



MAVI MARMARA





*DEFNE*



*GAZZE I*



*ELEFThERI MESOGIOS*



*RACHEL CORRIE*



*SFENDONI*



*CHALLENGER I*





HUMANITARIAN RELIEF ITEMS IN THE FLOTILLA	
BASIC NEEDS	Food
	Textiles (clothes, towels, bedding, shoes, fabric, carpets, kitchenware, quilts, blankets, couches and beds)
MEDICAL SUPPLIES	Medical equipments, ultrasound scan devices, X-Ray devices, electric patient beds, dentistry units, dentist's gear, doppler echocardiography devices, wheelchairs, electrical wheel chairs, disabled electric mobility scooters, stretchers, deambulateurs, autoclaves, mammography device, microscopes, blood circulating machine, hemodialysis machines, radiology monitors, crutches, ENT units, cat scan machine, operating beds, gynecological couches and various medical supplies.
	Medicines
CONSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	Iron - 750 tons
	Precast homes - 100 units
	Construction supplies: Tiles, timber, fiberboard, cage, plumbing supplies, electric equipment, plastic window frames, glass, steel cables, measuring tools, hand carts, nails, mountings, bathroom fittings, paint, power distribution units, ladders, isolation materials.
	Cement - 3500 tons
	Ceramic Tile Adhesive - 50 tons
	Children's Playgrounds - 16 Units
	2 trucks of wood
HARDWARE	2 electrical power generators
	Hardware supplies (Electric hand tools, machines, ovens)
	Power units (5 units of 85 kws - 2 units of 145 kws - 6 of 150 kws - 3 of 165 kws - 1 of 100 kws and 1 unit of 35 kws)
	Power Units (80 units of 1-2-5 kws)
	ETC
	2 desalination units
	20 tons of paper





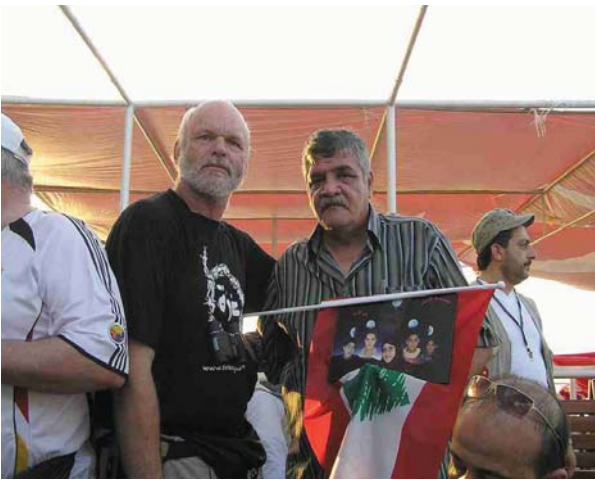
## The Conscience of The World

Among the participants of “Palestine Our Route, Humanitarian Aid Our Load” flotilla there were members of parliament, academics, journalists, authors, NGO representatives, religious representatives and activists.

In the flotilla there were members of parliament from Germany, Kuwait, Israel, Ireland, Sweden, Greece, Southern Cyprus, Morocco, Yemen, Egypt, and Algeria, there was the 89 year old archbishop Helarion Capyci, activists as well as intellectuals and representatives of NGOs from the Middle East, Europe, America, the Far East and Africa. The flotilla was carrying the conscience of the world.



In the flotilla there were representatives of important media organizations, TRT, Press TV, Al Hiwar, TV NET, Doğan News Agency, English Aljazeera, Kuwait News Agency, Telesur and Venezuela TV, Suara Hidayatullah, The Brunei Times, Al Aqsa TV, Al Jazeera Internet, Al Kuds TV, Al-Fakhura, AJ TV, Gulf News Agency and Radio 786 (South Africa).







**Nationalities of the participants in the flotilla:**

Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Lebanon, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine,



Poland, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, Yemen.



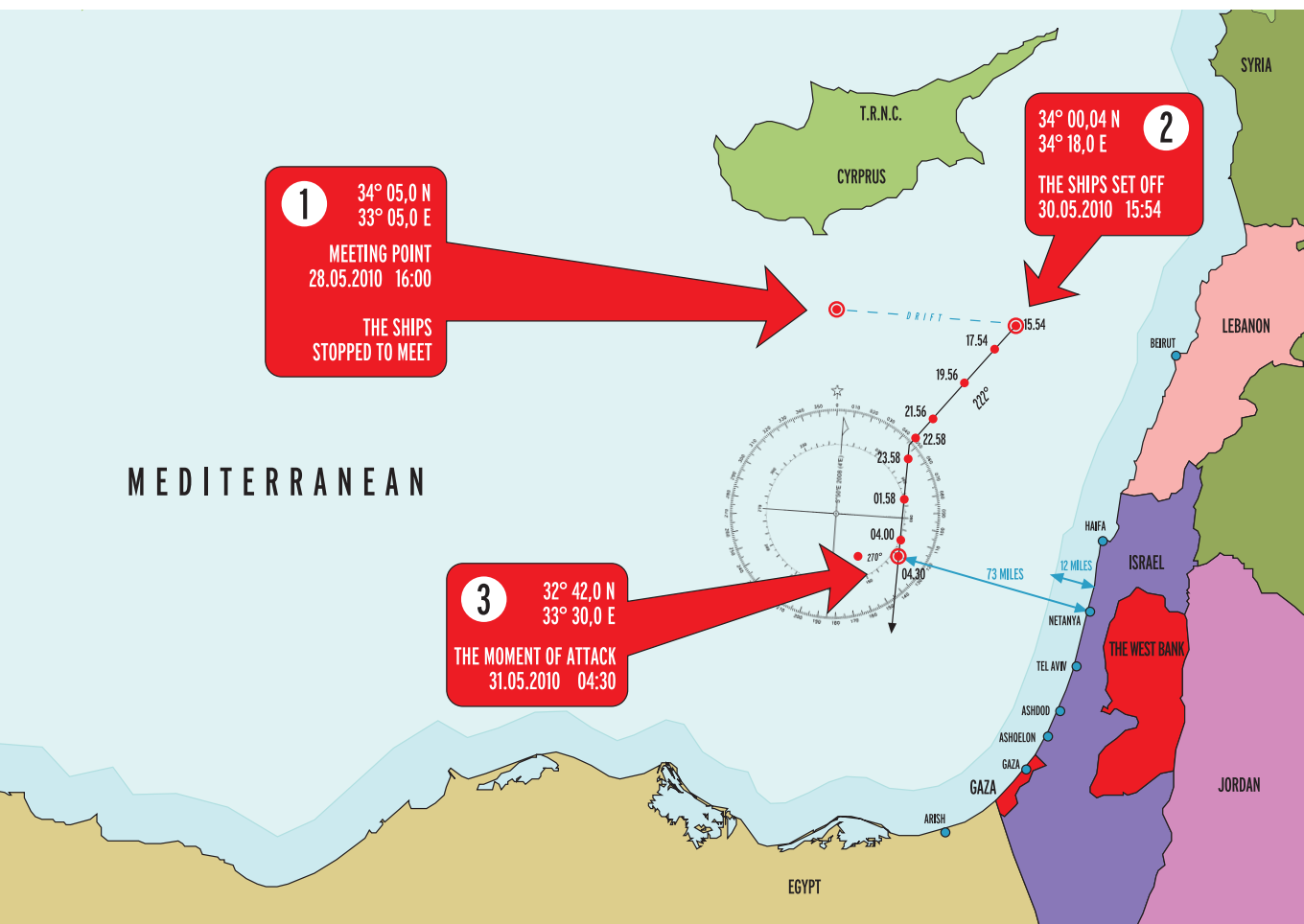


## The Journey of The Flotilla and The Unfolding of Events



**1-** The members of the flotilla from Turkey, the Mavi Marmara, Gazze I and Defne, from Greece the Challenger I, Challenger II, Eleftheri Mesogious and the Sfendoni, and the Rachel Corrie from Ireland, all set off for Gaza.





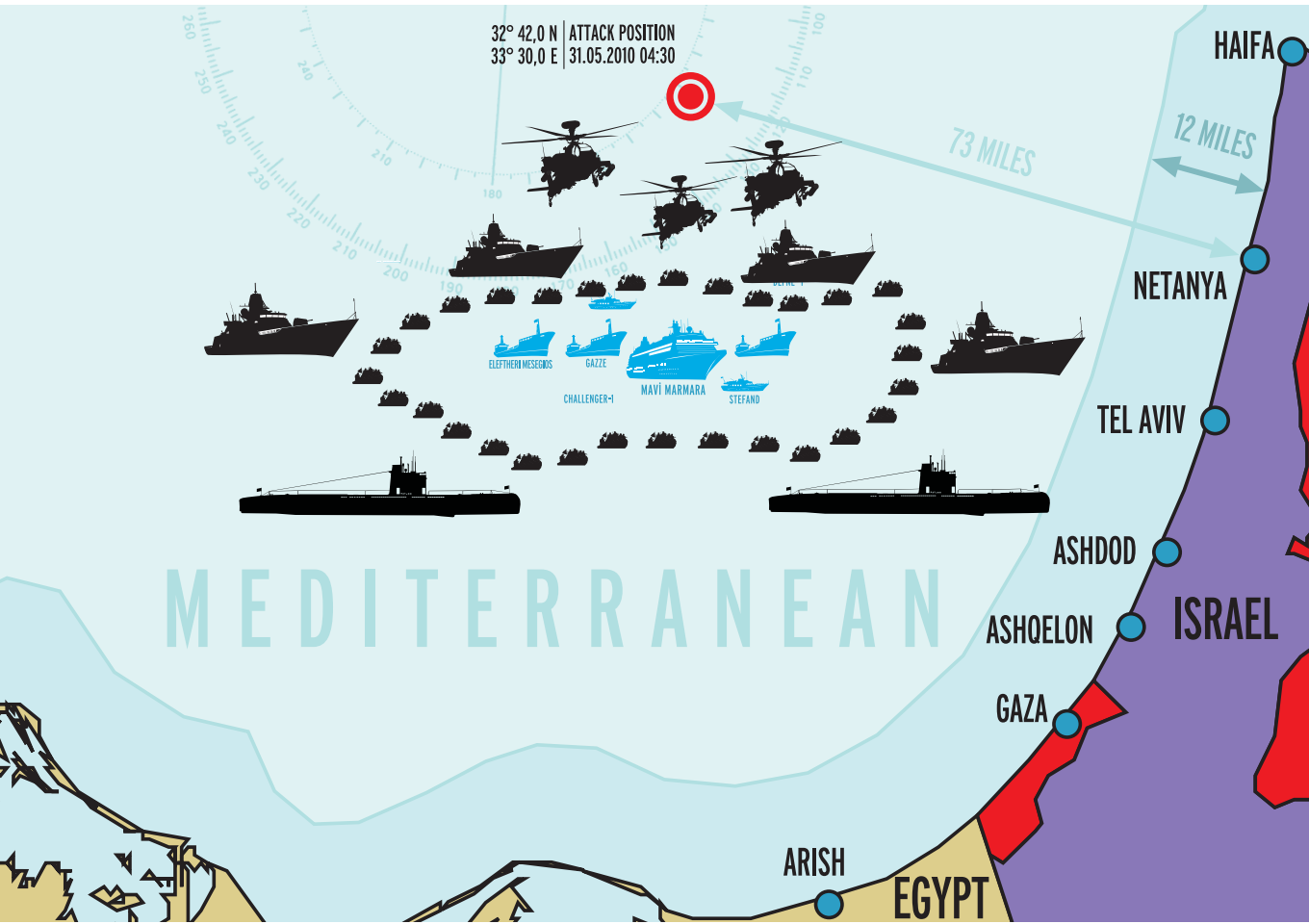
**2-** The ships started to come to the meeting point in the open waters of the Mediterranean on Friday, 28 May, 2010.

The ships that arrived at the meeting point set out for Gaza on 30 May, 2010.

The Israeli navy started to harass the humanitarian aid flotilla on 30 May, Sunday around 22:30.

The ships, which were sailing through international waters, were subjected to a terrorist attack by the Israeli navy on 31 May, 2010 Sunday morning, 4:30.





3- In the attack on 31 May, 2010 there were 4 battle ships, 3 helicopters, 2 submarines and 30 zodiac boats belonging to the Israeli navy.





## Summary of Events - Mavi Marmara

These ships, in order to draw the attention of the world to the illegitimate embargo that has been imposed on Gaza by Israel for more than three years and to bring help to the people living there, set off for Gaza in the month of May with the prayers and good wishes of people from various backgrounds.



The sole aim of these ships, which had undergone all forms of international inspections and which carried nothing but humanitarian aid, was to bring aid to the people of Gaza and break the siege. The flotilla, which took its legitimacy from the people, from human conscience, and most importantly, from international law, was subjected to a terrorist attack carried out by Israeli soldiers on the morning of 31 May. Everyone on board the ships was forcibly taken into Israel.

The flotilla, consisting of 6 ships that had set out from 36 different countries at different times, carried more than 700 people from 36 countries. The ships that made up the flotilla came to a meeting point off the shores of Southern Cyprus on 30 May, 2010. Around 16.30 on the same day the course of the ships, which were heading south, was around 70-80 miles, parallel to the shore in open sea. On the following morning the ships reached a point that was 75 miles off the

Gaza shore, and then the route was turned towards Gaza, with the intention of reaching the port of Gaza sometime in the day.

On 30 May, Sunday, around 22.30 at night, the captain of the Mavi Marmara began to receive harassing and threatening messages from Israeli fleet; battleships appeared on the radar. Each time the captain of the Mavi Marmara responded to the messages sent by Israel by stating "there are approximately 600 participants on board and we are moving south in open seas; we are taking the humanitarian aid on the ship to Gaza"; this was repeated time after time. However the ship, which was moving through international waters, continued to receive threats and harassing messages from Israel.

At this juncture the Türksat satellite frequency and satellite telephones, which the ship was using to broadcast to and communicate with the media and international public opinion, were blocked by the Israelis and the Israeli battleships started to follow the flotilla. As the battleships approached, the authorities on the ship asked the participants to put on life jackets as a safety measure against a possible Israeli attack.





The announcements from the ship via satellite constantly reiterated that the organizers of the humanitarian ship, the participants and the members of the press were traveling in peace and the ship was carrying nothing but humanitarian aid, their sole aim being to bring humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza.

At around 3:00 the battleships were still following in this way. After this time, it could be clearly seen that nearly 30 zodiacs and battleships had begun to surround the flotilla and were approaching. At this juncture, submarines and helicopters appeared, flying in circles around the humanitarian flotilla.

Around 4:10, messages from the ship Defne, which was part of the flotilla, began to be received by the Mavi Marmara, which stated “Mavi Marmara, all the boats and ships are approaching you”. Shortly after this warning was received, when most of the participants were performing their morning prayer, at around 4:30, pursuit boats carrying masked, armed soldiers came alongside the boat. There were at least 10 Israeli soldiers in every boat. While the soldiers in the boat were trying to grab onto the boat with heavy grappling irons, they also started to fire on the ship. Three different types of shots were heard. The highest frequency sound was the most intermittent. The second most frequent

heard sound was a full and loud noise that resembled a gas bomb. The third sound was the constant sound of machine-gun fire. While these developments were taking place, military helicopters full of armed soldiers came over the ship and soldiers started to repel down. The soldiers were shooting as they were descending.

Here the most important matter that needs to be emphasized is that the operation developed in a hostile manner that was geared directly towards killing. The Israeli soldiers did not open fire on the ship as a warning, but rather to directly kill the unarmed civilians on the ship. At this juncture, the Israeli soldiers shot a couple of the participants on board the ship, where there were no arms of any kind, in the head, killing them; they also injured a number of people.

The participants saw the Israeli soldiers firing real bullets as they came down from the upper floors of the ship; below were babies, women and the elderly, who were waiting in a completely defenseless manner. These people started to defend themselves with water bottles, chairs, sticks and any other such object they could find. Three Israeli soldiers were rendered ineffective and the weapons that were taken from them were thrown in the sea; the Israeli soldiers, slightly injured from the fracas, were taken to





the ship's doctors to be treated.

At this juncture, it was announced via the satellite frequency that these terrorist attacks should immediately be halted; this frequency at first had not been noticed by the Israelis and thus not blocked and it was broadcasting the massacre that the Israelis were inflicting on civilian activists.

Upon receiving news about the rising number of deaths and wounded, Bülent Yıldırım, the President of IHH, announced over the loud-speakers that the participants should go and sit in the lounge, should not show any forms of resistance, but rather sit and read the Qur'an. After this announcement, Bülent Yıldırım removed his white shirt and waved it at the soldiers as a sign of their desire for a cease-fire; the soldiers, ignoring this call, continued to fire for a while.

Announcements were made that passengers who were in the covered lounge area should sit still and everyone other than the medical teams who were helping the wounded should sit quietly. All the while, announcements were being made in both English and Arabic to the Israeli soldiers that they should cease firing and the injured should be taken to

the hospital. However, despite all these calls, the Israeli soldiers, who had surrounded the lounge, continued to fire at the windows. At this juncture a woman participant, raising her hands in the air, went to the soldiers and told them they should stop shooting. With the help of Hanin Zabi, an Israeli member of parliament who knew Hebrew, communication was made with the Israeli soldiers and it was stated that the wounded Israeli soldiers would be handed over to be taken to the hospital and in return the participants should not be shot at anymore. Upon this one or two of the participants and a doctor handed over the three wounded soldiers. After taking the soldiers the Israeli soldiers opened fire on the people who had handed them over, shooting the doctor who had provided the soldiers with first aid in the arm.





From this time on the Israeli soldiers waited outside for close to one or one and a half hours without entering the lounges. At this juncture there was a constant reinforcement of soldiers from the pursuit boats and helicopters, and specially trained K9 dogs were brought onto the boat. After this long waiting period, the soldiers sent everyone in the lounges to the exit door, one by one. After being searched, the participants were handcuffed and gathered on the open deck. The women were seated on the benches on the deck, while the men were forced to kneel on the wet and dirty deck. People were not allowed to fulfill their most basic needs. A long war of nerves was experienced here. In the end, as water was requested, a bottle of water was brought and it was demanded that people, with their hands handcuffed behind them, drink from the same container. All this time, the giant helicopters that were circling in the air were wetting the participants with sea water, and the journey passed mostly in this way. The disturbance of the air created by the helicopters was a great torture, in and of its own. The participants on the deck, after being submitted to extremely windy conditions and doused with sea water, were shut in two airless lounges, where it became



unbearably hot and stuffy. Food, prayer, the need to relieve oneself, standing up, looking at the soldiers – everything, absolutely everything was enough for the soldiers to act. They constantly incited the participants, trying to agitate them to create problems. After a long wait, the ship started to sail. The people did not know where they were going. The Israeli member of parliament, who was one of the participants, said that the ship was being taken to Ashdod Port; however, there was no way to confirm this information. The difficult journey, which began at 9:00, lasted until 7:00 pm.

Some of the wounded were purposefully mistreated, kicked and hit with weapons, while others were shot at, despite being wounded. Some wounded people who were not transferred to the hospital kept in the ship, even they had bleeding wounds. And doctors were not allowed to treat the wounded.

In the evening the Mavi Marmara arrived at the Ashdod Port, to be met by hundreds of people. The crowd was shouting in joy, as if they were celebrating a victory, swearing at the passengers in way that is against morals and humanity. After waiting a long time for order to be restored in the port, all the participants







were taken off the ship. At this juncture the female Israeli member of parliament, a participant on the ship, said that the official Israeli statement was that there were 19 dead and around 50 injured. Those who had witnessed the violence on the ship believed that this number did not reflect the actual situation.

In the early hours of the morning the participants started to be taken off the ship into the port in small groups. Before being taken from the ship they were searched once more, and those who had their handcuffs removed were handcuffed once again. Each participant was accompanied by two policemen. Extreme safety precautions were taken. The degrading and agitating behavior continued. As they entered the tent prepared for interrogation everyone was subjected to a very detailed security check. All the participants of the ship were searched once more, down to their underclothing. Everywhere had been cooled with air-conditioning and it was like a cold storage. Then the Israeli authorities had everyone sit around tables to fill out the forms they had prepared. It was stated that the participants had entered Israel without permission. However, the Mavi Marmara had been attacked while in international waters and the people on the ship had

been brought to Ashdod against their will. Everyone stated the situation as thus. The number of translators in the detention center was insufficient. After the filling in of forms, fingerprints from all the participants were taken, photographs were taken, and they were submitted to a health check. After this process, the files were handed over to the internal information unit, Shabak. Here some names among the participants in particular were focused on and from the first moment on these people were intensely interrogated.

While these processes were being carried out, the authorities told the participants that if they were to sign certain documents that they would be able to go immediately to the airport; otherwise they would be taken to prison and be held for at least two months. Most of the participants did not signed the documents in question. Afterwards all the participants were put on prison buses and taken to the prison. For the entire journey, which lasted more than an hour and a half, the air conditioning on the bus was working and the temperature fell to an unbearable cold. When the participants arrived at Bersheva prison, the time was 4:00. After being searched at the entrance to the prison all the participants were placed in wards.





No one could get news from any of the other participants; those who wanted to make a phone call were told that this was not allowed and the formation of a jamaat for prayer was obstructed. Everyone was placed in cells for two or four persons until morning. However, while they were being processed the guards harassed the participants, telling them “This is now your home, forget going back”, going as far as to make obscene gestures. When the participants requested meeting with the consulates of their own countries, this was refused, saying this would happen “later”. There was no permission throughout the day to use the telephones, operated with cards.

The participants were forced to carry out every type of duty concerned with the wards: carrying things, distributing things, cleaning up after dinner, etc.

The guards constantly made noise and did not give the participants, who had not slept for two nights, a chance to sleep. On the strike of every hour iron doors were slammed and everyone in the cells was ordered to stand up. Everyone was repeatedly asked their names, where they had come from and why they had come. Towards the evening of the first day consulate representatives from the different countries of the participants on the boat began to visit the wards. When the Turkish consulate came it was 5:00 pm. The consulate authority, stating that they had been delayed due to the fact that many of those who had been arrested were Turks, said that the necessary paperwork for their return to Turkey would soon be completed, but that information about the fate of some participants, including Bülent Yıldırım, had not been attained and that it was a priority to find them first. The consulate authority told the



participants that there were 9 dead and a number of wounded; the participants expressed their concern for the lives some of the participants who were under arrest and requested that those who were lost be found at once.

On the night of the same day, from 1:00, the guards who came to the wards read out names one by one and started to take everyone out in groups. This lasted until noon on the following day. While some groups arrived at the airport at 3:00, others did not reach the airport until noon on the following day. While the participants were going to the airport they were transferred to the vehicles, being carried by the arms and legs. 6 people were shoved into a vehicle measuring 2.5 square meters and forced to make a two hour journey in this manner. During this transfer, as with the first transfer, attempts to incite the participants by subjecting them to demeaning behavior, words and expressions were made. The slightest reaction was answered by a blow from the soldiers. Some of the participants who had left the prison unharmed arrived at the airport with injuries. In particular, there were people among the other nationalities except Turkey who were seriously beaten. While going





through passport control at the airport, everyone was forced to sign deportation papers. After a great deal of trouble, permission was given for the participants to write that they had been brought into Israel against their wishes. While waiting for the passports to be processed the participants were constantly verbally abused by the soldiers. After every outburst the soldiers would congratulate one another and they were praised by their commanders.

Those whose passports had been processed started to be slowly led towards the planes. This process continued until the early hours of the morning. Those who first boarded the planes had to wait nearly 12 hours on the plane. Some participants refused to board the plane until they could see the President of IHH, Bülent Yıldırım, the journalist Adem Özköse and two other participants who had been taken for interrogation in the airport. The authorities were informed that the plane would not take off until these participants came. The Israeli authorities insisted that no one had been left behind and that everyone was on the plane. It was

once more expressed in very clear terms that until those who were being held in the interrogation rooms in the airport were set free the participants were going nowhere. In the end an official went to the interrogation room and removed the four remaining people and processed their passports. They boarded the plane with the members of parliament and consulate officials who had come from Turkey. After carrying out a final check of the list of names, the plane set off for Turkey, leaving behind five people who were severely injured in the hospitals there.

When the fate of the personal belongings of the participants was inquired into it was announced that they would be sent by a different plane, however, the only thing to arrive was empty suitcases, broken telephones and cameras, etc. A large number of electronic goods had been confiscated by the Israeli authorities. This meant a serious financial loss for all the participants of the ship. Additionally, it is learnt that credit cards and mobile phones extorted by Israeli soldiers are used in Israel.





## Summary of Events - Defne

The Defne, which was part of “Palestine Our Route, Humanitarian Aid Our Load” fleet, was first harassed by Israeli soldiers on 30 May around 21:40. The Israeli authorities swore at the ship in both Turkish and English, telling her to change her course. This abuse continued until 4:00 am on 31 May. From the evening hours on the ship started to be surrounded by assault boats and frigates. From time to time submarines could be seen around the ship and helicopters were flying above the ship. This activity continued for six hours. At the end of this period the assault boats started to approach the ship from every direction. When they had come as close as 100-150 meters, they changed their route and headed to the Mavi Marmara. There was less than one mile between the Defne and the Mavi Marmara. While the boats were approaching the Mavi Marmara sounds of explosions could be heard. Immediately afterwards the sound of machine-gun fire could be heard. In the wireless announcements made to the Mavi Marmara the sound of shouting could be heard. Later, after fighting the lasted for about an hour, the Mavi Marmara was towed to a distant region. From this moment on communication with the Mavi Marmara was severed.



At 6:10 am the armed soldiers who were being carried by the helicopters landed on the Defne. Everyone on the ship was gathered on top of the hatches and made to wait here for an hour. Then they were taken to the cafeteria, an area measuring 15 square meters, and the participants and crew were forced to wait in this small and unventilated area for the journey that lasted approximately 10 hours to the Ashdod Port. When the ship arrived in Ashdod Port everyone was taken off the ship and boarded onto prison vehicles. The vehicles did not set off right away; rather the people in the vehicles were forced to watch as the Mavi Marmara approached the shore and those on the boat were brought outside and new operation teams enter the Mavi Marmara. The Israeli police and soldiers watched this process with great joy. Here everyone’s statement was taken. Immediately after this, fingerprints and photographs were taken and they were sent to the hospital. The participants and the crew, who were held in prison for 1.5 days, were subjected to psychological abuse by the Israeli officials during this time. Even when the participants were brought to the airport, the Israeli soldiers continued to try to incite them. They used brute force against both Turks and the citizens of other countries in front of everyone, striking them.





## Summary of Events - Gazze I

The ship Gazze I, which was part of the flotilla that set out in May to take aid to Gaza, was addressed via wireless by the Israeli authorities at 21.40 on 30 May. All the questions asked, for example, from which port the ship had set out, what its cargo was, which port it was going to, and all other normal procedural questions were answered in full by the captain of the ship. At this juncture the ships in the convoy were being observed for 70 miles. Throughout these wireless interviews, English and Turkish swearing could be heard over the loudspeakers. This abuse continued until 4:00 am on May 31. Assault boats and frigates were moving around the fleet. At this point submarines began to be seen. In the face of this, almost everyone was convinced that this was an Israeli operation against the cargo ships in the fleet, however, contrary to expectations, the battleships carrying the soldiers suddenly, in a coordinated manner, surrounded the Mavi Marmara.

As the Gazze I was immediately behind the Mavi Marmara we could see the terrorist attack carried out by the Israeli soldiers in complete detail. Zodiac boats and helicopters approached the Mavi Marmara at the same moment. There were dozens of masked and armed soldiers on the boat, who fired without warning directly at people while boarding the boat. The sound of screaming could be heard over the wireless. The final announcement that came from the Mavi Marmara was that there were dead among the participants, and so no resistance should be shown to the soldiers. From this moment on all communication with the boat was severed.

During the operation the Israeli military force, which blocked the satellite connection on the Mavi Marmara, purposefully did not interfere with the wireless communication between the ships. During this process interesting things happened. For example, the voice





of Abdullah Özkaya who was boarding on Gazze I was imitated; and a message on behalf of Abdullah Özkaya was sent to Defne. As confirmation of these announcements by the participants on the Defne it was discovered that the Gazze I was being searched. Later, it was learned that the same announcement had been heard on the Mavi Marmara. Upon the warning that came from the Mavi Marmara the Gazze I changed its route and headed for open seas. For about an hour the sound of gun shots could be heard and then the Mavi Marmara was towed by the Israeli battle ships; after this there was no more communication.

After the terrorist attack on the Mavi Marmara the Israeli soldiers stopped the motors of the Gazze I around 6:00 am in the morning and announced that everyone should come to a visible place on the ship, otherwise they would shoot. In order to prevent more bloodshed and to prevent events from deteriorating, the captain of the ship acted according to instructions. After the helicopters and zodiac boats had surrounded the ship, completely armed and equipped troops boarded. Then everyone was forced to wait on the hatches for some time and then they were taken to the ship canteen. Here, after waiting for some time all the participants and crew on the boat were searched, one by one and taken into a room to be questioned and searched. Everyone was forced to wait up to 10 hours in the small dining room of the ship until it arrived in Ashdod. A large number of Israelis insulted the people who were disembarking from the ship. The crowd was formed of a large number of youth.



The participants and crew members who were taken to the tents for interrogation were accompanied by two soldiers each. Here everyone was asked in particular if they worked for IHH, what their position in the foundation was, if they were a director or not. Another interesting question was “Why have you come to Israel without permission?” Everyone replied to this question in the same manner: “We did not come to Israel; you have brought us here by force”. Throughout this process, the Israeli soldiers continuously asked things to harass the participants. The police officers who were on duty in the center watched this abuse with great pleasure.

During all this the people who were translating could all speak Turkish fluently. Throughout the time that we were held, which lasted almost two days, a variety of psychological torture was inflicted on all the participants. Even when we arrived at the airport to return home the Israeli soldiers were openly encouraged by their commanders to incite the ship participants. During the uproar that this caused excessive force was used against some of the participants.





## Information About The Course of The Gaza Flotilla Before The Terrorist Attack and After The Attack (According to The Captain of The Mavi Marmara)

**1.** The Course of the Mavi Marmara was 222 at around 22:30 on 30 May, 2010

**2.** The Israeli navy called to the Mavi Marmara, announcing that it was progressing through a military blockage, but the course was 222, that is in international waters.

**3.** At 22:30 the warning “Change course, come to Ashdod Port!” was given we replied “Our ship is in international waters, you have no right to give such an instruction, you cannot decide our course.”

**4.** It was stated that Mavi Marmara was on course 222 and that Israel could not request a change of course.

**5.** Demands that Mavi Marmara change her course were made until 2:00. At 2:00 the demands ceased.

**6.** At 23:20 the course of the ship was 185. The end point of this course would have been a point between Arish and the Suez Canal.

**7.** Ships belonging to the Israeli navy started to appear on the radar.



**8.** 4 ships belonging to the Israeli navy could be seen on the radar, and they were within 3.5 miles of the Mavi Marmara. It was not possible to see the Zodiacs on the radar.

**9.** These ships that could be seen on the radar were assault boats and thus it could be understood that the Mavi Marmara was being pursued.

**10.** No call was made until 4:30 and the attack started suddenly

**11.** At a distance of 73 miles, at 4:30 first helicopters, and then about 30 zodiacs appeared.

**12.** At 4:30 while about 73 miles from the territorial waters of Israel, helicopters flew over the ship and the ship was surrounded on all sides by zodiacs. The helicopters all simultaneously attacked the ship. In the attack there were about 30 zodiac, 4 frigates, 2 submarines and 3 helicopters.

**13.** Before descending onto the deck, the soldiers fired both plastic and real bullets.

**14.** The first boarding of soldiers was made on the upper deck. The soldiers who took over control of the upper deck then headed to the lower deck and seized this area as well.





**15.** About half an hour before the soldiers came down from the helicopters onto the decks they started to fire from above, and they continued to fire while coming down onto the ship.

**16.** The soldiers entered the bridge and told everyone here to lie down.

**17.** All documents on board, including the ship's certificates, were confiscated. No permission was given for the Israeli soldiers to take anything from the ship.

**18.** At the moment of the first attack, at 04:30 the course, which was 185, was changed and brought to 270.



**22.** The ship was forced to go to course 130 with a single engine.

**23.** It took ten hours to go to Ashdod. The first 8 hours of the journey was through international waters. There was hope that an intervention on the part of the United Nations would occur during this period.

**24.** After 24 miles the second damaged engine was switched on and Israeli territorial waters were entered. It took 2 hours to arrive at Ashdod once Israeli territorial waters had been entered. At 7.00 pm, we had arrived to Ashdod.



**19.** The Mavi Marmara, which was progressing on course 185, was heading towards a point between al-Arish Port and the Suez Canal. The course was not heading for Israel or for Gaza when the operation against her was begun.

**20.** The Israeli ships tried to force the Mavi Marmara to turn her course to Israel. However, the maneuvers made actually turned her further from Israel and when the operation was completed the Mavi Marmara was approximately 85 miles from Israeli territorial waters.

**21.** The order was given for the Israeli soldiers who had seized the ship to switch the ship to a course of 135 Ashdod.







## Victims of The Israeli Attack

D E A D			
	NAME	REGION	DATE OF BIRTH
1	Ali Haydar Bengi	Diyarbakır	11.09.1971
2	Cengiz Akyüz	Hatay	10.05.1969
3	Cengiz Songür	İzmir	04.06.1963
4	Cevdet Kılıçlar	İstanbul	05.05.1972
5	Çetin Topçuoğlu	Adana	01.05.1956
6	Fahri Yıldız	Adıyaman	20.10.1967
7	Furkan Doğan	Kayseri	20.10.1991
8	İbrahim Bilgen	Siirt	02.03.1949
9	Necdet Yıldırım	İstanbul	15.08.1978

S E R I O U S L Y W O U N D E D			
	NAME	REGION	DATE OF BIRTH
1	Ahmet Aydan Beker	Kayseri	23.06.1979
2	Canip Tunç	Erzurum	13.03.1958
3	Çelebi Bozan	Diyarbakır	01.01.1960
4	Erkan Bayçidan	Samsun	05.03.1980
5	Fatih Kavakdan	Düzce	03.08.1977
6	İmdat Avli	İstanbul	01.11.1970
7	İsmail Yeşildal	Kocaeli	20.03.1978
8	Kenan Akçil	Erzurum	14.02.1972
9	Mehmet Ali Zeybek	Diyarbakır	01.04.1982
10	Mehmet Yıldırım	Muş	20.11.1978
11	Muharrem Güneş	Elazığ	25.07.1986
12	Muhyettin Yıldırım	Adana	01.02.1969
13	Mustafa Batırhan	Mardin	06.06.1980
14	Osman Çalık	Erzincan	01.03.1967
15	Osman Kurç	İstanbul	10.03.1978
16	Revaha Gümrukçü	İstanbul	20.10.1986
17	Sadettin Furkan	İstanbul	
18	Suat Koşmaz	Adana	14.01.1974
19	Uğur Süleyman Söylemez	Ankara	29.07.1963
20	Ekrem Küçükköse	Sakarya	20.04.1970
21	Abdulhamit Ateş	Ankara	10.07.1977
22	Adem Bakıcı	Almanya	15.02.1968
23	Murat Taşğın	Konya	10.01.1977





W O U N D E D			
	NAME	REGION	DATE OF BIRTH
1	Abdullah Taha Can	Çorum	08.02.1991
2	Abdülhalim Almalı	Van	01.01.1959
3	Ali Ekber Yaradılmış	Hatay	11.08.1952
4	Ali Tokluman	Kayseri	14.11.1964
5	Alper Mutlu	İstanbul	20.03.1976
6	Ayetullah Tekin	Diyarbakır	21.04.1981
7	Cevdet Ökenek	Şanlıurfa	01.10.1962
8	Erdoğan Tekir	Tekirdağ	17.11.1966
9	Eyüp Yaşar	Ş. urfa	01.01.1970
10	Fikri Karavil	Diyarbakır	11.08.1969
11	Halim Yazıcı	Kocaeli	05.01.1965
12	Halis Akıncı	Denizli	23.11.1987
13	Hüseyin Mutlu	Samsun	03.01.1962
14	İlyas Yılmaz	İstanbul	20.10.1973
15	İsmail Hakkı Vehaboğlu	Bursa	01.05.1968
16	Kemal Çelen	Van	04.07.1972
17	Mehmet Ali Akdeniz	Batman	16.08.1975
18	Mehmet Emin Kaya	Denizli	09.05.1987
19	Mehmet Tunç	Malatya	14.02.1967
21	Muhammed Latif Kaya	İstanbul	05.04.1977
22	Muhittin Gili	Bingöl	09.10.1964
23	Musa Çoğuş	İzmir	29.08.1962
24	Mustafa Şimşek	İstanbul	05.06.1989
25	Mücahit Şahin	Konya	13.03.1983
26	Necati Akar	İstanbul	02.01.1973
27	Okvianto Emil Bahatuddin	Endonezya	10.10.1968
28	Selim Özkabakçı	Çorum	01.11.1969
29	Şahin İbrahim Güleriyüz	İstanbul	11.03.1966
30	Şükrü Peker	İstanbul	26.07.1974
31	Zekeriya Kaya	İstanbul	07.07.1983





# The Other Violations and Infringements Carried Out by Israel in Addition to The Attack, Invasion, Murder and Wounding

## 1. OBSTRUCTION OF COMMUNICATION AND SEVERANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Mavi Marmara had a satellite antenna and communicated via satellite telephone. From 21:30 on 30 May occasional electronic blackout was implemented and the communication of those on the ships with the world was severed. Towards the morning of 31 May, around 4:00 am and immediately before the attack, there was a complete blackout. The GPS system and radar on the ship, communication with other ships and wireless communication between those on the ships were all severed. It is striking that at the same time as this implementation, which in and of itself was illegal and an infringement, was put into force, the grounds for secreting these infringements were prepared. However, as a supplementary frequency, about which the Israelis had no information, was put into service, the world was able to see what was happening.



## 2. ILLEGAL QUESTIONING AND ARREST

The participants in the flotilla were first collected in the lounge of the ship and were individually searched and handcuffed; they were brought to the open deck and held there, in kneeling position, for nearly 8 hours. During this time, they were not allowed to meet their basic human needs, such as relieving themselves, eating or drinking. Later, they were interrogated in Ashdod, for a long period of time that lasted between 8 and 12 hours, their fingerprints were forcefully taken and their photographs and video records were taken without permission. During these interrogations it was demanded that these people who had been attacked with weapons by Israeli soldiers in open seas, kidnapped and brought by force to Israel, sign a paper that stated they had illegally entered Israel. Later, the participants were forcefully boarded onto prison vehicles and they were taken to Bershava Prison, where they were imprisoned for one and a half days. In addition, some





participants, including the administrators of IHH, underwent special and repeated interrogations that lasted hours, being interrogated even in the airport immediately before take-off.

**3. CONFISCATION OF PASSPORTS**

The Israeli soldiers confiscated some of the passports and some identity cards of the participants of the flotilla. The confiscation of the passports by the Israelis, who were subjecting the participants to a number of illegal actions, has been questioned by some people. Those participants about whom we have information that their passports were confiscated are as follows:

	NAME SURNAME	COUNTRY
1	Abbas Mustafa Mohamed Al Lawati	Omman
2	Ahmed Oumemoun	France
3	Dimitra Kyriyllou	Greece
4	Dror Feiler	Sweden
5	Emmanouil Klironomos	Greece
6	Emmanouil Mathioulakis	Greece
7	Georgios Karatzas	Greece
8	Georgios Lieros	Greece
9	Henry Ascher	Sweden
10	Kahel Mazen	France
11	Michail Tiktopoulos	Greece
12	Mohammed Bounoua	England
13	Nadeem Ahmed Khan	Pakistan
14	Nicola Lesley Enchmarch	New Zealand
15	Polianthis Sigelakis	Greece
16	Raza Mehmood Agha	Pakistan
17	Sakir Kaptan	England&Turkey
18	Vagelis Pissias	Greece
19	Yiannis Karipidis	Greece

**4. SEIZURE OF SHIPS AND HUMANITARIAN AID**

All the ships and humanitarian aid found in the flotillas were seized by the Israelis.

**5. SEIZURE OF PERSONAL ITEMS AND DESTRUCTION OF THE SAME**

All personal belongings of the participants of the flotilla were seized by the Israeli soldiers and these objects were carefully searched. During this time electronic goods were stolen or those that were not stolen were broken beyond repair. Many items belonging to members of the press and to the ships themselves suffered serious damage. In addition, a large proportion of the personal belongings of all the participants were damaged and those possessions that were returned had been broken beyond repair. Many participants reported that large sums of money had been seized by the Israelis.

**6. TORTURE, HUMILIATION, MALTREATMENT AND PHYSICAL ABUSE**

From the first moment of the attack until the arrival in Ashdod Port, at the control point of Ashdod Port, in the Bershava Prison and at the Tel Aviv Airport the participants of the flotilla were physically struck. The participants were beaten at every given opportunity, even the wounded were handcuffed, their feet were stepped on, and they were subjected to pain and torment. Psychological pressure and torture were constantly applied and some participants were subjected to constant oppression during interrogations.





## Witnesses

### **Ismail Yılmaz (Staff, Turkey)**

“I was on the cargo ship Gazze I. As we were immediately behind the Mavi Marmara we could see the terrorist attack carried out by the Israeli soldiers in full detail. The zodiacs and helicopters approached the boat at the same moment. Dozens of masked, armed soldiers came onto the boat from the helicopters and boats, shooting without any warning directly at the people.”

### **Mevlüt Yurtseven (Doctor, Turkey)**

“I was the ship’s doctor. Within 20 minutes four people around us lost their lives. More than 50 people were wounded, 20 seriously. They forced the wounded to stand up and tried to make them walk. They did not bring stretchers. Because I protested against this action I was handcuffed.”

### **Hassan al Banna Ghani (Press TV - United Kingdom)**

“They set attack dogs against me and another volunteer from the UK. They gave us nothing to eat for the 20 hours that we were held prisoner on the ship. They stole our personal belongings and damaged them. The volunteers were subjected to violent treatment. The volunteers were bent double on the floor and force was applied to stop the blood circulation in



bodies. Sleep deprivation was practiced while in the cells and they prevented us from using the toilets on the ship.”

### **H. Zehra Öztürk (Activist, Turkey)**

“We were passengers on a humanitarian aid ship. Our sole aim was to bring aid to the people of Gaza. The Israeli government sent soldiers down onto our ship in international waters; this was nothing less than an act of piracy. They used fire-power. About 50 people were injured and 9 people lost their lives. The Israeli government used military force against a civilian enterprise. A large part of the Israeli navy was there. 4 battle ships, 2 submarines, and about 30 boats surrounded us and the Israeli government sent soldiers down from helicopters to carry out a violent massacre of civilians.”

### **Nur Choodhury (Emergency Aid Worker - United Kingdom)**

“We were physically abused: kicked, slapped, pinched, and elbowed. Our hands were tied tightly with cables; this was extremely painful and caused us to lose feeling in our hands. For about 10 hours permission were not granted permission to use the toilets. We were not allowed to telephone our families. We were only able to telephone on the plane before returning to Turkey. We were not allowed to sleep during our arrest. Morning and night, at





the top of every hour, they would wake us and carry out a head count.”

**Manuel Tapial (Association of Culture, Peace and Solidarity Haydée Santamaría-SPAIN)**

“They attacked unarmed civilians. They treated the prisoners badly. They treated Muslims and non-Muslims differently. The Muslims were humiliated and denigrated.”

**Dilaver Kutluay (Staff, Turkey)**

“I was on the Defne cargo ship. There was less than one mile between the Mavi Marmara and the Defne. When the military boats approached the Mavi Marmara sounds of explosions could be heard. This was immediately followed by the sound of automatic gunfire.”

**Maryam Luqman Talib (Activist-Australia)**

“My brother Ahmet Luqman was shot twice in the leg and was bleeding heavily. Despite this, without any medical treatment, he was ordered to walk to be taken to the hospital by the Israeli soldiers. My brother passed out three times before reaching the helicopters.”



**Sema İşlek (Nurse, Turkey)**

“At that juncture we were upstairs, in the inner part of the deck. The wounded were brought to the health stations we had established on the lower deck. Those who had died had all been shot in the head. 4 of the dead were downstairs. Despite everything we did we could not save them. Many of the wounded had been hit in the arms or legs. All of them were bleeding heavily. The soldiers took the wounded to the helicopters in a totally inappropriate manner. The psychological oppression and physical torture they subjected us to were very great. First they brought handcuffed people to the deck and the helicopters sprayed water over them, and then they were left to wait under the hot sun for hours. Then the windows were shut and the air conditioning system was turned off and they placed all of us in the lounge. We were searched for hours and many times. They even took the pin that was holding my headscarf in place.”

**Norman Paech (Former MP – Germany)**

“The Israeli soldiers displayed openly racial behavior. They treated us much better than the Turkish and Arab passengers.”





## Conclusion

### Those Who Wage War On Peace Are Doomed To Lose

Humanitarian Aid Flotilla aiming to break the inhumane 4 year-old embargo on Gaza, together with its 6 ships (1 from Free Gaza, 3 from IHH, 1 from Ship to Gaza Sweden and 1 from European Campaign to End The Siege On Gaza) , carrying over 700 activists including MPs, press members, artists, intellectuals, writers, NGO representatives, women and children from 36 countries and humanitarian aid cargo of over 10,000 tons, began sailing off down south to Gaza through international waters on the 30th of May at around 04.30 p.m.

The ships of the flotilla were being watched live online and supported with prayers and hope by millions of people from all around the world. It represented the common conscience of people throughout the world and carried wishes and prayers of people from all religious backgrounds in addition to its cargo of 500 wheelchairs, children's playgrounds, medical supplies for the injured and the sick, other basic humanitarian supplies and construction materials for building new homes to those thousands of people who currently live in tents and in ruins and for building schools for children of Gaza.

Israel exhibited an example of illegal action by stopping the attempts for breaking the embargo in Gaza which is a collective punishment of Palestinians. Around 4.00 am on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, Israeli navy including hundreds of fully geared up soldiers with faces painted camouflage carrying guns in assault boats, battle ships, submarines and military helicopters carried out a terrorist attack towards the ship Mavi Marmara in international waters. All the ships of the flotilla were affected by the attack, however the passengers onboard Mavi Marmara were directly subjected to live fire. They started killing



unarmed civilian humanitarian aid volunteers by directly opening fire on them. Obviously, current Israeli government performed a planned terrorist attack to kill out of nothing but hostility. During this terrorist attack 9 people have lost their lives and around 50 aid activists have been wounded. Firstly, we would like to express our condolences to the families and loved ones of the deceased. They helped build the most valuable and hard-to-achieve outcome needed for lifting the embargo on people of Palestine. Again, as the Freedom Flotilla Coalition we would like to wish well to those who have been wounded during the attacks.

Legal committees consisting of volunteering legal professionals have been formed in a number of countries to help those victims who were killed, wounded, permanently injured, imprisoned, tortured, robbed and assaulted, subjected to all





kinds of human rights violations by this attack on the flotilla. Our coalition is following up on these legal procedures as well.

The attack carried out against the flotilla is an attack on all humanity and peace. As long as the people of Israel and the world public remain silent, they will be supporting the terrorist attack and the inhumane occupation policies of Israeli government, which are completely against the international law. However, since the beginning of the preparations for this flotilla, we have declared that its only aim is to end the embargo on Gaza and deliver humanitarian aid and it has received support of people from all over the world and it is the common voice of the public's conscience and compassion and justified by the humanity's conscience and the international laws. Israeli government has waged war on peace. Those who wage war on peace are doomed to lose. Therefore, soon they may be facing enormous difficulties and a possible embargo. Should they be left in need of humanitarian aid through such an embargo, they should note that all individuals in this organization will be working against that embargo on them as well.

Meanwhile, we all know that Israeli government and international Israeli lobby have been working on a black propaganda campaign against the organizers of this flotilla. However, we would like them to know that it will surely not be possible to defame and blacken the NGOs activities of which have received numerous international awards and extend a helping hand to millions of people all over the world. Yet, no matter how cruel and unfair Israeli actions may get, brave people with good hearts will bring forward the truth clearly.

The embargo on Gaza is a crime against

humanity. Here, we would like to declare our intention to not only change its course but to lift the embargo completely. We will continue to work in full force towards fulfilling this responsibility of ours to the next generations and humanity. On the other hand, we invite every person and institution that witnessed the attack on the Humanitarian Aid Flotilla to look for the answers to the inquiries below before all the official and civil authorities and institutions:

- 1.** Why have Israel violated the international maritime laws in international waters?
- 2.** Why did Israel attack unarmed innocent civilians?
- 3.** How dare Israeli navy attack, with all kinds of deadly weapons and soldiers, a ship that carried a baby and people over 80 years old?
- 4.** Israel does not have the right to carry such an attack even in its own territorial waters, let alone in international waters. How does it explain the capturing, handcuffing, torturing and imprisoning all those people onboard the flotilla?
- 5.** Does Israel see the international waters as attackable locations? How are we going to protect innocent civilians and the world from this aggression and terrorism?
- 6.** The flotilla sent several "STOP!" warnings to the Israeli navy. All humanity sent "STOP!" warnings as they heard of the attack. Yet, Israel did not stop. How will Israel render an account of this massacre and all other violations they carried out?
- 7.** How will all those who are responsible for these crimes against humanity be punished?
- 8.** If other countries in the world also follow the path of Israel, what kind of world it becomes?









**IHH** İNSANİ  
YARDIM VAKFI

THE FOUNDATION FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND  
FREEDOMS AND  
HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

0.212.631 21 21  
[www.ihh.org.tr](http://www.ihh.org.tr)

Büyük Karaman Caddesi Taylasan Sokak. No: 3 Fatih - İstanbul