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## Dr M: PVC pipes aid to Gaza will help Israel, too

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**SEPANG:** Israel should support the mission to send humanitarian aid of 7.5km PVC pipes to Gaza as it will benefit Israelis as well, said former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Their whole sewerage system has broken down and because of that a lot of dirty effluent goes into the sea. It can carry diseases not only in Gaza but also neighbouring countries," he said.

Dr Mahathir was at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) last night to welcome seven more crew members of the *MV Spirit of Rachel Corrie* (officially *MV Finch*) who had joined the Perdana Global Peace Foundation mission to send the PVC pipes to Gaza.

They were Captain Jalil Mansor, Mohd Jaffrey Ariffin, Zainuddin Mohamad, Matthias Chang, Derek Graham, Jenny Graham and Julie Levasque.

Dr Mahathir considered the mission a success as it had broken into Palestinian waters.

Chang criticised UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon for writing to Mediterranean governments last month urging them to discourage pro-Palestinian activists from sending out a new aid flotilla to Gaza.

"When he went to Gaza to see for himself the destruction caused by Israeli forces, there was a report that it was a war crime and yet he said we must go through legal channels via Israel," he said.

Palestinian National Assembly president Dr Ahmed Bahar, who is currently visiting Malaysia, acknowledged the heroic efforts of the crew.

The aid flotilla was launched on May 11 from the Port of Piraeus, Greece, in a mission to break the illegal siege of Gaza and deliver humanitarian aid.

It reached Palestinian waters on May 16 but was forced to divert to Egyptian waters and anchor off El-Arish Port for 16 days after coming under attack from the Israeli navy.



**The welcome wagon:** Supporters posing with the Gaza aid team after their return from Egypt at KLIA yesterday.