

International Freedom Fleet Intends to Sail to Break Gaza Siege

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) – The International Freedom Flotilla Alliance has announced plans to provide humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip by sea, in light of the ongoing Zionist aggression and the dire humanitarian situation in the region.

The alliance held a press conference at the headquarters of the Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) in Istanbul, where it confirmed that it would set sail to Gaza to end the illegal and deadly Israeli blockade on the Strip.

The fleet aims to deliver thousands of tons of emergency humanitarian aid directly to the Palestinian people in Gaza.

The International Freedom Fleet



Freedom Flotilla Coalition Representatives from different countries meet in London between 4-6 November to discuss plans for new ship to break the siege on Gaza.

Alliance includes various international civil society organizations and activists, including the IHH.

During the press conference, Bu-

Gaza. The Freedom Fleet's goal is to lift the blockade on Gaza.

Several vessels have tried to break the siege on the Gaza Strip as part of the Freedom Flotilla, however Zionist occupation forces confronted them and prevented them from reaching Gaza's shores.

In 2010, Israel brutally raided the Mavi Marmara ship bound for Gaza and left a dozen activists killed. The attack occurred on a flotilla that comprised six civilian ships and sent the Ankara-Tel Aviv ties into a tailspin.

The siege has led to an economic and humanitarian crisis, with the United Nations warning that the overall conditions in the enclave could make it "uninhabitable".

lent Yildirim, the chairman of the IHH, spoke about the Zionist regime's continued blockade and increasing violence and massacres in

IMF, World Bank Warn Gaza Aggression Imperil Global Economy

DUBAI (Dispatches) – The IMF and World Bank warned on Monday that the Zionist regime's aggression on Gaza and the related attacks on shipping through the Red Sea pose threats to the global economy.

The occupying regime's war raging since October has already hit the Middle East and North Africa region's economy, said the International Monetary Fund's managing director Kristalina Georgieva.

Its knock-on effects could impact the world the longer the fighting drags on, Georgieva told the World Governments Summit, an annual gathering of business and political leaders in Dubai.

"I fear most a longevity of the conflict because, if it

goes on and on, the risk of spillover goes up," she said.

"Right now we see a risk of spillover in the Suez Canal," she said, as Yemeni forces have attacked Red Sea shipping leading to the crucial maritime passage in support of the Palestinians.

The Yemeni forces say they are targeting the Israeli-linked shipping in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, pushing some cargo carriers to take longer and more expensive routes to avoid attacks.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development warned late last month that the volume of commercial traffic passing through the Suez Canal had fallen more than 40 percent in the previ-

ous two months.

Georgieva said that if there are other "consequences in terms of where the fighting goes, it could be more problematic for the world as a whole".

On a personal note, she added that "as a woman, as a mother, grandmother... I pray for peace".

The Gaza Strip has been under intense Israeli assault for over four months. Israel has killed at least 28,340 people, mostly women and children, according to the health ministry in the territory.

Despite the war-related uncertainties, Georgieva said the IMF is "very confident that the world economy is now poised for this soft landing we have been dreaming

of".

"I expect to see by mid-year interest rates going in the direction inflation has been going for the last year now," she said, when asked about interest rates being cut in leading economies.

Also speaking at the summit, World Bank President Ajay Banga said that "what's going on in Gaza, but also the challenges of Ukraine... and the Red Sea" are among the top challenges to the global economic outlook.

"When you add these variables to what is already turning out to be probably the lowest growth of the last 55 years... that's something we have to keep a close eye on," he said.

Genocide... (Continued From Page One)

More than 67,984 Palestinians have also been wounded the ministry added. In the last 24 hours, Zionist forces martyred at least 164 people and more than 200 have been wounded in Gaza, a ministry statement on Telegram said.

More than 1.3 million people — more than half of Gaza's population — is seeking refuge in Rafah, with the majority of people displaced from other parts of the besieged enclave crammed into a sprawling tent city.

There are severe shortages of food, water, medicine and shelter, and the city has been described as a "pressure cooker of despair" by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) spokesperson, Jens Laerke.

Rafah has experienced aerial assaults from Zionist forces for months, but Monday's bombardment has heightened fears that an anticipated Israeli ground invasion would result in a bloodbath, with those trapped in the overcrowded city having no remaining escape route.

Zionist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday directed the military to plan for the "evacuation of the population" from Rafah after saying that troops would "soon go into Rafah."

His comments set off a firestorm of criticism, with Human Rights Watch saying forced displacement of Palestinians in Rafah would have "catastrophic consequences." The United Nations said it was "extremely worried about the fate of civilians in Rafah," according to UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric, who said people "need to be protected."

Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said in a statement that the Zionist regime's declared ground invasion of Rafah would be catastrophic and must not proceed.

"As aerial bombardment of the area continues, more than a million people, many living in tents and makeshift shelters, now face a dramatic escalation in this ongoing massacre," it said on X.

"Nowhere in Gaza is safe, and repeated forced displacements have pushed people to Rafah, where they are trapped in a tiny patch of land and have no options," it added.

MSF has said that its facilities have come "under fire from tanks, artillery, fighter jets, snipers and ground troops, or being subject to an evacuation order".

A Hamas leadership source said that an assault on Rafah would mean the "destruction" of negotiations that have been ongoing for weeks, according to Al-Aqsa TV.

And Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Egypt joined a growing list of countries to express concern over Israel's planned invasion.

Saudi Arabia's foreign ministry warned of "very serious repercussions of storming and targeting" the city, while Qatar — a key mediator in talks between Israel and Hamas — on Sunday urged the UN's Security Council to "prevent" the Zionist regime from committing what it described as "genocide" and warned of a "humanitarian catastrophe in the city."

In a call with Netanyahu on Sunday, U.S. President Joe Biden "reaffirmed" his stance the Zionist troops should not proceed with the military operation in Rafah "without a credible and executable plan" to ensure the safety of civilians, according to a White House release.

Many Palestinians fleeing Israeli bombs and shelling have trekked through the enclave and taken refuge in the city as the Zionist campaign has moved south through Gaza.

It has rapidly become home to a huge population of displaced Palestinians. Satellite images showed last week how a tent city in Rafah has swelled in size in just a few weeks, as more Gazans descend on the area to escape the Zionist onslaught.

It is unclear where next they could go; the city borders Egypt to the south, but the border into the country has been closed for months.

For the more than one million Palestinians in the southern city, the expected push into Rafah is causing alarm and fear.

"We are praying to God that what happened in Gaza City does not happen in Rafah because if the same happens in Rafah we will have no place to go," Muhammad Jamal Abu Tour, a Palestinian living in Rafah, said.

"If we go to Gaza City or Khan Younis or El Nuseirat we are not going to find the supplies that were provided for us here in Rafah," he added. "We keep hearing that in Gaza City they can't find clean water and that they are eating grass, they drink from the sea, God help them."

Mahmoud Khalil Amer, who was displaced from the Al Shati refugee camp in northern Gaza, said he stayed in a tent near a cemetery in Rafah. "We are not living, the dead are better than us," he said.

Rafah is the last major population center in Gaza not occupied by the Israeli military. Other cities stormed by the occupying regime have been turned into wastelands — a

grim preview of what could be in store for Rafah.

People in the Tal El Hawa neighborhood of Gaza City described scenes of "total destruction" following Israeli operations in northern Gaza, with some people saying they have had to drink from toilets due to a lack of water.

"We were besieged. We tried to go back to the north, but we were besieged here," Abdul Kareem Al-Qaseer told a journalist working for CNN. "Every day there were martyrs. Every day there was shelling. Every day there was hunger."

"We even had to drink water from the toilets. We had to drink from it and make our children drink from it. There was no food, no drink," he added.

Olfat Hamdan said she had witnessed dead bodies on the streets of Gaza City, noting that "nobody was able to drag them or move them."

"What have I seen? Total destruction — look at the scale of the destruction," she said in a video commissioned by CNN, as she pointed to damaged buildings and rubble around her.

In the southern city of Khan Younis, where the Zionist military urged large numbers of civilians to flee in the early days of the war, the devastation was described as being beyond imagination.

Since the Zionist regime focused its campaign on Khan Younis, many buildings have been completely destroyed and the rubble bulldozed away. The ones that are left standing appear damaged beyond any chance of repair. Some look like the ruins of medieval castles — lone walls with holes where windows used to be.

At the heart of crescendoing fears surrounding an Israeli ground invasion in Rafah is a large-scale human toll from a war that has already inflicted a catastrophic humanitarian crisis on the people of Gaza, including starvation, looming famine, a medical disaster, and the deaths of more than 28,300 Palestinians, according to information released by the Hamas-run Ministry of Health in Gaza.

Iran...

(Continued From Page 2)

He said, "The Israeli regime totally collapsed after Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, and if it were not for the U.S.'s all-out meddling in the field in support of the Zionist regime and its efforts to resurrect and save it, this collapse would have been completely visible."

Amir-Abdollahian said many believe that Zionist regime and the U.S. government achieved none of their declared goals since the beginning of the war on Gaza and that they are now forced to hold political talks with Hamas, whom Tel Aviv and Washington called for its demise.

The top Iranian diplomat also noted that the struggle and resilience of the resistance groups, as well as the sacrifices of people in Gaza and the West Bank, and the practical unity of the Axis of the Resistance in solidarity with Palestine helped the nation defeat the occupying regime.

He further appreciated the support provided for the Palestinians by the resistance factions in Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria, along with independent and brave governments and nations.

"Today, the Palestinian issue has become the foremost issue of the world. The October 7 Operation Al-Aqsa Storm showed that Palestine is alive and that it will not surrender to the will of the Zionist regime and oppressive powers, including the US government," he added.

Amir-Abdollahian said Iran believes that the Palestinian leaders should reach a consensus based on their interests and those of their nation, and that the world should support the Palestinians' decision.

The Iranian foreign minister also underlined the need for unity among Palestinians, saying, "If you are united, the world will submit to your will."

"What helped Palestine defeat the Israeli regime until this moment is the trust in God and the Gazans' resilience and sacrifice, as well as the support of the Axis of Resistance."

The Palestinian officials, for their part, said that Palestine and the Axis of Resistance scored "a great victory" against Israel despite the martyrdom of tens of thousands of people and the extensive destruction in Gaza.

They stressed that the Gaza war is not between Hamas and Israel but an unfair battle between the oppressed Palestinian nation and the Zionist regime and its supporters.

They further hailed Iran's support for the Palestinian issue as "outstanding and distinct and practical and real."

The current war is one of a series of battles that the Palestinian nation has had against the occupiers, the officials said, vowing to continue their heroic struggle until the "complete liberation" of Palestine.

Over four months into the Gaza war, Israel has achieved no success, while the Palestinian nation has won the battle with faith in divine assistance, they added.

Qatar Frees Eight Indians Months After Dropping Death Sentences

NEW DELHI (Reuters) – Qatar has released eight former officers of the Indian navy after dropping their death sentences, India's foreign ministry said on Monday, crediting the Qatari emir for the decision more than 18 months after the arrest challenged diplomatic ties.

The men were accused of spying for Israel, according to sources, though India and Qatar did not confirm the charges against them. Their death sentence, handed down in October, was dropped in

December.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who "personally supervised all developments" in the case, will visit Qatar on Feb. 14 and hold talks with its ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, India's foreign secretary told reporters.

India said seven of the men had returned to the country and authorities were making efforts to bring back the eighth citizen. Some of the men told local media on arrival in New Delhi that it was Modi's intervention that helped

free them.

"It wouldn't have been possible without his personal intervention and his equation with Qatar," one of the men told ANI. None of the men were named.

New Delhi engaged in talks for months with Qatar after the men were arrested in August 2022 and the case challenged ties with Doha, a crucial natural gas supplier to India, which is one of the world's top energy importers.

The men, employed by a private company, were supporting a num-

ber of programs and activities for the Qatari Navy, a person with knowledge of the case said.

The news of the release comes days after Qatari and Indian firms signed their biggest single deal for supplies of liquefied natural gas and after Modi met Sheikh Tamim on the sidelines of the COP28 climate summit in Dubai in December and discussed the "well-being of the Indian community in Qatar".

More than 800,000 Indian citizens live and work in Qatar.

Biden Hosts Jordan King for Talks on Gaza War

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – Jordan's King Abdullah II met U.S. President Joe Biden at the White House for talks Monday on resolving the Zionist regime's war on Gaza, as fears grow of an aggression in Gaza's southern city of Rafah.

Amman is a key player in the region and the king is also visiting Canada, France and Germany, amid mounting international efforts for a deal to pause fighting in Gaza and free hostages there.

"They will discuss efforts to produce an enduring end to the crisis," a senior Biden administration official told reporters on Sunday, ahead of the meeting.

A deal "requires as a precondition the return of captives held by Hamas, and then of course, looking ahead at durable long-term peace requires a formula for two states with Israel's security guaranteed."

Meanwhile, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has arrived in Doha for talks on securing a ceasefire in Gaza with the Qatari emir, whose country has been at the heart of mediation efforts between the Zionist regime and Hamas.

The official Palestinian news agency Wafa said Abbas would meet Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, but did not say if he would also meet leaders of

Hamas, a group that has long been at odds with Abbas and his West Bank-based Fatah group.

The Palestinian ambassador to Qatar, Munir Ghannam, told Voice of Palestine radio on Sunday that Abbas and the emir would discuss efforts to secure a Gaza ceasefire with Israel and ways to increase aid for the territory's 2.3 million people.

"Qatar plays an important role in the international efforts and mediation to reach a ceasefire. Therefore, coordination with Qatar, also with Egypt, is of special importance, to bring an end to this aggression against our people," Ghannam said.