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Foreign minister Margot Wallström's reply to our letter

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Regeringskansliet
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Utrikesdepartementet
Utrikesminister

Jeanette Escanilla
Ship to Gaza Sweden

Tack för ditt brev daterat den 3 augusti 2018.

Situationen som råder i Gaza är mycket kritisk. EU:s generalsekreterare Antonio Guterres har beskrivit läget som en humanitär katastrof och som de största riskerna på självständighetsområdet, inte minst efter att så många människor stupats då israelisk militär stötte in i samband med demonstrationer längs med Gazas gränser de senaste veckorna.

EU och Sverige verkar för att lösningen av Gaza ska bli en fri och självständig stat. Regeringen har konsekvent stött EU:s och FN:s försök att lösa konflikterna mellan Israel och Palestina för humanitära, handels- och politiska skäl. Det är av yttersta vikt att humanitära lösningar till Gaza utvecklas.

Sverige väntar på att kunna få ett svar från Israel om vilken väg som ska tas för att lösa konflikterna mellan Israel och Palestina och för att åter och hålla värdelösheten där två stater kan utvecklas fristående och fria. Att lösa konflikterna i Gaza och lösa den humanitära krisen i Gaza är två betydande och väsentliga utmaningar på vägen.

Regeringen kommer att fortsätta verka för att lösa konflikterna mellan Israel och Palestina och för att åter och hålla värdelösheten där två stater kan utvecklas fristående och fria. Att lösa konflikterna i Gaza och lösa den humanitära krisen i Gaza är två betydande och väsentliga utmaningar på vägen.

Margot Wallström

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[1]

Ship to Gaza has now received an answer to [the open letter](#) [2] that we, through our chairman Jeanette Escanilla, have sent to the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström on August 5:th.

The Minister writes:

"Sweden upholds the principle of freedom of the seas and freedom of navigation. The government has been in contact with the Israeli authorities regarding Ship to Gaza, and has expressed that the actions of the Israeli authorities in relation to the Swedish-flagged vessel Freedom and the persons onboard constitutes a breach of international law. The government has also demanded that the ship, its cargo and the persons who were aboard be released." (Translated by Ship to Gaza)

Wallström's full reply can be read below. Ship to Gaza wishes to emphasize that the wording in the cited paragraph in principle corresponds with our own demands that the crew, cargo and boat should be returned to the place where they were boarded and be allowed to continue their journey to Gaza. We are now being notified that the activists and crew is being deported from Israel. This is not in agreement with our demands or with the requests of the Swedish government.

We also want to know what the Swedish government is doing now to enforce the demands regarding our ships, cargo and crew, but even more importantly, also with regards to the blockade of the Gaza Strip.

Thank you for your letter dated 5th of August 2018.

The situation in Gaza is very critical. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has described the situation as a humanitarian crisis. Furthermore, as you wrote, the lack of medical supplies is disastrous, not least since so many people have been injured as Israeli military has been deployed in connection with demonstrations along Gaza's border in recent months.

Sweden upholds the principle of freedom of the seas and freedom of navigation. The government has been in contact with the Israeli authorities regarding Ship to Gaza, and has expressed that the actions of the Israeli authorities in relation to the Swedish-flagged vessel Freedom and the persons onboard constitutes a breach of international law. The government has also demanded that the ship, its cargo and the persons who were aboard be released. The Swedish Embassy in Tel Aviv is monitoring the imprisoned Swedish citizens' consular rights and visited all of them on Sunday, August the 5th.

The Swedish government will continue to work towards an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and towards a fair and sustainable two-state solution in which the two states can co-exist, peacefully, side by side. Ending the isolation of Gaza and providing humanitarian aid to its people are two critical, urgent steps towards that end.

(Translated by Ship to Gaza)

[3] [4]

Links

[1] https://shiptogaza.se/sites/default/files/pressreleaseImages/skarmklipp_svar_0.png

[2] <https://shiptogaza.se/en/news/open-letter-government-sweden>

[3] <https://shiptogaza.se/print/2404>

[4] <https://shiptogaza.se/printpdf/2404>