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PETALING JAYA: All 23 Malaysians who joined the Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza have been detained after Israeli forces intercepted their vessels, sparking sharp condemnation from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and other national leaders.

Anwar denounced the interception as "intimidation and coercion" against a humanitarian mission carrying unarmed civilians and life-saving aid, demanding the immediate release of all detainees.

"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.

"The safety and dignity of our people are paramount and we will not allow them to be compromised with impunity. 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.

He confirmed that Putrajaya is engaging diplomatic channels to secure the release of Malaysians, Asean nationals and other international activists.

"I have received information from our activist and volunteer team after the Zionist regime intercepted the convoy. I urge that all Malaysians and international activists be released immediately. Let us pray together that all detainees, especially Malaysians, remain safe and protected."

Earlier, during a livestream posted on Facebook, Anwar revealed he had reached out to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to press for Washington's intervention, stressing that the detainees had committed no crime.

"Their only 'offence' was to act out of humanitarian concern - to help the weak, the hungry, the sick, including women and children."

Anwar reiterated Malaysia's condemnation of Israel's actions and renewed his call for an end to the ongoing siege of Gaza.

"Once again, I pray that Israel's cruelty will be brought to an end, that our friends will be freed and that humanitarian aid to Palestine can be delivered in its true and rightful form."

The GSF, which set sail with 10 vessels in total, carried international volunteers and basic supplies for Palestinians. Five ships attempted to reach Gaza, with Malaysians aboard one of them.

This is not the first time Israel has intercepted flotillas carrying humanitarian aid, with previous missions also blocked despite involving only unarmed volunteers.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi also condemned Israel's actions, calling them a blatant violation of



M'sians detained as Gaza flotilla halted by Israeli forces

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> Anwar condemns interception of civilian convoy, says actions mock humanity and international law and vows to pursue all diplomatic channels for release of activists

international law and human rights.

"The flotilla carried aid and symbolised global solidarity with Palestinians, but it was met with intimidation and violence. This is tyranny against the people of Gaza and an affront to humanity.

"Malaysia will continue pursuing legal channels to hold Israel accountable, especially to safeguard the lives of our volunteers."

Zahid stressed that the government places the highest priority on Malaysian lives and pledged solidarity with Palestine "until justice and freedom are achieved"

The Foreign Ministry, meanwhile, said it is closely monitoring the

situation and working with the Prime Minister's Office to assist affected Malaysians.

Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Mohamad Alamin said Wisma Putra is gathering information from multiple sources and liaising with relevant parties.

"Wisma Putra will continually monitor this development and obtain as much information as possible. We are also working with the Prime Minister's Office to assist Malaysians involved in the mission."

He assured that the government would do its utmost to support the families of those involved. "We are always monitoring the situation from

time to time. For now, we can only pray for the safety of our citizens."

Mohamad reaffirmed Malaysia's position, stressing the country would not waver in opposing Israel's actions and defending Palestinian rights.

"Malaysia will not cease in making our stand known. We shall remain steadfast and committed. This is not a threat, but a warning that Malaysia will continue to stand with Palestine," he said, adding that NGOs must provide regular updates on their activities and remain vigilant in high-risk zones.

Israel's Foreign Ministry confirmed yesterday that pro-Palestinian activists from the GSF, including Malaysians, will be deported to Europe after their

vessels were intercepted by the Israeli navy.

"All Hamas-Sumud passengers on their yachts have arrived safely in Israel, where deportation procedures to Europe will begin. The passengers are safe and in good health," the ministry said on X.

Meanwhile, Sumud Nusantara Command Centre director-general Datuk Dr Sani Araby Abdul Alim said those detained are believed to be safe and are being held on board their respective vessels.

He said radio communications confirmed that the Israeli military had ordered the ships to divert from Gaza to an undisclosed location.