

About us

Ship to Gaza Sweden is unaffiliated with political and religious organizations. It is a non-profit association which wishes to promote increased respect for human rights and international law.

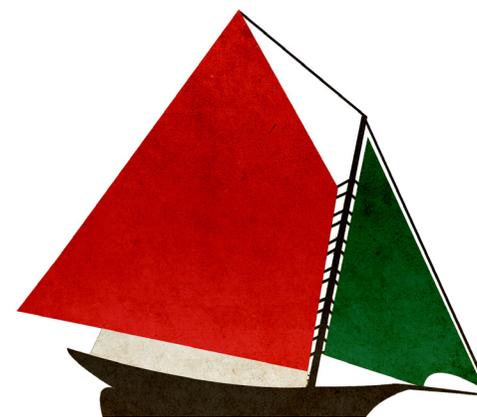
Ship to Gaza interprets the humanitarian emergency in Gaza as being created by political policy. Ship to Gaza intends to supply, man and sail the ship with humanitarian aid from the Nordic countries via European and Mediterranean ports. Ship to Gaza expects each state to respect the principal of the international law of free passage and to guarantee shipping protection in the ports visited on the journey. Ship to Gaza is a non-profit and peaceful action from person to person. Read more about us and our activities on our website:

www.shiptogaza.se/En/

Help us end the Blockade by funding our action! Use SWIFT: NDEASESS, IBAN: SE92 9500 0099 6026 0046 3596.

Quick Facts on the blockade of Gaza

- More than **half** of the population is **below 18 years** of age.
- **38%** of the inhabitants live **below the poverty level** as defined by the UN.
- **56%** of the inhabitants live under **unsafe nutritional conditions** as defined by the UN.
- **75%** are **dependent** on international relief **aid**.
- More than **30%** of the labour force is **unemployed**.
- Average **wages** have **decreased** with **20%** during the last 6 years.
- **35%** of the agricultural land on the Gaza Strip is fully or partially **unavailable** due to buffer zones and other Israeli **military precautions**.
- **85%** of the Palestinian fishing waters by the Gaza coast is **entirely inaccessible** due to **restrictions** imposed by the Israeli navy.
- More than **90%** of Gaza's water sources are unfit as drinking water.
- **85%** of the Schools plan their teaching in double shifts due to **lack of proper premises**.



SHIP TO GAZA

The 2012 Action

S/V Estelle, our beautiful sailing ship, is playing a key role in Ship to Gaza's attempt to break the siege on Gaza. We and our European partner organizations in the Freedom Flotilla Coalition have launched an entirely new project this summer. We are sailing from Umeå in northern Sweden all the way to Gaza, stopping on the way at ports in the Baltic Sea, the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. At each stop, there will be speakers, concerts and public festivals providing information about the situation in Gaza. We will be bringing a cargo of necessities that have been requested by the non-partisan, independent organizations in Gaza that we work together with.

We need your support in order to implement our peaceful, humanitarian project in the name of freedom and justice. Ship to Gaza is a non-profit organization, with no other assets than our own volunteer work and solidarity from people like you. The distance from Umeå to Gaza City is approximately 5,000 nautical miles. This will be our longest and most comprehensive voyage. We are offering individuals and organizations an opportunity to help finance part of our trip. Each nautical mile costs 1,000 SEK, and buyers will be issued a handsome certificate as proof of their solidarity. Smaller donations will be appreciated as well, of course.

Make a donation by using the donation function on our website: <https://donate.shiptogaza.se/en/>. Stay up to date on our progress at our home page www.shiptogaza.se.

The situation in Gaza

The five-year-long blockade is devastating in its efficiency in keeping people and goods from moving in and out of Gaza. Confined within this small enclave, the people are regularly the subject of attacks from Israeli military. In the aftermaths of the Flo-

tilla in 2010, a pressured Israeli government declared some relaxation in the blockade. This has proven to be a hoax, an illusion. Illegal, collective punishment keeps being inflicted on people day after day, week after week and month after month. Imports are, generously estimated, approaching 40% of the pre-blockade levels. Exports are all but eradicated and large shares of the population are dependent on international aid. The crisis is urgent when it comes to power, fuel, water resources and sanitation. Maybe worst of all is the isolation from family, friends, universities and other parts of society in the occupied territories.

Since the start of the blockade, 250,000 children have been born in Gaza. They know of no other reality than the world's largest open-air prison. In March 2012, The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed concern regarding "the dramatic and disproportionate impact of the Israeli Defence Forces' blockade and military operations on Palestinians' right to housing and basic services in the Gaza Strip". The international community have condemned the blockade, and deemed it illegal many times. But this has not converted into action, mere lip service being paid to common principles and values—Human Rights. This passiveness constitutes the backdrop to our engagement in Ship to Gaza. We pose a simple question to ourselves and to others: Are Palestinians human beings?

If the answer is "yes", then the Palestinians have to be acknowledged with the same inalienable rights as others. Whoever would answer "no" will have exposed themselves rather than those they seek to dehumanise. The siege is not only inhumane and illegal. It is also counter-productive. When will the Arab Spring be allowed to cross the border into Gaza?



Estelle is a steel-hulled 53-metre ship originally built for North Sea trawl fishing. Before being converted into a Fair Trade vessel, she spent about fifteen years hauling gravel from Vuolahti to Helsinki. In 1985, Estelle was acquired by Eestaas Ltd and its transformation to a sailing ship began in Turku, in 1986. On June 2nd, 1997 Estelle was certified as a Finnish merchant vessel. At the same time, she was issued papers on a special-purpose basis (training vessel). On June 29th, 1999, Estelle was certified for ocean-going traffic, i.e. as seaworthy for all the world's ice-free waters. In the spring of 2012 Estelle was bought by Ship to Gaza Sweden through its company Northern Light. She was repaired and renovated with the help of many volunteers. In the end of June 2012 Estelle started her 5000 nautical miles long journey from Umeå in northern Sweden to Gaza City.

Read more about the consequences of the blockade on our website: <http://www.shiptogaza.se/en/blockade-consequences>

**Support our action by funding. For payments use SWIFT:
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