

Dead: 19. Injured: 60. This is Israel. Appeal of the BRussells Tribunal.

Israel's killing of 19 innocents with 60 more injured must have maximal consequences. Israel impunity is a threat to all

By [BRussells Tribunal](#)

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Even for eyes burnt witnessing human suffering, there is something shocking, something impossible, about watching Israeli soldiers, armed and in gas masks, fast-roping from helicopters onto an aid ship filled with civilians — journalists, parliamentarians, human rights activists, mothers, doctors — headed to Gaza to break the inhuman siege that keeps 1.5 million people somewhere between life and death.

The Mavi Marmara, carrying 10,000 tons of humanitarian aid, was flying a white flag: a universal symbol of non-violence. It was also flying the Turkish flag, in international waters, giving it status as a sovereign extension of Turkey. Regardless, Israel attacked. For what does Israel fight? Its existence, or the continuance of a regime of collective punishment calculated to destroy the Palestinians? Or are these the same thing? Dead: 19. Injured: 60. Who gave the order? Will NATO react to an attack on one of its members?

Simple public murder

The right to exist cannot be asserted through murder. The very acceptance of Israel into the United Nations System was — in 1948 — conditioned on the former recognising the equal rights of Arabs, in particular the right of return of Palestinians. Not only has Israel prevented the return of refugees, it took over by force and occupied in 1967 the rest of historic Palestine. From founding until now we have witnessed an unending catalogue of Israeli atrocities. By these countless atrocities, Israel has forfeited any claim to legality — it is moreover a state that refuses to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or consider giving up its nuclear weapons.

Gaza is both the world's largest open-air prison and the 21st century's undeclared concentration camp. Everybody knows it. The UN knows it. The US president knows it. Tens of thousands of civil servants in countries across the world know it. The siege is a way of sealing the exits, and of slow killing. It is an atrocity on the same level as genocide. Here every man and woman has a moral duty: inaction is complicity and a betrayal of humanity. All legal rights are with those who attempt to end this situation by whatever means.

The Freedom Flotilla is such an attempt: it is a refusal of inhuman suffering. Its symbolism is more powerful than any navy. As such, it remains what it was as it embarked on its journey: a signal of the collapse of the blockade. Where earlier lone vessels tried to reach Gaza, now

they go in groups. More will follow. When a thousand ships set sail, what would Israel do?

Israel on trial

Israel lost the battle for international public opinion a long time ago. None can forget the relentless strafing of a captive civilian population in Israel's last war on Gaza. Who can Israel hope to persuade now?

—We condemn the illegal, immoral and inhuman blockade on Gaza, and all who uphold it

—We condemn Israel

—We condemn Israel's brutal attack on peace activists in international waters. We declare that 700 brave souls, from 50 nations, represent something real that Israeli propaganda cannot erase

—We mourn the 19 murdered and express hope and solidarity with the 60 injured. We demand of Israel the release of all activists detained

—We call on all international institutions — including the UN, the EU and human rights agencies and organisations — to declare themselves unequivocally on this latest Israeli atrocity and to work towards ending Israeli impunity

—We demand an international tribunal to judge all Israeli crimes, past and present. We call on the UN General Assembly to request of the International Court of Justice an advisory opinion on the legality of Israel within the United Nations System given its systematic and gross disrespect of international law and moral authority

—We support all efforts by all means to free the people of Gaza from their prison and their suffering, including sanctions and divestment against Israel, a general boycott, and the boycott — by workers federations — of all ships going to and from Israel

—We call upon people everywhere to express their solidarity with the dead and injured, and with Palestinians under occupation, in local expressions of outrage wherever it is deemed useful.

We call on all associations, unions, parliaments, professionals and others to endorse this appeal and its demands. Please distribute and act upon it.

The BRussells Tribunal Committee

<http://brusselstribunal.org>

Please circulate this appeal widely and show your solidarity with the people of Gaza and the victims of Israeli killings by signing this appeal at

<http://www.petitiononline.com/GazaSol/petition.html>

For information contact: info@brusselstribunal.org

URL for this webpage: <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/gaza310510.htm>

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