BREAKING NEWS: Israel Attacks Humanitarian Ship to Gaza in International Waters

By Prof Michel Chossudovsky
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Montreal, 12.30 AM EST,

SEE UPDATED ARTICLE, May 16, 12.50pm

NOTE: Our earlier report (filed at 12.30am) following initial communication with the ship shortly after midnight (March 16) pointed to cooperation between the Israeli navy and their Egyptian counterparts. The initial report pertaining to the role of the Egyptian navy was incorrect. While there was "cooperation", it should be emphasised that the Egyptian navy played a supportive role, which served to appeasing the Israeli attacks as well as escorting the Spirit of Rachel Corrie into Egyptian territorial waters.

Global Research has been in contact with the Spirit of Rachel Corrie, a Malaysian ship carrying a humanitarian aid cargo to Gaza, which has been attacked in international waters by Israel.

The vessel left the Port of Piraeus, Greece on Wednesday, May 11 carrying 7.5 kilometers of UPVC (plastic) sewage pipes to help restore the devastated sewerage system in Gaza. The humanitarian initiative is sponsored by Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF) and participating in this mission includes anti-war activists and journalists, consisting of 7 Malaysians, 2 Irish, 2 Indians and 1 Canadian.

The Spirit of Rachel Corrie is an initiative of The Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF) chaired by Malaysia's former Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed. The Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG) (Global Research) is also participating in this mission.

> At 10.54 pm Eastern Time (EDT), the Spirit of Rachel Corrie was intercepted by an Israeli ship and a Egyptian ship in international waters.
>
> 10:54pm EDT, Gaza 5:54am: We have been intercepted by Israeli ship and Egyptian ship. We are disobeying the orders and sailing ahead to Gaza.
>
> 10:57pm EDT, Gaza 5:57am: One Israeli warship coming to us very fast! We are in international waters, therefore they have no right to attack us. We are still sailing ahead.
>
> 10:59pm EDT, Gaza 5:59am: They are opening fire across our ship! We are still sailing ahead.
>
> 11:09pm EDT, Gaza 6:09am: They are shooting all over the place. We can't continue …

> 11:35pm EDT, Gaza 6:35am: They circled our ship twice and fired across our ship. Machine guns. No one was injured. One of the fishing nets caught the propeller, so we can't move now.
>
> 11:37pm EDT, Gaza 6:37am: The Israeli ship was coming from one end and the Egyptian ship was coming from another end. Firing. We are just stalled now. Everybody is okay. No one is injured.

In a subsequent communication from the boat, it would appear that Israel sought the collaboration of Egypt and the humanitarian vessel was escorted into Egyptian territorial waters. A subsequent report from the ship confirmed that the Egyptian vessel acted in support of the Mission.

We will be informing our readers as events unfold.

UPDATE

AFP REPORT

The first press reports state that

"Israeli naval forces fired warning shots at a Malaysian ship carrying aid to Gaza as it approached the shore, forcing it to withdraw to Egyptian waters, the vessel's Malaysian organiser told AFP."

"The MV Finch, carrying sewage pipes to Gaza, had warning shots fired at it by Israeli forces in the Palestinian security zone this morning at 0654 Jordan time (0354 GMT)," said Shamsul Azhar from the Perdana Global Peace Foundation.

Israeli naval forces fired warning shots at a Malaysian ship carrying aid to Gaza as it approached the shore, forcing it to withdraw to Egyptian waters, the vessel's Malaysian organiser told AFP.

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"Currently the ship has been forced to anchor in Egyptian waters, 30 nautical miles from Gaza," he told AFP." [emphasis added]

Global Research is in contact with the Ship and will be providing updates in the next few hours.

SEE UPDATED ARTICLE, May 16, 12.50pm

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