

# GAZA Flotilla: The Missing Truths

*Although the flotilla raid is past, it offers an example of how the media distorts the truth, making Israel look bad. If you believe Israel was guilty of crimes, please read the following “missing truths.”*

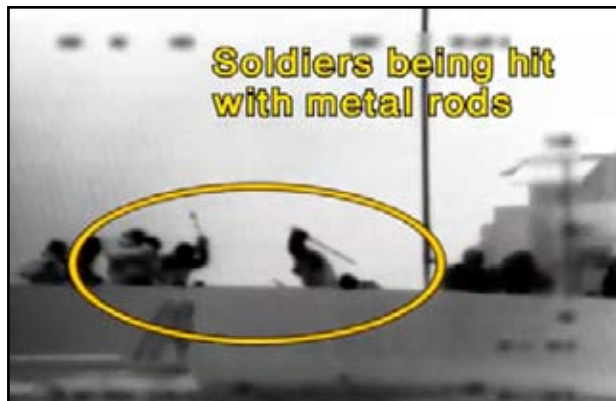
**Why a blockade?** In 2005, Israel withdrew from Gaza, hoping for peace. In 2007, Hamas, which by its very charter is sworn to destroying Israel, took over in a coup. Over 6,000 rockets were launched at civilian targets in Israel, causing 28 deaths and injuring hundreds (BBC). IN Sderot, 90% of the residents have had a missile explode directly on their street or the next. Israel did just what the UN says should be done to stop aggression - it imposed a partial blockade on Gaza, just as Britain did to Germany in WWII, and to Argentina in the Falklands war.

**Is Israel acting alone?** No. The Gaza blockade is run jointly by both Egypt and Israel. Egypt, a Muslim country, feels the same need to keep arms away from this terrorist government on its border. Even the Palestinian Authority, fearful of Hamas, pleaded with President Obama to allow the blockade to continue.

**Is it a full blockade?** No. Medicines, food, and other consumer needs are allowed through. Ambulances are given swift passage through checkpoints into Israeli hospitals. What other nation tends to the sick from its sworn enemies? What are disallowed are items that have potential military use (guns, gunpowder-making chemicals, timers, fuses, some fertilisers, steel pipes, etc.).

**Is there a humanitarian crisis?** No. Each week Israel sends Gaza over 13,000 tons of food and medical supplies, one million litres of diesel fuel, and 900 tons of cooking gas. Any poverty in Gaza results from the totalitarian Hamas government, not from a shortage of basic necessities. This month, a luxury shopping mall was opened. “There is no starvation in Gaza. No one has died of hunger,” says a senior Hamas official (Daily Telegraph). “The only place where refugees drive Mercedes”, says reporter Tom Gross. Ironically, in Gaza the life expectancy is longer and the infant mortality rate lower than in Turkey, where the flotilla originated.

**Did Israel “raid” the flotilla?** No. The Israeli military asked the six flotilla ships bound for Gaza to dock so their cargos could be inspected for weapons. Only one ship ignored this simple process – the one whose crew was armed with weapons and instructed to resist any attempt to divert the vessel with force. As part of its blockade, Israel could have fired on the vessel, but instead chose to attempt a peaceful boarding, despite the risk to its men. That risk turned out to be very real.



*Photo taken from IDF video of the attempted boarding. To see the full video, Google “passengers attacking IDF”.*

**Did Israel initiate the violence?** No. When soldiers carrying paintball guns rappelled onto the sixth ship from a helicopter, they were met with axes, knives, metal pipes and guns\*. Ten Israeli soldiers were wounded. It was only then that Israel responded with armed force, resulting in nine deaths.

**Would other nations have done the same?** Yes. Protecting its troops is what any military, including ours, would do. Other nations have used stronger measures. In 1982 Syria, vexed by terrorism from the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama (whence Hamas takes its name) shelled the insurgents, killing up to 35,000 residents. The Arab world remained silent. In 1988, Saddam Hussein gassed Kurds in Halabja, killing 5,000 residents. The Arab world’s response: more silence. Israel’s tolerance toward enemies that vow “to turn the sea red with Jewish blood” stands in contrast. Yet the world condemns Israel, a small country with rocket-firing zealots on its borders who, when given the chance, board city buses and detonate bombs specifically designed to kill civilians.

**What should Israel have done?** It seems as if the world wanted Israel to ignore the flotilla and allow any munitions to be safely delivered. But Israel refuses to commit suicide and insists on protecting its people. According to the International Court of Justice, this is not only its right, but its duty.

\*Although no guns were found at the time, a bullet in one of the wounded soldiers was not of the calibre used in Israeli weapons.

*If Palestinians had accepted the original UN partition plan, we would now be celebrating the 62nd Anniversary of a Palestinian State. Instead we are mired in the current conflict. When the world acknowledges the validity of Israel as a nation whilst also supporting the Palestinians, both financially and peacefully, to change their focus from making conflict to meaningful production, giving them hope, then this conflict will end and Israelis and Palestinians will live together harmoniously.*

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