

PLEASE CIRCULATE THIS TO ALL OF YOUR LISTS.



Dear Jewish Canada subscriber,

B'nai Brith Canada was quick and judicious in coming to Israel's defence after one of the six ships in the 'Free Gaza Flotilla' refused to enter safe harbour in Israel for customary cargo inspection procedures and Israel was forced to intercept it. While we regret the loss of life and several casualties – including Israeli personnel – that took place, ISRAEL WAS RIGHT.

However, these days it doesn't seem to matter whether Israel is right. The forces of the left and the radical Islamists have found common cause and continue to marshal their combined resources worldwide to vilify Israel. Whether it is Operation Cast Lead, the Goldstone Report, Israeli Apartheid Weeks or intercepting ships trying to break through a legal blockade.

As Frank Dimant, Executive Vice President and CEO of B'nai Brith Canada, said: "The kangaroo courts of NGOs and countries hostile to Israel have already joined the stampede to condemn the Jewish state and her supporters across the globe. The truth is irrelevant for those whose prejudice against Israel as a Jewish state is uppermost. This very sad incident gives hate mongers one more chance to spew their venom against Israel and the Jewish people."

What you can do

B'nai Brith Canada urges all of Israel's supporters to write letters to the editor of their local or national newspapers. Below you will find factual writing points that can be used to help you write those letters. Here are email addresses for a few important newspapers: letters@nationalpost.ca; letters@globeandmail.ca; lettertoed@thestar.ca, and letters@cbc.ca (for publishing on their website).

Help Needed

B'nai Brith Canada, the grassroots voice of the Jewish community, needs your financial support to continue its fight against the foes of Israel and the Jewish community as it prepares for a major counter-attack against the radicals in Canada.

Please support our hard-hitting, aggressive counter-offensive by donating today by calling 416-633-6224 or toll-free 1-800-274-2310.

To donate online, please go to: <http://www.bnaibrith.ca/donate/index.php>

Key writing points:

1. The Gaza flotilla mission was a PR stunt intended to provoke Israel into a response which would tarnish its image. The organizers had many options to avoid a confrontation (dock in safe harbour in Israel for cargo inspection, deliver their supplies through Egypt, which also shares a border with Gaza, etc.), but clearly stated their intent to target Israel.
2. The organizers of the flotilla are Islamists with numerous ties to terrorist organizations across the globe. Prior to departing on their mission to Gaza, participants of the flotilla were recorded chanting Islamic battle cries referencing the massacre of Jews.
3. The blockade on Gaza is a security measure designed to prevent terrorists from smuggling in weaponry which could be used against Israeli civilians. This blockade has been imposed since Israel is currently in a state of armed conflict with the Hamas regime that controls Gaza, which has repeatedly bombed civilian targets in Israel with weapons that have been smuggled into Gaza via the sea.
4. Maritime blockades are a legitimate and recognized measure under international law that may be implemented as part of an armed conflict at sea. The naval manuals of several western countries, including the US and England recognize the maritime blockade as a necessary naval measure in armed conflict and set forth the various criteria that make a blockade valid, including the requirement of giving due notice of the existence of the blockade.
5. It should be noted that Israel publicized the existence of the blockade and the precise coordinates of such by means of the accepted international professional maritime channels. Israel also provided appropriate notification to the affected governments and to the organizers of the Gaza protest flotilla. Moreover, in real time, the ships participating in the protest flotilla were warned repeatedly that a maritime blockade is in effect. Under customary law, knowledge of the blockade may be presumed once a blockade has been declared and appropriate notification has been granted, as above.
6. A state may take action to enforce a blockade. Any vessel that violates or attempts to violate a maritime blockade may be captured or even attacked under international law. A vessel is considered to be in an attempt to breach a blockade from the time the vessel leaves its port with the intention of evading the blockade. (The US Commander's Handbook on the Law of Naval Operations) Also, vessels that are "believed on reasonable grounds to be carrying contraband or breaching a blockade, and after prior warning they intentionally and clearly refuse to stop, or intentionally and clearly resist visit, search or capture" can be intercepted. (Section 67A of the San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea)
7. We should note that the protesters indicated their clear intention to violate the blockade by means of written and oral statements. Given the protesters' explicit intention to violate

the naval blockade, Israel exercised its right under international law to enforce the blockade.

8. Israel had attempted to take control of the vessels participating in the flotilla by peaceful means and in an orderly fashion in order to enforce the blockade.

9. Israeli personnel attempting to enforce the blockade were met with violence by the protesters and acted in self defense to fend off such attacks. The protestors used knives, clubs, and handguns against the Israeli personnel who initially boarded the *Mavi Marmara* ship armed with non-lethal weapons.

10. There is no humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Israel delivers 15,000 tons a week of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

B'nai Brith Canada has been active in Canada since 1875 as the Jewish community's foremost human rights agency