

Malaysia aid ship makes another attempt for Gaza

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, May 23, 2011

Reuters 23 May 2011

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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KUALA LUMPUR - A Malaysian aid ship that was warned off by Israeli naval forces from the Gaza Strip was attempting another landing Monday after being stranded in Egyptian waters for seven days, activists said.

Matthias Chang, who is heading the mission for the Perdana Global Peace Foundation, told AFP by phone from the MV Finch that since being forced into Egyptian waters last Monday, they were prevented from docking at El-Arish.

"We have pulled our anchor and are now en route to Gaza. We had given the Egyptian authorities an ultimatum to let us dock by 2:00pm (1200 GMT) or we would set sail for Gaza but they did not respond," he said.

"We are now on the way to Gaza, and will face whatever the consequences," he said.

"We are almost out of food and water and have been stuck on this ship since last Monday, we have no choice," Chang added.

Chang said that their shipping agent had been making calls to urge them to stop but that the vessel would continue regardless. Perdana Foundation officials declined further comment.

Malaysia's foreign minister Anifah Aman said in a statement that he had spoken to his Egyptian counterpart on Saturday to "expedite the issuance of the necessary approval from the Egyptian Authorities for the vessel to dock at the port" and that the minister had "agreed to assist in the matter".

Perdana Foundation officials said the MV Finch left Greece on May 11, carrying plastic pipes to help restore the sewage system in Gaza.

However, Israeli naval forces fired warning shots at the vessel when it was in Israeli waters, about 400 metres (yards) from Gaza, and forced the ship into Egyptian waters.

The Perdana Foundation is headed by former Malaysian premier Mahathir Mohamad, an 85-year-old firebrand who was a strident critic of the West and Israel over the treatment of Palestinians during his two decades in power.

The organisation was also involved in the first "Freedom Flotilla," a May 2010 attempt to break the Israeli blockade on Gaza, which ended in disaster when naval commandos raided the aid ships, killing nine Turks on board one of the vessels.

The incident sparked heavy criticism of Israel and led to a sharp deterioration in ties

between Turkey and the Jewish state.

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