

# Special gathering to celebrate return of Malaysian flotilla activists

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**PETALING JAYA:** Describing them as symbols of courage, a special gathering will be held to celebrate the return of the Malaysian activists involved in the Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) mission.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the gathering was also aimed at strengthening Malaysia's solidarity with the people in Gaza.

Anwar said he had spoken with the activists and asked about their well-being as soon as they arrived in Istanbul, Turkiye, following their release from the Zionist regime's detention.

"They are all in good health and their spirits are still high.

"I expressed my appreciation for their courage, perseverance and sacrifice in fighting for the

fate of the people of Gaza, who continue to be oppressed.

"They are a symbol of Malaysian courage in upholding human values without knowing borders. I look forward to their return soon," he said in a Facebook post.

In Seremban, Malaysians in the GSF mission were required to sign the Request for Immediate Departure form after their detention at Ketziot Prison in Israel to expedite the repatriation process, said Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan.

The Foreign Minister said this was part of the standard operating procedure, and was communicated by the humanitarian mission secretariat to the delegation.

"When they sign the form, they do not have to go through the complex legal process. We are not certain how the legal process in Israel works, but it is very likely that they would have been



**Checking in:** Anwar having a video call with one of the Malaysian activists currently in Istanbul.

detained for a longer period if they had not signed (the form). This step has helped to expedite their release.

"GSF is not a terrorist mission but a peace mission to protest against Israeli atrocities. They did

not carry any weapons on board, so do not misunderstand. Some may argue that we are conceding by signing the form, but we are not," he told reporters after an event, Bernama reported.

Mohamad said signing the

release form also helped to facilitate diplomatic efforts, as Malaysia does not have official relations with Israel and relies on assistance from friendly nations such as Turkiye, Jordan and Egypt.

He said the documentation process and arrangements to bring back all 23 Malaysian activists, who were currently in Istanbul, would be managed by the Prime Minister's Department.

Last Thursday, the Malaysian activists were detained by the Zionist regime after their vessel was intercepted in the R3 Red Zone waters of the Mediterranean Sea, before being taken to the port of Ashdod, Israel.