

UN Security Council Only Calls for Investigation of Attack

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United Nations, June 1 (RHC)- The United Nations Security Council has condemned actions that “led” to the deaths, but not the actual killing of civilians. In a statement approved after nearly 12 hours of deliberation, the Council merely demanded the release of the ships and the civilians held by Israel and called for an impartial investigation.

All permanent member states of the Security Council except for the United States explicitly called for Israel’s three-year blockade of the Gaza Strip to be lifted.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon expressed shock at the deadly military interception on boats loaded with relief supplies headed for Gaza, calling on Israel to fully explain its actions. In Kampala, Uganda, where he presided over the first review conference of the International Criminal Court, Ban Ki-moon said it is important that there is a full investigation into the incident.

Also speaking out against the Israeli action was UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, who emphasized that “nothing can justify the appalling outcome of this operation.” Calling for a probe into the incident, she underscored the need for accountability.

For his part, Richard Falk, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, said that “Israel is guilty of shocking behavior by using deadly weapons against unarmed civilians on ships that were situated in the high seas where freedom of navigation exists, according to the law of the seas.”

Richard Falk characterized the Israeli blockade of Gaza as a “massive form of collective punishment” that is tantamount to a crime against humanity.

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