

Members of Swedish Parliament Demand Security for Ship to Gaza

By [Free Gaza Movement](#)

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Gaza — Helén Pettersson, Social Democratic member of the Swedish Parliament, submitted a written inquiry to Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, asking what measures the government intends to take in order to protect Ship to Gaza's peaceful, lawful, humanitarian initiative. The reason for the inquiry is that Ship to Gaza and the Freedom Flotilla—the coalition in which the Swedish initiative will be included— has been threatened with military resistance from Israeli authorities and private individuals.

The following is Petterson's inquiry in its entirety:

"One and a half million Palestinians are living in isolation on the Gaza Strip, in pure misery. There is a shortage of food, medicine and other necessities, such as building materials to repair homes, schools and other buildings which were destroyed by the bombings during the war around Christmas in 2008. In order to address the situation, Ship to Gaza is planning to take the sea route to Gaza, bringing medicine, desalination plants, cement, etc. in order to help the people in need. Ship to Gaza is a politically and religiously independent, non-profit organization that is working to promote increased respect for human rights and general international law. Israel's government has now threatened to stop Ship to Gaza and to use force if necessary. Does the Foreign Minister intend to protect this humanitarian initiative?"

As early as last week, Mehmet Kaplan of the Green Party of Sweden requested a meeting with the Foreign Minister, along with Ship to Gaza spokespersons Dror Feiler and Mattias Gardell, in order to discuss which security measures the Swedish government plans to take. Foreign Minister Carl Bildt has still not responded to any of the questions. As the convoy is setting sail this weekend, Ship to Gaza-Sweden wishes to emphasize how important a response from the government is regarding this matter. Especially since the Israeli media is reporting that the Swedish Ambassador to Israel has informed the Israeli government that she and the Swedish government intend to discourage Swedish citizens from participating in the Freedom Flotilla's peaceful, lawful, humanitarian convoy. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and several other human rights organizations have all condemned the blockade. Furthermore, the director of U.N. relief operations in Gaza, John Ging, welcomes initiatives such as Ship to Gaza, in order to break the blockade.

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