

**PRESS
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**UNITED STAFF FOR GAZA URGES PROTECTION FOR CIVILIANS ABOARD THE
GLOBAL SUMUD FLOTILLA**

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As the [Global Sumud Flotilla](#) prepares to depart on 12 April from Barcelona, Spain, towards the Gaza Strip, United Staff for Gaza notes with appreciation its [stated aim](#) to “challenge the decades-long blockade imposed on Gaza and the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe facing Palestinians.” The Flotilla reportedly involves over 70 vessels with more than 1,000 participants, carrying humanitarian supplies, including food, baby formula, and medicine. The participants are said to stem from some 70 countries, comprising people such as teachers and medical workers.

United Staff for Gaza reiterates its alarm at the severe restrictions that Israel imposes on **humanitarian access** into Gaza, in violation of international law, and in contravention of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, Security Council Resolutions 2803 and 2720, and multiple resolutions of the General Assembly and Human Rights Council. Israeli authorities continuously obstruct the entry of food, fuel, medical supplies, and other basic needs, as [reported](#) on a near-daily basis by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

We note that, as the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General [said](#) during the Global Sumud Flotilla's previous sailing, “There is a level of advocacy that is needed and welcome regarding the humanitarian situation in Gaza.” The Deputy Spokesperson moreover [said](#): “**We want all efforts to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza to be supported.**” We recall that, during the previous sailing, the Flotilla’s ships were reportedly **attacked and harassed** while in international waters, which the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [decried](#). We further recall with concern that the Israeli navy intercepted the ships, that civilians aboard were detained, and that many were reportedly **mistreated**, which the Secretary-General’s Spokesperson [called](#) “disturbing.”

United Staff for Gaza underlines that participants aboard the Flotilla are civilians and must be afforded the full protection to which they are entitled under international law.

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