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What has happened to the small sailing boats?

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Norwegian flag Al-Awda and Swedish flag Freedom for Gaza have been attracted to the media. The two smaller Swedish sailboats, Mairead and Falestine have lessened attention after police escorts through Paris.

Mairead took part to Palermo, but stayed there because we could not find a willing and competent crew.

Falestine started from Palermo together with Freedom. South of Italy we lost each other in hard weather. We had a rudder injury which meant that the autopilot became unusable. Some days later, the forestay was broken. We were forced to secure the rig provisionally and go by motor to the nearest emergency port with service.

There we could fix the rudder but the rig and sail repairs were too extensive to allow us to continue along with Freedom. The coast guard has also issued a sailing ban after rigid interrogation until the rig is ok.

The small boats did not come to Gaza or Israel's provocations on international waters. Their effort has instead been to remind Europe of the inhuman exposure of the Israeli occupation and the situation on Gaza Strips. We have been on rivers and canals through Germany, Holland, Belgium and France. Many have taken note of our message and we have in most cases got the thumbs up. We have had meetings with Palestine activists mainly in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Paris suburbs, Lyon, Avignon and Marseille. The parade through Paris on Seine with pushing police boats and hoarding police cars was highlighted widely.

[2] [3]

Links

[1] https://shiptogaza.se/sites/default/files/newsImages/pastedimage_0.png

[2] <https://shiptogaza.se/print/2400>

[3] <https://shiptogaza.se/printpdf/2400>