# Freedom Flotilla targeted by drone strikes in international waters en route to Gaza



A diverse coalition comprising 35 individuals from 21 countries, including notable figures such as climate activist Greta Thunberg, was set to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza when their vessel was struck by drone fire on Friday morning. The incident occurred while the ship was in international waters, leading the Freedom Flotilla Coalition to accuse Israel of the attack. The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) did not provide a comment regarding the incident.

Dr Yvonne Ridley, a member of this group and a longstanding advocate for humanitarian efforts, spoke to The Herald about the attack. "I think our intentions were very honourable and noble but obviously not everybody wanted to see this happen," she stated, reflecting on the two drone strikes that disabled their ship. She emphasised the potentially dire consequences had the strikes occurred just hours later, expressing relief that the crew, including Turkish members and an Azerbaijani captain, were unharmed. Ridley noted visible evidence of the strikes, observing, “You can see clearly where the missiles have entered the front of the ship…We were deliberately targeted.”

Since Israel's resumption of hostilities, humanitarian aid to Gaza has been severely restricted. The United Nations’ Emergency Relief Coordinator described the blockade as "cruel collective punishment." South Africa has lodged a case at the International Court of Justice, alleging that Israel has utilised starvation as a weapon of war, further accusing the nation of genocide through a campaign of depopulation and forced displacement of Palestinians.

Dr Ridley highlighted the grave humanitarian crisis unfolding in Gaza, stating, “Children are starving…Malnutrition is going to kill an entire generation of children if we do not act fast.” She asserted that the international community’s apparent inaction towards the situation is fostering perceptions of complicity. “The majority of the global south is looking at the west and thinking how evil we are that we’re allowing this to happen,” she said, declaring that the treatment of Palestinians amounted to genocide.

The incident has drawn parallels to the 2010 Gaza flotilla raid, where Israeli forces confronted activists on the MV Mavi Marmara, resulting in the deaths of nine individuals. Following the raid, a UN report determined that at least six of the passengers were killed in a manner consistent with extrajudicial execution.

Despite the significant risks, Ridley affirmed the coalition's resolve, stating, “This will not stop us – far from it, it’s given a lot of people more determination than ever to face Israel down.” She continued, asserting the group's commitment to their mission: “The activists are not going to be deterred – we’re going to dust ourselves down, pick ourselves up and do it again.” Such statements illustrate the ongoing tension and contentious nature of humanitarian efforts in the region amid escalating violence and systemic challenges.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/ship-carrying-activists-aid-gaza-attacked-by-drones-ngo-says-2025-05-02/> - This article reports on the Freedom Flotilla Coalition's claim that their humanitarian aid ship was struck by drones in international waters near Malta, accusing Israel of orchestrating the attack.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/may/31/israel-accused-state-terrorism-assault-flotilla-gaza> - This article discusses the 2010 Gaza flotilla raid, where Israeli forces confronted activists on the MV Mavi Marmara, resulting in the deaths of nine individuals.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/may/31/israeli-attacks-gaza-flotilla-activists> - This article provides details on the Israeli assault on the Gaza flotilla, highlighting the use of force against activists delivering aid to Gaza.
* <https://news.un.org/en/story/2010/09/352342> - This UN report concludes that Israeli forces violated human rights and international humanitarian law during the 2010 Gaza flotilla incident.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29939003> - This article provides a Q&A on the 2010 Israeli raid on the Gaza aid flotilla, detailing the events and international reactions.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/10203726> - This article explains why Israel stopped the Gaza flotilla in 2010, including the blockade and the international response.
* <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25134422.scots-based-gaza-flotilla-member-speaks-drone-strike/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data