

Nakba and the Spirit of Rachel Corrie: Humanitarian Ship Attacked by Israel now within 1.5 nautical miles of Gazan Waters

By [Global Research](#)

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The Spirit of Rachel Corrie Mission, involving a Malaysian owned ship carrying aid for Palestine, has been intercepted and attacked by the Israeli naval forces in the Palestinian security zone this morning at 6.54 am local time. The ship's 12 crew and passengers are safe. Currently the ship has been forced to anchor in Egyptian waters at one and a half nautical miles from the Gazan waters.

This latest event occurred in the wake of yesterday's sad commemoration of the 'Nakba' in which many lost their lives. 'Nakba' the Arabic word for catastrophe means "the expulsion and dispossession of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes and land in 1948."

The humanitarian initiative is sponsored by Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF) and participating in this mission includes anti-war activists and journalists from the Asian, American and European continents.

The cargo ship The Spirit of Rachel Corrie (officially known as FINCH) is carrying 7.5 kilometers of UPVC (plastic) sewage pipes to help restore the devastated sewerage system in Gaza. The ship was named after the courageous American activist who was crushed and killed by an Israeli bulldozer in 2003 while trying to prevent the demolition of another Palestinian home. She died at 23.

The Spirit of Rachel Corrie Mission is part of the Perdana Global Peace Foundation's (PGPF) "Break the Siege on Gaza" campaign. The purpose of this campaign is to highlight the effects of the illegally imposed Israeli siege and raise awareness of the human rights violations of the people of Gaza. Breaking the siege and ending the illegal collective punishment of 1.5 million people must be a priority for the international community.

On 27 December 2008, the Israeli military launched Operation Cast Lead, which not only

killed some 1400 Palestinians, but also destroyed vital infrastructure leaving the Gazans with critical water and sewage problems. Repair of the infrastructure has proved impossible as Israel has prevented the entry of construction materials and fuel to resolve this dire situation.

According to a report from the Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene group (EWASH), “the release of 80 million litres of untreated or partially treated sewage into the environment and Mediterranean Sea each day is primarily a result of the Israeli imposed blockade on the Gaza Strip.”

Gaza, one of the world’s most densely populated areas, is currently dealing with serious health issues such as the blue baby syndrome, diarrhea and other waterborne diseases like typhoid and hepatitis A. The World Health Organization is warning of a possible cholera epidemic if nothing is done rapidly to resolve this sanitation crisis.

According to Physicians for Human Rights-Israel: “Between 90% and 95% of the aquifers in the Gaza Strip are not safe for drinking.” The primary cause of the current problem originates from the destruction, during Operation Cast Lead, of “20 kilometers of water pipes, 7.5 kilometers of sewage pipes and 5,700 mobile water tanks.”

While the Gazans are experiencing the dramatic environmental impacts of the sewage and water crisis, the effects have already reached the Israeli shores, and could spread further affecting neighbouring countries. This severe health and environmental issue needs to be dealt with urgently. The international community must demand that the illegal Israeli blockade be lifted.

The Spirit of Rachel Corrie Mission stemmed from PGPF’s participation in the Freedom Flotilla in 2010, in which 9 activists were killed by Israeli commandos. Following a fact finding mission conducted in Gaza in October 2010, PGPF decided to continue its efforts to assist Palestinians and shows this project as the most immediate of all priorities.

About PGPF

The Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF), formerly Perdana Global Peace Organisation (PGPO), is a first but resolute step in the arduous journey towards global peace, moves towards the single goal of putting an end to war. Its founder, YABhg Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, envisages “a serious, active and sustained struggle against war and for peace”. Sharing and supporting this agenda are world-prominent professionals, intellectuals, authors, statesmen – all passionate advocates of international peace. Together, they have signed the KUALA LUMPUR INITIATIVE to define the initiative to criminalise war.

“The Palestinian struggle is nothing more than a struggle for justice, to which they, as much as everyone else, have a right.” Tun Dr. Mahatir Mohamad, President of PGPF.

Tan Sri Norian Mai – PGPF Chairman

T(O) +603 2092 7248

Tan Sri Dr Samsudin Hitam – PGPF (Jordan)

HP +6 012 528 3414

Tan Sri Abdul Halil Abdul Mutalif – PGPF (Malaysia)

T(O) +603 2092 7248

Dr Zulaiha Ismail – PGPF (Malaysia)

T(O) +603 2092 7248

Alan Lonergan – Representative (European Media)

HP +962 795 412 169

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