

Israeli Gunboats on Way to Hijack Gaza-Bound Women's Boat

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A few hours before the Zaytouna boat reaches Gaza shores, a cry for help has been launched by onboard activists to guarantee their safe arrival to the coastal territory.

With Israeli threats materializing on the ground, the International Committee to Break the Siege on Gaza appealed for guaranteeing women onboard al-Zaytouna a safe arrival to Gaza shores without being hijacked by Israel.

A fleet of Israeli gunboats has, meanwhile, set sail from the Ashdod Harbor in an attempt to intercept the Zaytouna solidarity boat.

The American activists onboard the ship appealed to the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv to deter Israel from attacking the boat. However, they were told by the embassy that the occupation navy has received instructions to commandeer the boat right as it approaches Gaza shores and to tow it to the Ashdod Seaport. In case of any defiance, activists will be arrested.

Israeli gunboats docked in Ashdod navigated to international waters so as to force Zaytouna to backtrack.

The international anti-siege committee dubbed Israel's projected takeover of the boat an infringement of international laws and parliamentary immunity and also a crime against peaceful activists that do not pose any threat to Israel.

The committee's chairman Zaher Birawi called on activists around the world to launch a solidarity campaign via social media in the event of an Israeli assault.

A similar Gaza-bound aid flotilla ended in tragedy in 2010 when the Turkish "Mavi Marmara" aid ship was raided by Israeli commandos, who killed 10 Turkish activists.

Since 2007, the Gaza Strip has groaned under a crippling Israeli/Egyptian blockade that has deprived its almost two million inhabitants of most basic commodities, including food, fuel, medicine and desperately-needed building materials.

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