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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.5.2026)

The EU shares the aim of delivering urgent humanitarian aid to Gaza and ending the suffering of its civilian population. Since the 7th of October 2023, the EU released over EUR 640 million in humanitarian assistance for Palestine, working with trusted partners to ensure aid reaches those most in need. The EU calls for the removal of all restrictions obstructing humanitarian access, in line with international humanitarian law (IHL). The EU has continued to urge Israel to ensure unimpeded aid delivery and compliance with IHL.

While the EU respects the humanitarian commitment of the flotilla participants, it discourages such initiatives due to the risks to participants' safety and the potential for escalation. The freedom of navigation under international law must be upheld, and any use of force against vessels in international waters, including seizures or attacks, is unacceptable. The EU has not received formal requests for assistance from the flotilla organisers, and it has no mandate or assets to escort private vessels. The EU Member States bear responsibility for consular protection and the security of their citizens at sea.

Should incidents occur, the EU stands ready to support affected citizens via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism¹, to assist member states with any medical evacuation needs.

¹ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en.