



The Global Sumud (“Perseverance”) Flotilla to the Gaza Strip – Update (September 25, 2025)

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Overview

- ▶ The Global Sumud Flotilla, which was launched at the end of August 2025, continues its progress in the Mediterranean Sea with about 50 vessels and hundreds of activists with the aim of “breaking the siege on the Gaza Strip.”
- ▶ The flotilla participants claimed that they had been subjected to a series of drone attacks and various attempts to disrupt the proper course of the voyage and prevent the vessels from reaching the Gaza Strip. As a result, Spain and Italy announced the dispatch of military ships to accompany the flotilla and assist in evacuation operations if necessary.
- ▶ Israel has made it clear that it will prevent the flotilla from entering the Gaza Strip due to the ongoing fighting. However, it has not claimed responsibility for the alleged attacks against the vessels. The Israeli proposal that the vessels dock in Ashkelon and that humanitarian aid be transferred to the Gaza Strip was rejected by the flotilla organizers.
- ▶ **The organizers’ refusal to heed calls to halt the voyage to the Gaza Strip, together with the military escort provided to the flotilla’s vessels and Israel’s determination to prevent the ships from reaching their destination, are creating a complex situation that could lead to violent clashes in the coming days. In the ITIC’s assessment, this development could play into the hands of the flotilla organizers and the Hamas movement, who view the flotilla as a propaganda tool intended to undermine Israel’s standing on the international stage.**

Detailed Information

- ▶ The Global Sumud (“Perseverance”) Flotilla began in Barcelona on August 31, 2025, with the aim of “breaking the blockade on the Gaza Strip.” Later, additional vessels departing from ports in Italy, Tunisia and Greece joined in, making the flotilla the largest since the beginning of Israel’s naval blockade of the Gaza Strip in 2007.¹ As of September 25, 2025, the flotilla numbered 52 vessels, most of them in the Crete region and preparing to set sail for

¹ For further details, see the ITIC’s study from September 4, 2025, “[The Global Sumud \(“Perseverance”\) Flotilla in the Service of Hamas](#)”

international waters in the Mediterranean Sea on their way to the Gaza Strip (Flotilla website, September 25, 2025).



The Flotilla's route (Flotilla website, September 25, 2025)

►As the flotilla progressed, the organizers claimed that they were under attack by drones and other means, pointing the finger at Israel. The following are prominent events (Flotilla Telegram channel, September 9-25, 2025):

- ◆ On September 9, 2025, it was claimed that the “Family” ship, the flotilla’s leading vessel carrying the members of the steering committee, was hit by an unidentified drone while anchored at the port of Sidi Bou Said in Tunisia; there were no casualties. A few hours later, flotilla organizers said that the *Alma* was also attacked by a drone while moored in Tunisian waters and that the upper deck sustained damage. Tunisian authorities initially denied that a drone attack had occurred after the first incident, but later said there had been a “deliberate attack” and opened an investigation (Reuters, September 9-10, 2025).



Alleged attack on the “Family” ship in Tunisia (Flotilla Instagram account, September 9, 2025)

- ◆ On September 23, 2025, it was claimed that more than 15 drones circled over the ship *Alma* at low altitude. The activists claimed that the drones were intended to harass them and “collect intelligence for Israel.”

◆ On the night of September 23-24, 2025, it was claimed that drones “attacked” dozens of “civilian” vessels taking part in the flotilla, with the attacks including explosive devices and arson, the distribution of “chemical components,” the neutralization of emergency communications devices, and the use of “calculated physical weapons” with the aim of rendering the vessels unfit while “endangering” the volunteers on board.



“Explosion” near one of the vessels (Flotilla Telegram channel, September 24, 2025)

► The organizers and their supporters, some of them Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood operatives, made it clear that the flotilla would continue on its way to the Gaza Strip and called on the international community to act to prevent Israel from disrupting the vessels’ progress:

◆ In an official statement by the flotilla organizers, they accused Israel of running a campaign “to defame, smear and incriminate” the flotilla “in a false attempt to portray the citizen-led humanitarian mission as a security threat” (Flotilla Telegram channel, September 22, 2025). It was further stated that the “psychological operations” by Israel and its allies will not deter the flotilla participants and that they are determined to continue the mission “to deliver aid to the Gaza Strip and break the illegal siege” (Flotilla Telegram channel, September 24, 2025). The organizers also claimed that “government sources in the European Union” assessed that Israel’s “threats” would intensify as the vessels advanced into international waters (Flotilla Instagram account, September 25, 2025).

◆ The International Committee to Break the Siege on Gaza, headed by Zaher Khaled Hassan Birawi (Abu Khaled), a prominent Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood activist in Britain, said that in light of the attacks, the flotilla had declared a state of “high alert” and that it was expected to continue on its way, despite clear attempts to deter the participants from continuing on their way. The committee also called on UN institutions

and countries whose citizens take part in the flotilla to protect the vessels by military naval escorts and diplomatic means (safircom.com, September 24, 2025).

◆ Marwan bin Qattaya, a member of the Movement of Society for Peace, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Algeria and one of the organizers of the “Sumud Convoy” that attempted to reach the Gaza Strip in June 2025, strongly condemned the drone attacks against the vessel. He accused the international community of encouraging Israel to continue its measures to block the flotilla by failing to respond to its actions (Algerian Baraka News website, September 24, 2025).

◆ Hamas called on the international community to take immediate steps to protect the flotilla and to prosecute the IDF and its commanders for the actions against the flotilla (Quds News Agency, September 24, 2025).

► Following the series of incidents, the organizers of the flotilla reported that several foreign governments had warned their citizens taking part in the flotilla of the possibility that they might be harmed by the IDF’s actions to stop the vessels (*Al-Araby Al-Jadeed*, September 25, 2025). Also, several countries decided to send military ships to accompany the flotilla:

◆ Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez instructed the navy to dispatch the patrol ship *Furor* to assist in rescue operations for the flotilla participants, if necessary (*Infodefensa*, September 24, 2025).

◆ Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto condemned the drone attacks, making clear that they exceeded the bounds of international law. He ordered the deployment of the multi-purpose frigate *Fasan* to protect the flotilla participants and provide them with assistance if necessary (ANSA, September 24, 2025). Later, he reported that the frigate *Alpino* had also been sent to escort the flotilla. However, he questioned how far the flotilla would go and asked why Italian citizens were putting themselves at risk to deliver aid to the Gaza Strip after the government itself had already provided aid to the residents of the Strip (ANSA, September 25, 2025).

◆ Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni also condemned the anti-vessel activity. However, she added that the flotilla was “dangerous and irresponsible” and accused the Italian opposition of using it only to attack her government, claiming it was not doing enough to help Gazans. She called on the flotilla participants to refrain from endangering themselves by entering an active combat zone (ANSA, September 24, 2025).

- Israel has not claimed official responsibility for the attacks against the flotilla. However, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs made it clear that Israel would take all necessary measures to prevent the vessel from entering the area where active fighting was taking place and breaking the naval blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip in accordance with international law (Israeli Foreign Ministry X account, September 23, 2025).
- Israel also offered the flotilla organizers to dock in Ashkelon and transfer their humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip by land (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs X account, September 23, 2025). However, the flotilla organizers rejected “the Israeli demand to dock at the port of Ashkelon” and accused it of trying to prevent the aid from reaching the residents of the Gaza Strip in “blatant violation” of international law (Flotilla Telegram channel, September 23, 2025).
- In addition, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs published photographs of prominent flotilla organizers alongside Yousef Hamdan, who is in charge of Hamas’ activities in North Africa (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs X account, September 23, 2025). The Israeli Ministry of Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism also published a dedicated study presenting ties between flotilla activists and Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood (Ministry of Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism website, September 10, 2025).



**Flotilla operatives with a senior Hamas figure in North Africa
(Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs X account, September 23, 2025)**