



United States Department of State

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

Case Number: 201004163 SESCO1, ER1, ER2

Ms. Katherine Gallagher  
Center for Constitutional rights  
666 Broadway, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10012

AUG 25 2011

Dear Ms. Gallagher:

In response to your request dated June 30, 2010 under the Freedom of Information Act (Title 5 USC Section 552), we have initiated searches of the following Department of State record systems: the Central Foreign Policy Records (the principal record system of the Department of State), the records of the Executive Secretariat, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of Consular Affairs Overseas Citizens Services, and the Tel Aviv American Embassy.

The initial search of the Central Foreign Policy Records and records of the Executive Secretariat has been completed which resulted in the retrieval of 17 documents responsive to your request. After reviewing these documents, we have determined that three may be released in full, five may be released with excisions, and two must be withheld in full.

A decision on the remaining seven documents requires interagency coordination. Five originated in other government offices which will review those documents and respond to you directly. The other two have been referred to another government office for further review to assist us in making a final determination.

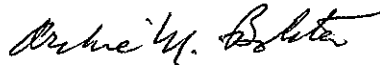
An enclosure provides information on Freedom of Information Act exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made excisions, the applicable exemptions are marked on each document. Of the documents withheld in full, one was withheld under exemption (b)(1) and one was withheld under both exemption (b)(1) and (b)(6).

In some cases, two or more exemptions may apply to the same document. In the case of a document released in part, all non-exempt material that is reasonably segregable from the exempt material has been released.

With respect to material withheld by the Department of State, you have the right to appeal our determination within 60 days. A copy of the appeals procedures is enclosed.

We will keep you informed as your case progresses. If you have any questions, you may write to the Office of Information Programs and Services, SA-2, Department of State, Washington, DC 20522-8100, or telephone us at (202) 261-8484. Please be sure to refer to the case number shown above in all correspondence about this case.

Sincerely,



*for*

Alex Galovich  
Co-Director, Acting  
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures:  
As stated.

ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	MFA-00	ACQ-00	WHA-00	VCI-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	L-00	ARMY-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	VCIE-00	NEA-00
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	PRS-00	MA-00	P-00	ISNE-00	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00
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P 140950Z APR 10  
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 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2711  
 INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
 EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
 AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY  
 SECNAV WASHDC PRIORITY  
 NSACSS FT GEORGE G MEADE MD PRIORITY  
 CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
 AFOSI 52 FIS ANKARA TU PRIORITY  
 CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
 DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
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 JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY  
 NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
 SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D), B6

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 000565

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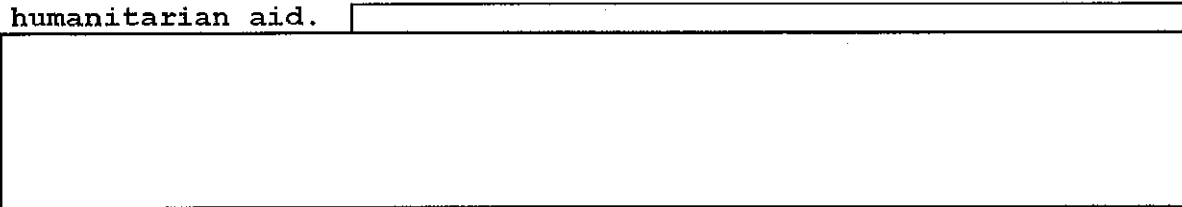
DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/14/2020  
 TAGS: PGOV, PREL, TU, EG, IS  
 SUBJECT: ANGST REIGNS OVER CONVOY OF AID SHIPS TO GAZA

REF: ANKARA 467

Classified By: POL Counselor Daniel O'Grady for reasons 1.4(b,d)

1. (C) SUMMARY: The Turkish Humanitarian Aid Foundation (IHH) is preparing to lead a convoy of ships to Israeli-controlled Gaza beginning on May 15 to "break the embargo" and deliver humanitarian aid.



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END

## SUMMARY.

2. (C) Bulent Yildirim, president of the Turkish Humanitarian Aid Foundation (IHH), [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] has announced his organization will lead a flotilla of ships to Israeli-controlled Gaza in May to "break the embargo" and deliver humanitarian aid. IHH has called this convoy "Noah's Ark," "Freedom Is the Last Port," and most recently "Palestine Our Destination, Freedom Our Cargo."

B1, B6

[REDACTED] told us April 9 the flotilla will consist of seven ships: two from Turkey, three from the UK, and one each from Greece and Ireland. Inconsistent media reports say IHH hopes to increase the number of ships to 10, 15, or 20. One of the Turkish ships is a cargo ship with a 3000-ton freight capacity. The other is a passenger ship with a maximum capacity of 1100 persons. IHH was forced to buy its own ships when no shipping company would risk their property on this convoy. The passenger ship was purchased for \$1.2 million while the cargo ship cost \$570,000. [REDACTED] said financial contributions for the ships came "from people in every city and every town of Turkey." He acknowledged that IHH does not have strict rules regarding contributions, saying "we cannot refuse money." The IHH ships will launch from Istanbul and stop in Mersin before joining the rest of the flotilla near the Gaza maritime "border." The other ships in the convoy will make a stop in Cyprus before heading to Gaza. [REDACTED]

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B6

## An "Artificial Island"

3. (SBU) According to [REDACTED] IHH fully expects to be stopped along the maritime border by Israeli ships. He said the convoy will create an "artificial island" and is prepared to stay at least one month. This "artificial island" will be serviced and supplied by a number of smaller, faster boats that will make supply runs to Mersin and Cyprus. In addition to providing a supply-line, the smaller supply boats will also ferry and rotate the passengers, crew, and media. [REDACTED] said VIPs such as entertainers, Turkish MPs, and other politicians can be shuttled to the mother ships with ease. The large Turkish passenger ship will not be at full

B6

capacity. [redacted] said this is so the passengers are comfortable even if they have to stay long-term. Women and children will reportedly be aboard. Because IHH now owns its own ships, he said, it plans to continue sending convoys by sea to Gaza "until the end."

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4. (C) The sea convoy will have a heavy media component and organizers plan to broadcast everything live on television.

[redacted] said "Our power is the consciousness of the world people. Day by day, hour by hour, we will inform the world."

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[redacted] said IHH opted to wait until after the May 6 UK election in order to maximize media coverage. IHH believes its media coverage window will close on June 11 when the 2010 World Cup begins in South Africa. Meanwhile, [redacted]

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[redacted] told us April 12 that he believes the

only purpose of the convoy is political propaganda and "diplomatic drama." He cited existing means for delivering humanitarian to Gaza, if that were the true purpose. [redacted] told us

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the same thing on April 9. He said [redacted]

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[redacted] believes IHH has no interest in actually delivering the aid, contending there are no ports in the Gaza Strip that can even accommodate the ships.

5. (C) The IHH's [redacted] told us the flotilla will not attempt to break through the expected line of Israeli ships. But

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[redacted] did say it would be impossible to have absolute control over such a large and diverse convoy: "We are not a state. We don't know what will happen." [redacted] understood the potential for hostilities. He stressed that the seven ships will be from four states: "There are four flags. If Israel attacks, it is an attack on four countries. It will be her problem, not ours." If Israel boards the convoy ships, [redacted] said they would be no different from the Somali pirates: "It is your (international community's) obligation to fight against pirates." Other IHH representatives claim the convoy will attempt to break through the line of Israeli ships. In interviews with local media, IHH spokesperson Salih Bilici said the goal of the convoy is to reach Gaza. Bilici said, "We don't have a plan B, C, or D. We have decided to reach Gaza by sea and enter via its port." In a meeting announcing the convoy at their headquarters, IHH President Yildirim declared "We will sail in May to break the embargo."

[redacted] Concerns

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9. (C) COMMENT:

"Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at <http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Turkey>"  
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CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED  
Page 1 of 3

RELEASED IN FULL

From: svcsmartmfi  
Sent: 5/28/2010 8:40:20 AM  
To: SMART Core  
Subject: USEU Today Transfer

**UNCLASSIFIED**

MRN: 10 DAILY 5282316  
Date/DTG: May 28, 2010 / 281130Z MAY 10  
From: DAILY  
Action: DAILY ROUTINE  
TAGS: BE, XTAG  
Subject: USEU Today Transfer

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FOR TRANSFERRING DATA ONLY

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: BE  
SUBJECT: USEU Today Transfer

(U) EU presses Armenia and Turkey to continue normalization process

Speaking at separate briefings following their meetings with visiting President Sargsyan of Armenia May 26-27, European Council President Van Rompuy and Commission President Barroso pressed both Armenia and Turkey to continue the "historic" process of normalization of their relations "without preconditions" and "within a reasonable timeframe." Van Rompuy said he was "pleased that Armenia decided to stay committed to the process, adding: "I recognize the President's political courage on this issue." He confirmed the EU's "continued commitment to peace and security in the Caucasus, including through contributing to the resolution of the protracted conflicts." Barroso said the Commission was prepared to launch negotiations for an Association Agreement between the EU and Armenia "as soon as next July," noting that "an important part of this Agreement will be the negotiation on a bilateral Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)." Barroso nevertheless made it clear that "this could kick off only once Armenia will have fully addressed key trade-related recommendations made by the Commission." (POL:RDeGlain).

News

(EU) EU/CSDP: General Ton van Osch new chief of EU military staff - Brussels, May 27 (Agence Europe) - General Ton van Osch from the Netherlands took over on Thursday 27 May from General David Leakey (United Kingdom) as Chief of the European Union Military Staff (EUMS). During a joint press conference with his predecessor, General Osch emphasised that during his three-year mandate he would focus on two main subjects: implementation of a comprehensive approach, which would help to combine and jointly coordinate all crisis management instruments; and strengthening cooperation between the EU and its partners such as NATO, the UN, the African Union and the other "major actors and nations". The general provided

assurances that "every body will find me willing to cooperate" and said that making the European External Action Service operational, where EU High Representative Catherine Ashton will be responsible for all instruments, will be a big step forward. The general explained: "I know there's a lot of talking that should be much better and I agree with that, but at the same time I would like to make a point that we made a lot of big steps". General Leakey was asked about the necessity of providing the EU with a permanent military operations staff in the future but explained that there is no "one size fits all" solution from a political point of view or in the context of military practicalities. He added: "If you have a member state who takes an operations commander rather than operational headquarters responsibility, then it means that the operation is guaranteed to be a success". According to Leakey, the current situation has the merit of giving each member state greater responsibility when it ensures command of an operation. Born in 1955, General Osch has been the Dutch permanent military representative to NATO and the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) since June 2007. He is the third chief of staff as head of this structure, following French General Jean-Paul Perruche and General Leakey, and will be particularly responsible for strategic planning and EU military expertise.

(EU) EP/PALESTINE: Isabelle Durant and Louis Michel urge Israel to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza - Brussels, May 27 (Agence Europe) - The vice president of the European Parliament, Isabelle Durant (Greens/EFA, Belgium) and the MEP and former commissioner for development, Louis Michel (ALDE, Belgium) launched an appeal to Israel on Thursday 27 May, to allow humanitarian aid to Gaza to reach its destination. MEPs are concerned about threats of a blockade by the Israeli authorities and the deployment of military forces to prevent the berthing and unloading of the "Gaza freedom flotilla". The mission consists of nine new boats. They contain 10,000 tons of humanitarian equipment (educational and medical materials) and construction materials (cement etc) for Gaza, as well as 700 volunteers from the whole world. The first boats left Turkey for Gaza on Tuesday 25 May. "This mission must arrive at the right port of call", insisted Isabelle Durant. She added that "this is not a political mission; it aims to provide aid and solidarity, and it is necessary to guarantee the security of the people accompanying it". The appeal by MEPs aims to mobilise public opinion to put pressure on the Israeli government. Louis Michel was keen to point out that "international humanitarian law requires that access to victims or people in danger is ensured or at least facilitated. (...) The Israeli authorities do not want Hamas to benefit from this operation because it is claimed that the Palestinian organisation and the humanitarian workers are working together. Isabelle Durant and Louis Michel refute this.

EU's Almunia says fewer banks taking up state aid - BRUSSELS, May 27 (Reuters) - European Union banks are gradually weaning themselves off state aid as the sector recovers from the credit crisis which led to trillions of euros in bailouts and state guarantees, the EU's competition chief said on Thursday. Since the crisis deepened in September 2008, the European Commission has approved 4.13 trillion euros (\$5.072 billion) in recapitalisation schemes and other measures by EU governments to help lenders. Of this figure, just a third or 1.24 billion euros were taken up by banks via state guaranteed funding or recapitalisation measures. The EU executive said the use of government guarantees by banks has declined since the middle of 2009, both in terms of the number of bonds issued and volume of issuance. The total amount of state-guaranteed bonds issued by banks in December last year amounted to a monthly average of 4 percent of lenders' total funding, down from 30 percent in the

first quarter of 2009, data from the Commission showed. "The declining use of state guarantees is an encouraging indicator that the financial sector has begun to return to normal market conditions," EU Competition Commissioner Joaquin Almunia told a news conference. "While the situation remains fragile it is crucial for the overall economy that banks do not stay dependent on the state for longer than is strictly needed and finance themselves increasingly on the market," he said. He said France, Italy and the United Kingdom have already said they would not extend their guarantee schemes. There are currently 15 EU countries with such schemes which will expire either at the end of this month or next. EU finance ministers agreed last week to raise the fees that banks pay if guarantee schemes are extended by up to 40 basis points.

(EU) EU/ECONOMY: Herman Van Rompuy wants more governance and greater EESC involvement in taking important Council decisions and measures - Brussels, May 27 (Agence Europe) - Addressing the plenary session of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) chaired by Mario Sepi, on Thursday 27 May in Brussels, the president of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, unveiled how he felt about the need to immediately overcome the agitation caused by the economic crisis, and to have a crisis prevention and management system. He announced the results of the first meeting of the task force under his leadership. Van Rompuy wanted the EESC to be more actively involved in taking measures and important decisions at the European Council in June 2010, and to be more actively concerned by follow up to such measures and decisions. He highlighted how important it was to have a structural growth policy, i.e. the EU2020 strategy, which, he said, is an operation of high political intensity without which the EU's social model would be in danger. (...) In addition to overcoming the crisis, there is a structural policy for increasing the EU's economic potential, the EU2020 strategy. Van Rompuy said he wished to speak to the EESC about this later, adding that he was willing for the committee to be more involved when important decisions or measures are taken at the European Council in June. However, he asserted, this process is not yet over. There will be follow-up, and adjustment throughout the process. He took the view that, without this structural policy for growth, the EU's social model would be in danger. Van Rompuy underlined how difficult it was for a politician to explain to the public that it is necessary to put taxes up while safeguarding investment in human capital. This prompted him to say that "the EU2020 strategy is not a technical operation but an operation with high political import".

Kennard

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**Info:**

**Attachments:** metadata.dat

**Dissemination Rule:** Archive Copy

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CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL  
Page 1 of 4

RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

**From:** Daughton, Thomas F (Beirut)  
**Sent:** 6/17/2010 6:41:36 AM  
**To:** svcSMARTHBTSP0P2  
**Subject:** Lebanese Gaza Flotilla Update – June 17, 2010  
**Attachments:** Metadata.dat

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**MRN:** 10 MDA 1049  
**Date/DTG:** Jun 17, 2010 / 171041Z JUN 10  
**From:** Daughton, Thomas F (Beirut)  
**Action:** Lawson, Christine MIMMEDIATE; HHajjar@nss.eop.sgov.govIMMEDIATE  
**E.O.:** 12958  
**TAGS:** PREL, PBTS, KPAL, PHUM, GZ, IS, LE  
**Subject:** Lebanese Gaza Flotilla Update – June 17, 2010

SITUATION UPDATE  
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(C) EFFORTS TO DISCOURAGE/IMPEDE LAUNCH: Minister of State Wael Abu Faour, who holds the Palestinian affairs portfolio, told us this morning that President Sleiman sent a message to Hizballah SYG Hassan Nasrallah on June 15 saying that, given the current tension between Lebanon and Israel, it was a bad idea to send a new flotilla to Gaza and Lebanese should seek to avoid taking such actions. Separately, a senior Surete Generale (SG) official told us late this morning that the SG has issued an order to all Lebanese ports saying that no ship may leave port without providing a manifest of who is on board. No manifests have been provided as yet for Gaza-bound ships. A Port of Beirut official verified to us that no vessel there has applied for a permit to depart for Gaza.

(C) POSSIBLE LAUNCH TOMORROW? Media contacts say that the *Mariam* is hoping to launch for Gaza the morning of June 18 carrying 50 women of different nationalities. *An-Nahar* reports that the *Mariam* effort is being led by Inam Saad, the wife of a Saida-based opposition politician who is a foe of PM Hariri. Conflicting press reports have said the boat plans to launch from Beirut, Jounieh (just north of Beirut), Tripoli and Saida. We have verified that the *Mariam* is not in Beirut or Jounieh, and are seeking now to verify the Saida report (Saida is roughly halfway between Beirut and the Israeli border; the Maronite bishop of Saida is presiding over a mass there today to bless the *Mariam's* undertaking). [REDACTED]

The press is also reporting that Yasser Kashlak, a wealthy Palestinian businessman based in the Gulf, is the main funder of the *Mariam* effort. Kashlak heads the Palestinian Businessmen's Association as well as the Lebanese Institute of International Research.

(C) AMCIT INVOLVEMENT: One newspaper is reporting that "four U.S. nuns"

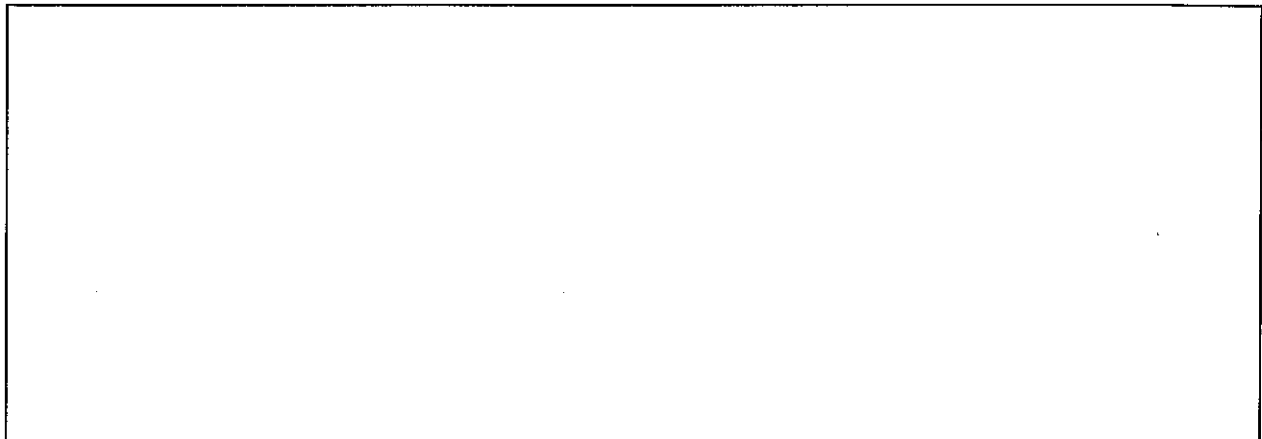
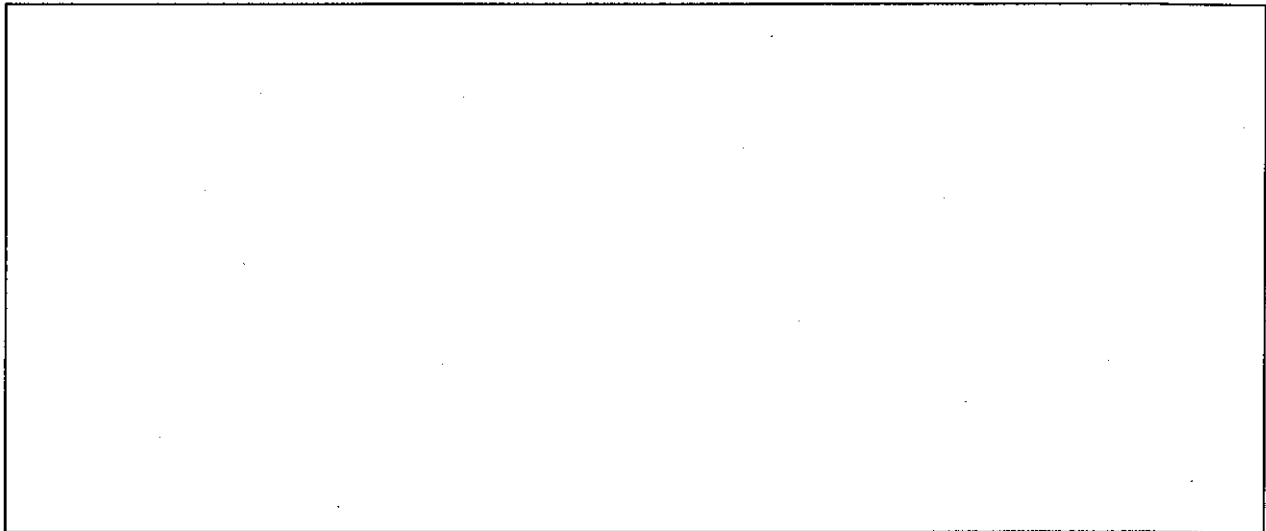
B1

plan to be among the 50 women aboard the Mariam. Separately, Amcit Paul Larudee (who was on the first Gaza flotilla) gave an interview to a Beirut paper, but it is not clear from the article that Larudee was present in the country at the time of the interview. We have asked consular contacts [redacted] if they can verify that Larudee has entered Lebanon.

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CONTACTS WITH GOL AND OTHERS  
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(C) The Ambassador made a series of phone calls this morning to GOL officials and others about the potential new flotilla. Drawing from the points prepared for U/S Burns, she stressed our strong concern at reports about the advanced state of preparations for launching one or more ships from Lebanon. She underscored our belief that such an effort would be extremely destabilizing for Lebanon and the region, and urged the GOL officials to take quick action to dissuade the organizers from proceeding with their plans. She also noted our concern that American citizens might be involved in the effort and asked for any information about Amcit participants. Following are the responses she received:



-- [redacted] said the issue was on the front burner for the PM's office, and that he would be following it closely through the day.

-- [redacted] reported that [redacted] contacts were saying no launch would occur for several days, but [redacted] was checking again based on today's press reports. [redacted]

[redacted]

-- [redacted] agreed that the new Gaza flotilla effort is fraught with potential problems, but noted that the issue is "very delicate" and virtually all Lebanese are "lining up on one side" of it.

[redacted]

-- [redacted]

CONCLUSION

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[redacted]

It is not clear that the Israeli announcement today of a plan to ease restrictions on Gaza will change the thinking of the Lebanese organizing the launches. [redacted]

[redacted]

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**Classified By:** Thomas F. Daughton, Deputy Chief of Mission  
Embassy Beirut  
Department of State

**Reason:** 1.4 (b), (d)

**Declassify on:** 2020/06/17

**Drafted By:** BEIRUT:Daughton, Thomas F (Beirut)

**Approved By:** U.S. Embassy Beirut:Daughton, Thomas F (Beirut)

**Released By:** BEIRUT:Daughton, Thomas F (Beirut)

**Info:** Mull, Stephen DROUTINE; Sievers, Marc JROUTINE; Cunningham, James BROUTINE; Hale, David MROUTINE; Connelly, MaurarROUTINE; Holmstrom, ToddROUTINE; Sison, Michele JROUTINE; Hof, Frederic CROUTINE; Sachar, AlonROUTINE; Knopf, Payton L

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Rana, Gautam *AROUTINE*; Walles, Jacob*ROUTINE*; Cornforth, Jeremy *AROUTINE*;  
Wong, Kam *TROUTINE*; Vassilev, Ivaylo*ROUTINE*; Williams, Prestina *DROUTINE*;  
Bauer, Paul *AROUTINE*; Solly, Janet R (Beirut)*ROUTINE*; Williams, Jennifer *LROUTINE*;  
Lantz, James *VROUTINE*; Pannaman, Jeffrey *EROUTINE*; Balestri, Richard *RROUTINE*;  
Riley, Richard *HROUTINE*; Hinton, Terrance*ROUTINE*; Brown, Karen *LROUTINE*;  
Hosking, Erika L (Beirut)*ROUTINE*; Citrin, Ruth*ROUTINE*; Embury, Benjamin *SROUTINE*;  
Herbol, Denise *AROUTINE*; Abell, J Andrew*ROUTINE*; Kontek, Ted L (Beirut)*ROUTINE*;  
Gliha, Ryan *MROUTINE*; Wilt, Mark C (Beirut)*ROUTINE*; Addis, Casey *LROUTINE*;  
Creedon, Reid *MROUTINE*; Evans, Jennifer *RROUTINE*; Tachco, Amy N (Beirut)*ROUTINE*;  
Polacheck, Joshua W (Beirut)*ROUTINE*; McCulloch, Megan *LROUTINE*

**Attachments:** Metadata.dat

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**Dissemination Rule:** Archive Copy

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ACTION EUR-00

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	SS-00	NCTC-00	FMP-00	BBG-00	EPAE-00	IIP-00	SCRS-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	CARC-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
	FA-00	SWCI-00	/001W				

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O 311346Z MAY 10

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0085

INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ADANA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

RELEASED IN PART  
B6

UNCLAS ANKARA 000772

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PHSA, TU, IS

SUBJECT: Turkey: SitRep 1 on Humanitarian Aid Foundation Flotilla,  
12:00 pm Turkey Time

REF: 10 ISTANBUL 199; 10 ISTANBUL 195

DE OTALVARO EMAIL OF 31 MAY 10 AT 12:55 TO SES-O

1. (SBU) According to Turkish press sources, at approximately 4:30 a.m. on May 31, the Israeli military allegedly landed soldiers on the deck of the Turkish flagged ship "Blue Marmara", while it was in international waters, between 69 and 70 miles from Israel's shore. The ship was part of the Turkish NGO Humanitarian Aid Foundation (IHH) flotilla attempting to reach Gaza and allegedly deliver humanitarian supplies. The latest press reports indicate that shots were fired on the ship and somewhere between 10 and 16 people were killed. Israel Prime Ministry Spokesman Gendelman said that there were firearms, knives and batons on the ship, and that fire was opened against the Israeli soldiers. Gendelman reported that between eight and ten soldiers were wounded, some in serious condition.

2. (SBU) So far the press has not identified any Americans among the victims. According to Al Jazeera TV, 9 of the dead are Turkish citizens. According to the Associated Press, IHH Official

Omer Faruk Korkmaz reported that Israeli soldiers are taking the ship to Haifa. IHH Headquarters in Istanbul also reported that they have lost radio contact with the flotilla. The Turkish press reported that the Israeli military jammed the flotilla's radio communication starting at 3:30 a.m. Israeli television stations have reported that the wounded -- civilians and soldiers -- were transferred to hospitals in Ashkelon. Turkish television stations reported that preparations are underway to detain some civilians in prisons.

3. (SBU) Following the intervention, the Prime Ministry established a crisis task force to follow events after 7:00 a.m. Deputy PM Bulent Arinc, Interior Minister Besir Atalay, Prime Ministry Undersecretary Efgan Ala, and Turkish General Staff Operations Commander General Mehmet Eroz are following the issue. The Turkish MFA released a strong statement that condemned the attack and protested the use of force by the Israeli Defense Forces against the civilians on the flotilla, who were from many countries and wanted to transport humanitarian assistance to the people in Gaza. It pointed out that there were women and children among the passengers, and that they had received reports so far that the intervention had caused 2 deaths and more than 30 people to be injured. It said Israel has "once again clearly demonstrated that it does not value human lives and peaceful initiatives through targeting innocent civilians." Calling the intervention an "inhuman act," it said the incident, which took place on the high seas in a gross violation of international law, "might cause irreversible consequences in our relations." It said that the Embassy in Tel Aviv would conduct initiatives to protest the event, and that the incident is being "strongly protested" in Ankara, while an explanation from the Israeli Ambassador in Ankara has been demanded at the Ministry. It said the actions against civilians conducting peaceful activities -- whatever their motives -- were unacceptable and that Israel will have to bear the consequences of the actions, which constitute a violation of international law. In closing the statement said "May God bestow His mercy upon those who lost their lives. We wish to express our condolences to the bereaved families of the deceased, and swift recovery to the wounded."

4. (SBU) [redacted] told the Ambassador that he personally could not understand how the intervention could have happened. He and others were working with the Israelis, he admitted, and they thought that they had a solution to keep everything under control. He stressed as well that there will be consequences to the intervention. He emphasized that Turks are outraged that the Israelis acted when the ships were 69 miles from Gaza, in international waters. He intimated that 'a solution' might have been possible, or at least more understanding, were the ships intercepted -- as he had thought they would be --

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closer to Gaza. The Ambassador stressed the need to protect both U.S. and Israeli diplomatic establishments from crowds of protesters in Turkey, and urged caution on any action until all of the facts were in. [redacted] in turn urged for us to ask Washington to say something critical about this operation, indicating that this would help, although the Ambassador did not respond to the request.

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5. (SBU) Israel's Ambassador to Turkey, Gaby Levi, told the Ambassador that while he had been summoned to the MFA, his residence had been blockaded by protestors and so he was unable to move. He was "under siege" at his embassy. He anticipated "the worst" from the Turks, and that there will be diplomatic consequences to the intervention. The Turkish press reported that MFA Deputy U/S Unal Cevikoz spoke to Ambassador Levi for 20 minutes, and in addition to condemning the attack, he urged Israel to send the passengers and wounded to Turkey immediately. Cevikoz also reminded Levi that Turkey preserves all its rights stemming from international law. The Turkish press also reported that the visit of an Israeli tourist ship to Alanya port today was cancelled.

6. (SBU) There were protests in several cities Turkey against Israeli and U.S. installations. Media outlets reported that a large crowd of protestors gathered outside the Israeli Consulate in Istanbul starting at 5:00 a.m. The group had been very agitated but at the moment was calm, and had been contained by Turkish police, using water cannons and pepper gas. Mission RSOs sent SMS messages through its warden network to avoiding protests in the areas around Israeli or U.S. diplomatic buildings. In Adana at approximately 1:45 a.m. a group of 30-40 protestors held a sit-in in front of the U.S. Consulate for half an hour, and another protest is expected.

7. (SBU) Turkish media outlets report that Hamas called the operation "brutal", and urgently urged the UN to interfere, while Palestinian President Abbas termed the attack as "massacre" and declared three days of mourning.

8. (SBU) Post will continue to monitor events and report as needed.  
JEFFREY

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT  
Operations Center

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**SPOT REPORT No. 2**  
**LATEST SITUATION ON GAZA AID FLOTILLA**Monday, May 31, 2010  
1200 EDT**NETANYAHU TO CURTAIL TRIP AND RETURN TO ISRAEL**

(U) The Israeli Prime Minister is currently in Canada, but press report he will cancel his scheduled onward stop in Washington to return to Tel Aviv. (AP)

**FLOTILLA SHIPS ENTERING PORT, CASUALTIES NOT YET IDENTIFIED**

- (SBU) Embassy Tel Aviv reports nine American citizens are in detention and consular staff hope to have access to them the morning of June 1. Israeli sources say two former U.S. diplomats detained for their participation in the flotilla will be deported from Ben Gurion Airport tonight. One Amciti is hospitalized with minor injuries and will be transferred to a deportation facility shortly. A total of 18 Amcitis are believed to have been part of the flotilla, seven are unaccounted for. (Ops/Embassy Tel Aviv e-mail)
- (SBU) Israeli defense officials say 10 to 14 civilians were killed or seriously injured, with an additional 30 wounded. Ten Israeli Navy personnel were wounded, one seriously. All casualties had been aboard the MAVI MARMARA and are now in Israeli hospitals. (Ops/Embassy Tel Aviv e-mail)
- (SBU) The CHALLENGER I is now in the port of Ashdod with Americans onboard, and the MAVI MARMARA is expected between 1700 and 1800 local time, with the rest arriving later in the evening. Passengers will have two options – jail or deportation. (Ops/Embassy Tel Aviv e-mail)

**TURKEY CALLS ON INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO RESPOND**

- (SBU) Turkey is alleging a gross violation of international law, saying the raid occurred 64 nautical miles from the Gaza blockade area. The IDF contends a vessel may be boarded prior to entering an area under naval blockade, if there is reason to believe the vessel intends to breach it.  
(Ops/Embassy Ankara e-mail, Ops/Embassy Tel Aviv e-mail)
- (SBU) Israeli Defense Minister Barak and Major General Dangot, Coordinator for Government Activities in the Territories, are in communication with officials from the Turkish Foreign and Defense Ministries. They discussed the extent to which rhetoric could be kept in check, the need for security cooperation, and the impact the status of wounded Israeli Arab Islamic leader Raed Salah could have on public reaction.  
(Ops/ConGen Jerusalem e-mail)
- (SBU) Turkish PM Erdogan cut his trip to Latin America short and will return to Turkey today. FM Davutoglu is in route to New York to request an emergency session of the UNSC today to discuss the incident. Acting PM Arinc ruled out sending Turkish naval forces to the region for the time being, and President Gul condemned the attack, but urged Turks to act with restraint. (Ops/Embassy Ankara e-mail)

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- (SBU) Peaceful protesters gathered outside the U.S. Consulate in Adana (500 to 700 according to local guards, 4000 by Turkish National Police estimates) to lay a black wreath, then dispersed. *(Ops/Embassy Ankara e-mail)*
- (SBU) Embassy Ankara requested additional security for Israeli and American installations in Turkey, and reports the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has authorized the additional forces. *(Ops/Embassy Ankara e-mail)*

Please see our classified website at <http://ses.state.sgov.gov>.

Drafted: JBLcedy

Approved: PMBeekman

Dist: State (all bureaus), NSS, OSD, NMCC, JCS, CIA, OSC, NCTC, DHS

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2010 Jun 3 P 9:43

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT  
Operations Center

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**SITUATION REPORT No. 8** 2010 Jun 3 P 9:44  
**Gaza Flotilla Monitoring Group MGGZ01**  
Thursday, June 3, 2010  
1800 EDT

**STATUS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS**

- (SBU) A family member confirmed that 19 year-old Turkish-American citizen, Furkan Dogan, was among those killed on the MAVI MARMARA. (MGGZ01/Embassy Ankara e-mail)
- (SBU) Embassy officials located previously unaccounted for Israeli-American citizen, Huwaida Arraf, in Ramallah. Eight American citizens departed from Tel Aviv to Istanbul, another to Athens, and two to Jordan. (MGGZ01/Embassy Tel Aviv e-mail)

**STATUS OF FOREIGN PASSENGERS**

- (U) The Israeli Foreign Ministry announced three activists from Ireland, Australia, and Italy remain in Israel for "technical reasons," without providing any further information. Seven additional activists are still hospitalized in Israel. (Israel Radio News)
- (SBU) Israel turned over 120 detainees from Muslim and Arab countries to Jordan. (Amman 1231)

**OTHER SHIPS EN ROUTE TO GAZA**

- [Redacted] The RACHEL CORRIE [Redacted] the Free Gaza Movement announced it will delay its arrival to Gaza until June 7 to maximize media coverage.
- (U) Media report the Israeli Navy intends to board the RACHEL CORRIE if necessary, but released no additional specifics. (Ma'ariv)

**STATUS OF HUMANITARIAN GOODS**

(SBU) Truckloads of goods arrived in Kerem Shalom but have not entered Gaza. UNRWA and ICRC are waiting for permission from Turkey to secure the items. Hamas is disallowing any further entry of goods into the area. (MGGZ01/Special Envoy for Middle East Peace e-mail)

**ISRAELI RESPONSE**

- [Redacted]
- (U) Media report Israel decided to release flotilla detainees immediately in order to help the United States garner support for UN sanctions against Iran. (ynetnews.com)

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## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- (SBU) Arab League: Foreign ministers agreed to ask the UN Security Council to urge an end to the Israeli blockade of Gaza. *(MGGZ01/Embassy Riyadh e-mail)*
- (U) UN: Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, condemned Hamas for raiding NGO offices in Gaza City and the Rafah crossing. *(MGGZ01/Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process e-mail)*
- (SBU) A June 3 International Maritime Organization meeting (IMO) was interrupted by Cuba, Indonesia, Syria, and Venezuela condemning Israeli actions. Turkey is expected to push for official IMO condemnation of Israel at the June 7 meeting. *(MGGZ01/Bureau of International Organization Affairs e-mail)*

## INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS

- (U) Turkey: PM Erdogan said full restoration of diplomatic ties with Israel was contingent upon ending Israel's blockade of Gaza. *(nytimes.com)*
- (U) South Africa: The ambassador to Israel was recalled June 3. *(ynetnews.com)*
- (U) Ecuador: The ambassador to Israel was recalled June 3. *(washingtonpost.com)*
- (U) EU: The European Jewish Congress called on the EU to ban the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief (IHH) and other "terrorist front organizations" *(European Jewish Congress press release)*
- (U) Saudi Arabia: Flotilla discussions interrupted meetings between a U.S. Congressional delegation and members of the Saudi business community at the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry on June 2. *(Saudi Gazette, Al-Watan, Shams)*
- (U) UK: Former FS Miliband restated the British call for an end to the blockade as the only way to limit Hamas' control over the region. *(MGGZ01/Embassy of the United Kingdom to the United States e-mail)*
- (SBU) Australia: PM Rudd called for an independent inquiry and an easing of the blockade. *(MGGZ01/Embassy of Australia to the United States e-mail)*

Additional updates are available through our Ops portal at  
[http://www.intelink.gov/wiki/Portal:Gaza\\_Flotilla\\_2010](http://www.intelink.gov/wiki/Portal:Gaza_Flotilla_2010)

Drafted: KFrelich/JGroblacher

Dist: State (all bureaus), NSS, OSD, NMCC, JCS, CIA, OSC, NCTC, DHS, DNI

Approved: RWThomas

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Washington, D.C. 20520

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June 4, 2010

DECL: 06/03/2020

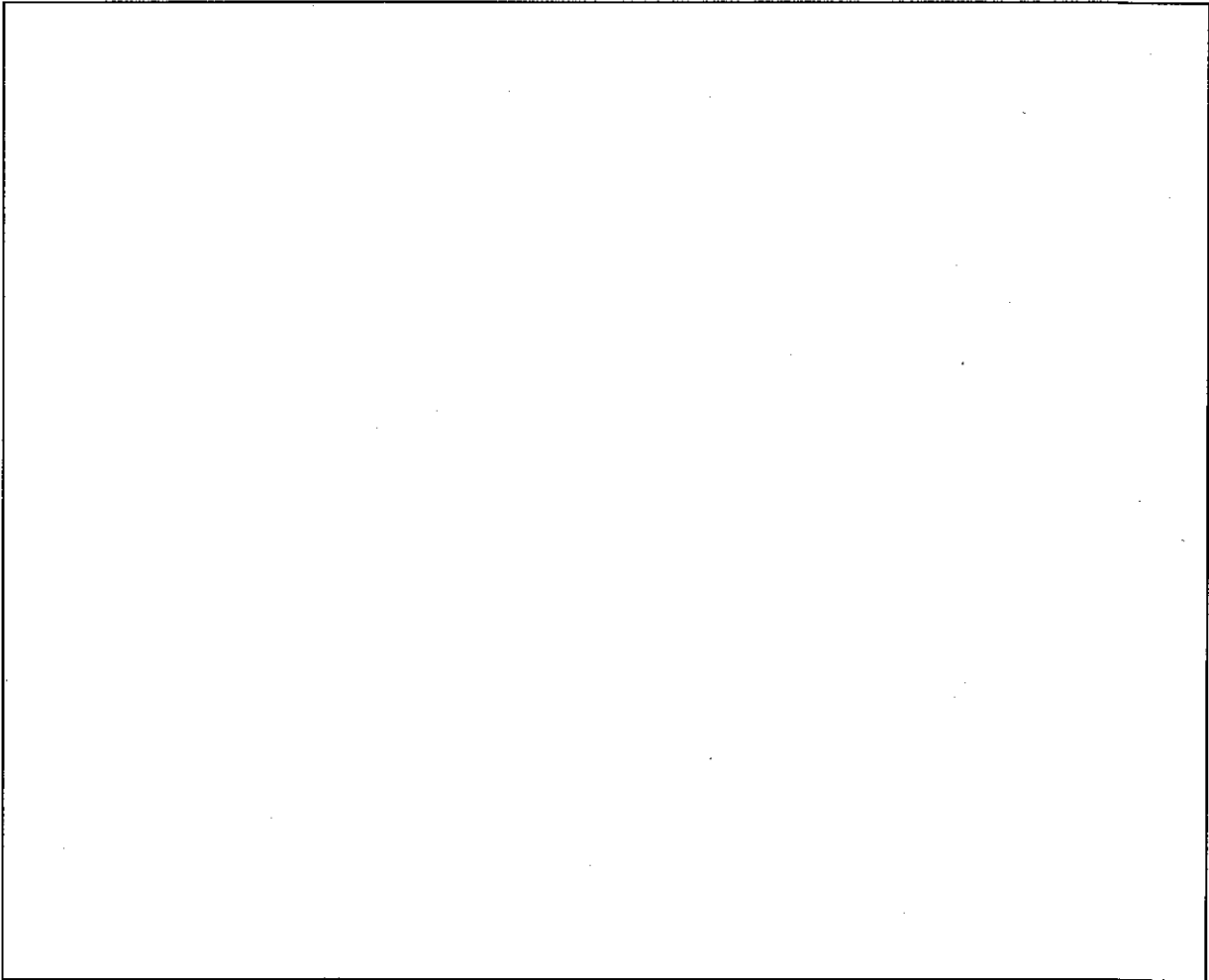
VMM  
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**INFORMATION MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY**

FROM: NEA – Jeffrey Feltman }  
EUR – Nancy McEldowney, Acting } VMM

SUBJECT: U.S. Government Contact Regarding the Free Gaza Flotilla Prior to its Interdiction by the Israeli Navy



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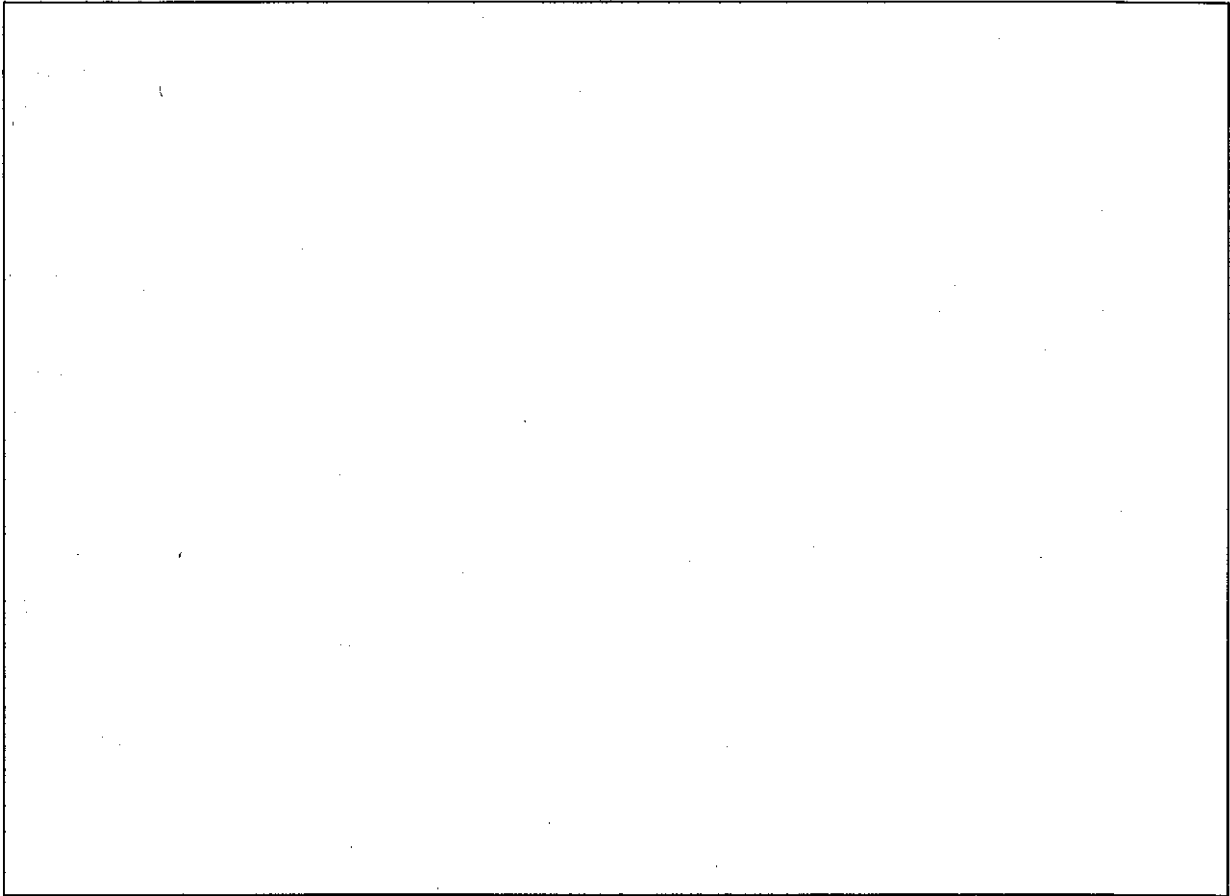
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Attachment:

*U.S. urged Israel to use caution and restraint with aid boats heading to Gaza, Washington Post, June 3, 2010*

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SIIA

**U.S. Urged Israel to Use Caution and Restraint  
with Aid Boats Heading to Gaza**

RELEASED IN FULL

Scott Wilson and Glenn Kessler  
Washington Post Staff Writer

June 3, 2010, Page A01

The Obama administration said Wednesday that it had warned Israel's government repeatedly to use "caution and restraint" with half a dozen aid boats bound for the Gaza Strip before Israeli commandos raided the flotilla this week in an operation that killed nine people.

"We communicated with Israel through multiple channels many times regarding the flotilla," P.J. Crowley, a State Department spokesman, said in a statement issued in response to a question from The Washington Post. "We emphasized caution and restraint given the anticipated presence of civilians, including American citizens."

The acknowledgment shed new light on the administration's contact with the Israeli government before the Monday morning raid, which has inflamed international opinion against Israel and complicated President Obama's efforts to improve U.S. relations with the Islamic world. White House officials said Wednesday that there is a growing consensus within the administration that U.S. and Israeli policy toward Gaza must change, even as Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu flatly rejected calls for his country to lift its blockade of the Palestinian territory.

Netanyahu, addressing his nation Wednesday for the first time since the raid, angrily defended Israel from mounting international criticism over its use of force against the flotilla, which was carrying construction materials, medicine, school paper and other aid to Gaza when Israeli commandos set upon it in international waters.

Netanyahu called the criticism "hypocrisy" and described Gaza, where 1.5 million people live in a narrow slice of dunes and refugee camps between southern Israel and the sea, as "a terror state funded by the Iranians."

"The same countries that are criticizing us today should know that they will be targeted tomorrow," he said, just a day after Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called Israel's policy toward Gaza "unsustainable." "It's for this and for

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many other reasons we have a right to inspect cargo heading into Gaza," Netanyahu added.

The flotilla was organized by the Free Gaza Movement and a Turkish charity that Israeli officials say has connections to radical groups.

In an interview with Charlie Rose broadcast Wednesday night, Vice President Biden agreed that Israel had a right to inspect the cargo. "You can argue whether Israel should have dropped people onto that ship or not . . . but the truth of the matter is, Israel has a right to know -- they're at war with Hamas -- has a right to know whether or not arms are being smuggled in," he said.

At the same time, Biden acknowledged that the administration is trying to sway the Israeli government on the issue of Gaza, which has been under some form of an Israeli blockade for five years.

"We have put as much pressure and as much cajoling on Israel as we can to allow them to get building materials" and other designated humanitarian aid into Gaza, he said.

Michael Oren, the Israeli ambassador to Washington, said that although lifting the blockade is out of the question, Israel shares the administration's goal of improving civilian life in the Gaza Strip. "We are open to the discussion of how best to reconcile the civilian needs of the people of Gaza with Israel's very real security needs," he said in an interview.

The Israeli raid on the flotilla has focused international attention on Israel's closure policy and the mixed results it has achieved.

Israel withdrew its soldiers and settlements from Gaza in 2005 after a nearly four-decade presence in the strip. But it has maintained strict control over the coast and crossing points for goods arriving from Israel, which has come under frequent attack over the years from rockets fired by the Islamist movement Hamas and other armed groups at war with the Jewish state.

In 2007, after Hamas's violent takeover of the strip, Israel effectively closed it to all but a limited amount of humanitarian aid. The goal was to turn the public against Hamas, and prevent arms-making materials from entering. Israel has also linked lifting the blockade -- which includes a ban on nearly all exports from Gaza -- to the release of Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier Hamas captured in Israel in 2006.

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But Israel has let several aid flotillas land at Gaza over the past two years; missions designed primarily to draw attention to the blockade. Before Monday's most ambitious attempt to run the blockade, Israel had turned back two previous flotillas and detained some participants for more than a week.

Israel said Wednesday that it had completed the deportation of the more than 700 activists detained after the raid. Most of them were flown to Turkey, which was Israel's chief Muslim ally in the region before the raid but has since withdrawn its ambassador.

The administration's acknowledgment that it warned Israel against using excessive force comes as White House officials have been meeting with Israeli diplomats and security officials to discuss how the blockade might be altered to allow more aid to enter Gaza without risking Israeli security.

White House officials said Obama has had several phone calls with Netanyahu since the incident, and national security adviser James L. Jones met with his Israeli counterpart for several hours this week.

A White House official briefed on those meetings said there is "a general sense in the administration that it's time to change our Gaza policy," although he would not elaborate on how the administration might change the way it engages an area controlled by a U.S.-designated terrorist organization.

The official said meetings have been held to explore "alternative approaches to dealing with ships who try to run the blockade, and to ensure the humanitarian aid reaches people in Gaza." The official added that "our militaries are in touch on this."

David Makovsky of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy said that discussion should focus on trimming the Israeli bans on many basic items for fear that they could be used for nefarious purposes. "It needs to be streamlined, so that everything is permitted unless it is forbidden, rather than everything is forbidden unless it is permitted," he said. "You have got to use common sense so that you just deny things that can be used for weapons."

*Correspondent Janine Zacharia in Jerusalem contributed to this report.*

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