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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(31.7.2026)

1. The EU respects the intention and the right of those on board of the Global Sumud Flotilla ships to draw attention to the humanitarian plight of the population of Gaza. Freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and association are human rights enshrined in international law, in the European Convention on Human Rights, and in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The EU is firmly committed to protect and support civic space and an enabling environment for civil society everywhere.
2. The EU opposes any legislation, regulation or practices that unduly limit freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and urges States to repeal or amend measures that penalise individuals or civil society organisations for exercising those rights. In this respect, attacks against participants of the Global Sumud Flotilla or reprisals against them constitute a breach of international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The delivery of humanitarian aid, food, medicine, or other emergency supplies should be exempted from sanctions, as provided in the UN Security Council Resolution 2664 (2022) and transposed by the EU across its sanctions regimes. The EU considers that sanctions, whether adopted by the UN Security Council or autonomously by the EU, must be grounded in international law, targeted, proportionate and accompanied by appropriate procedural safeguards, including respect for the rights of listed persons.
3. The EU supports independent investigations into all alleged violations of international law. The EU uses various tools at its disposal to stand up for human rights around the world, including through bilateral contacts with the United States and other countries.