



State of Israel
Ministry of Public Diplomacy & Diaspora

Jerusalem, 1 June 2010

Dear friends around the world,

In the wake of yesterday's interception of a flotilla of ships and activists bent on lifting Israel's blockade of the Hamas regime, a regime whose charter, rhetoric and behavior are all aimed at Israel's destruction, we find ourselves yet again in the center of a perfect media storm.

We are sure that you, like us, are frustrated with the situation. The simplistic images and narratives that appear in the media do not reflect the complex facts on the ground in Israel or in Gaza. Few media outlets discuss Israel's position that the blockade is based on the Hamas regime's refusal to end its state of war against our country, and fewer still have shown the chilling footage available on the Internet of the Gaza-bound activists on one of the flotilla's ships beating, stabbing, lobbing firebombs toward and even throwing overboard IDF troops sent to enforce the blockade on Hamas. Nor do these outlets note the fact that Israel sends 15,000 tons of goods and supplies into Gaza each week, a figure that makes the flotilla's cargo a mere drop in the ocean. For all the discussion of a terrible "humanitarian crisis," there is no hunger in Gaza, no starved children and no famine deaths. There is only tyranny, extremism and endless war sustained by the brutal rule of Hamas.

We know that you, in the Diaspora Jewish communities, often feel that Israel fails to present these facts adequately, and that Israel's bad image is projected onto you. We also know that Diaspora Jews are passionate defenders of Israel in its darkest hours.

Therefore we say that this is not the time to talk about what should have been done.
This is the time to act!

You too can take part in Israel's public diplomacy, in showing clearly that while Israel may make mistakes, it is Hamas, Iran and other enemies who are perpetuating the war and thriving from the bloodshed they instigate.

In response to the calls to isolate Israel and the efforts to place all responsibility for the violence on our soldiers, we must offer substantive and clear answers, including the reason that the flotilla was intercepted and the need to continue to prevent open shipping lines to the vicious tyrants of Hamas.

Some important talking points:

1. The Palestinian people are not under blockade. In the West Bank, Israel has worked hard in the past year to bring prosperity and lay the foundations for peace. Most of the roadblocks are down and the West Bank's economy is now one of the fastest-growing in the world. There is only one reason that the blockade was instituted: to prevent the rearming of the brutal tyrants of Hamas, who would use those arms against Israeli civilians and their own people.



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2. Civilians on the flotilla were cynically exploited by extremist organizations. Five ships did not act with violence toward the soldiers, and were peacefully brought to port. Only the ship that had planned in advance to brutally attack the soldiers and endanger their lives were, in turn met with deadly force.

3. There are ways to help the residents of Gaza that do not also help the Iran-backed Hamas regime and terror organizations in the Gaza Strip. Supplies can be donated to UN agencies, for example. But Israel cannot allow open supply routes for war materials into Gaza.

We urge you to share videos, photographs and articles about Israel's complex situation with your friends and family around the world. Write letters to your local newspapers, comment on blogs and news websites, call in to radio programs and post links to social networking sites, to help spread the real version of events. The more knowledge people acquire, the more accurately Israel's position is represented.

Let us be clear. We are not asking for blind support for the government's position. Even within Israel there is criticism over the handling of the flotilla operation and the policy that led to it. We are a country that cherishes as our highest ideal the freedom to speak one's mind and criticize. We are however, asking for help against the effort to delegitimize and dehumanize our country, an effort led by those who would deny us our very right to exist. The flotilla was a political act, not a humanitarian one and the ultimate goal of those who choose violence is not peace, but our destruction.

Thank you for your help,

Sincerely,

Ronen Plot
Director General

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ronen Plot', written over a light blue background.