

Israel used excessive and unreasonable force: Palmer report

By [Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East](#)

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

For Immediate Release

Toronto, September 7, 2011 — On September 2, 2011, after many months delay, the UN released the “Palmer Report” into Israel’s 2010 attack on the Gaza Flotilla that left nine Turkish civilians dead and dozens injured. The report blasts Israel for use of excessive and unreasonable force in its attack, made without warning and under cover of darkness on the ships of the flotilla. The report condemns the killing of unarmed civilians who were shot repeatedly from close range, even, in one instance, where the person “may have already been lying wounded.” The report states: “No satisfactory explanation had been provided to the panel by Israel for any of the ... deaths.”

Once the ships of the flotilla were taken over, they and the hundreds of passengers on board were forcibly taken to Israel. During that voyage, the Palmer report found that the passengers were treated very badly, being beaten, confined in overly tight handcuffs, denied access to medication, humiliated, exposed to the elements, given only limited access to food and water, robbed of most of their possessions and denied access to their consular officials.

Canadian for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) welcomes this confirmation of the testimony of hundreds of eyewitnesses, but takes issue with the finding that the “naval blockade” of Gaza is legal. This finding contradicts that of the 2010 report of the UN Human Rights Council (2010 HRC Inquiry) which asserted that the true intent of the Israeli blockade is to punish Gazans for their support of Hamas and that it amounts to “collective punishment in violation of Israel’s obligations under international law.” “It is important to point out that the Palmer Report did not have a mandate to review the legality of the *land* blockade of Gaza by Israel,” pointed out CJPME director, Thomas Woodley. Under international law, blockades are permitted as a military tactic, but must respect international humanitarian law, providing for the free flow of civilian goods to civilians held behind the blockade.

Unlike the 2010 HRC Inquiry, the Palmer Inquiry interviewed no witnesses and had no experts to assist in the inquiry. The Report admits that it was intended to help find ways for Israel and Turkey to repair their relations, rather than to determine right and wrong based on international law. CJPME has issued a factsheet — “The Palmer Report on the Gaza Aid Flotilla Incident” — which provides a summary of Palmer’s findings.

[Palmer report](#)

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