

Anwar slams Israel's interception of Global Sumud Flotilla bound for Gaza

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Bernama

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has strongly condemned Israel's interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla, which carried unarmed civilians and humanitarian aid bound for Gaza.

"I condemn in the strongest terms Israel's interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla. These vessels carried unarmed civilians and life-saving humanitarian supplies for Gaza, yet they were met with intimidation and coercion," he said in a statement today.

Anwar pointed out that the action reflected Israel's disregard not only for the rights of Palestinians but also for the global conscience.

"By blocking a humanitarian mission, Israel has shown utter contempt not only for the rights of the Palestinian people but also for the conscience of the world.

"The flotilla embodied solidarity, compassion and the hope of relief for those under blockade," he added.

The prime minister stressed that Malaysia would pursue all legitimate and lawful avenues to hold Israel accountable, particularly in matters concerning Malaysians.

“The safety and dignity of our people are paramount, and we will not allow them to be compromised with impunity,” he said.

Reiterating Malaysia’s long-standing support for Palestine, Anwar affirmed that the government would continue pressing for an end to the injustices faced by Palestinians.

“As long as the Palestinian people are denied their fundamental rights and aspirations, Malaysia will stand unflinchingly with them. We will not relent in demanding an end to the injustice and dispossession that have plagued Palestine for generations,” he said.

The Global Sumud Flotilla is part of an international effort to break the blockade of Gaza and deliver humanitarian aid.

Reports said the convoy was intercepted before reaching its destination.

Chronology of events

According to Bernama, the Israeli navy boarded two of the GSF ships - Alma and Sirius - at 9.44pm Gaza time (2.44am Malaysian time) while they were sailing through the high-risk Red Zone R3 in the Mediterranean Sea.

Alma was carrying Malaysian humanitarian delegates Musa Nuwayri, Iylia Balqis Suhaimi, and Sul Aidil, while Sirius had onboard Haikal Abdullah, Muaz Zainal, Zulfadhli Khiduddin, and Rusydi Ramli.

According to Bernama, Sumud Nusantara Command Centre (SNCC) reported that Morgana visually confirmed the Zionist interception of Alma, while Sirius received a mayday signal and visual confirmation from Grande Blue. However, neither boat received an SOS signal.

Earlier, SNCC also reported that communication had been lost with nine Malaysians across four ships in the flotilla.

Apart from those on Alma and Sirius, two other delegates - singer Zizi Kirana aboard Huga and actress Ardell Aryana aboard Mikenno - were also unreachable.

The report said it is believed that the Israeli navy had deployed radar jamming equipment to block communications from the flotilla.

As of 2.45am Malaysian time, SNCC's tracking system indicated the flotilla was

approximately 66.6 nautical miles from Gaza's coastline.

The Red Zone R3 area is the same region where the Israeli navy seized the Handala in international waters on July 27, detaining 21 activists from multiple countries.

This zone also bears historical weight as it was where the Mavi Marmara, which was part of a humanitarian flotilla to Gaza, was violently raided by Israeli forces on May 31, 2010, resulting in multiple fatalities.

MCA calls for release of activists

MCA president Wee Ka Siong said Israel had just violated another international law by blocking the activists, who just wanted to deliver humanitarian aid to Palestinians in Gaza.

He added that not only are Palestinians being brutalised by the Israeli forces, but they are also deprived of food and medicine, leading many to die of starvation.

“MCA will continue to be in solidarity with Malaysians and urge for the immediate release of the activists,” he said in a statement today.

‘State piracy’

Former MP Charles Santiago described Israel's action as nothing short of state piracy.

"It has no jurisdiction there, no legal grounds to detain civilians, and yet it arrogantly hijacks a humanitarian mission, proving once again its utter disregard for international law.

"Seizing aid meant for Gaza's starving population is not security, it is collective punishment and a war crime," he said in a statement today.

Charles then urged the Israeli authorities to release the activists and allow the flotilla safe passage.

"The world cannot look away. Silence is complicity, and every hour of inaction emboldens Israel's criminal blockade of Gaza," he added.

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