

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003849/25
to the Commission
Elena Donazzan (ECR)
(2 October 2025)**

Subject: Clarifications on statements about the flotilla by Commission spokesperson

On 2 October 2025, during the daily press briefing, a European Commission spokesperson expressed respect for the humanitarian commitment of all those on board the flotilla to Gaza, stating that such activism is a ‘core pillar of our values’, while also condemning ‘any attacks’ against the vessel ⁽¹⁾.

However, it appears that the flotilla deliberately violated international maritime law by crossing Israeli territorial waters, refused proposals to transmit the humanitarian aid through official channels and knowingly sought provocation against a sovereign state.

This raises serious questions about the legitimacy and political expediency of the spokesperson’s statements, which could amount to institutional support for an international provocation by a non-institutional actor without official European Union recognition.

In view of the above:

1. On what basis did the spokesperson express herself in these terms? Was there a College mandate?
2. Was the Commission aware of the violations of maritime law and of the refusal to have the humanitarian aid transited through official routes?
3. What steps does the Commission intend to take to prevent statements by its representatives from being interpreted as supporting non-institutional initiatives of a provocative nature?

Submitted: 2.10.2025

**Answer given by President von der Leyen on behalf of the European Commission
(3 March 2026)**

The reply from the Spokesperson’s Service during the Midday briefing on 2 October 2025 was provided within the context of acknowledging the intentions of those involved, which is consistent with the values the EU upholds, such as respect for fundamental rights and support for relief efforts.

The Spokesperson’s Service operates within its mandate, supporting the President and Commissioners in effectively communicating with the press.

The Commission recognises the challenges in delivering aid to Gaza and remains in constant contact with the Member States and Israel regarding the humanitarian situation.

It has acknowledged several times the right of the activists on board of the flotilla to raise awareness about the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, freedom of assembly being integral part of the EU values within democratic societies. As such, they should not have been subject to attacks by drones or any other means.

Nevertheless, the Commission also expressed its concerns about the risks the activists on board of the flotilla were taking and the need to comply with international law of the sea.

The Commission is committed to upholding the freedom of navigation under international law of the sea and calls for establishing pathways for the delivery of aid to ensure its safe and lawful passage.

The Commission promotes humanitarian efforts, in full respect of international law, and is committed to maintaining this balance in its communications.

¹ https://www.ansa.it/europa/notizie/rubriche/altrenews/2025/10/02/ue-no-ad-attacchi-flotilla-vogliono-aiutare-li-sosteniamo_ed8667b3-9a8b-459a-8819-e1e1cf90467f.html