

# *Climate activist Greta Thunberg to join aid ship effort to break Gaza siege*

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Activists wash the deck of the Freedom Flotilla Coalition ship 'Handala' as they prepare to sail for Gaza in an attempt to break a long-standing Israeli blockade and deliver humanitarian aid amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in Marsa, Malta August 16, 2024.

REUTERS/Darrin Zammit Lupi

**The Freedom Flotilla Coalition plans second sailing after earlier attempt saw ship targeted in a drone attack blamed on Israel.**

Catania, May 30 (RHC)-- Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg and Game of Thrones actor Liam Cunningham will join the next sailing of the Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC) as it attempts to break Israel's months-long blockade of Gaza.

The "Madleen" is due to disembark from Catania, Sicily, on Sunday with a cargo of humanitarian aid and several high-profile activists on board, including Thunberg, European Member of Parliament Rima Hassan and Palestinian-American lawyer Huwaida Arraf.

Cunningham, an Irish actor best known for his role as Davos Seaworth in the hit HBO series, is a longtime advocate for Palestine and similar causes.

The sailing marks the second attempt in as many months by the FFC, a coalition of humanitarian groups, to reach Gaza. A mission at the start of May was aborted after another FFC vessel, the "Conscience", was attacked by two alleged drones while sailing in international waters off the coast of Malta.

The FFC alleges that Israel was responsible for the attack, which severely damaged the front section of the ship.

MEP Hassan said in a short video on social media that the trip by the "Madleen" is a protest against Israel as much as an attempt to deliver much-needed aid to Gaza. "The first [goal] being of course to reject the blockade of humanitarian aid, the ongoing genocide, the impunity enjoyed by the State of Israel and to raise global international awareness," she said.

"This action is also in response to the attack that took place on May 2 against the previous ship that took place in international waters near Malta."

Israel partially lifted its nearly three-month blockade of Gaza last week, but since then has only allowed a tiny amount of assistance into the Palestinian territory, which the United States has warned is on the brink of famine.

This week, thousands of Palestinians rushed to so-called aid distribution stations set up by the controversial Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, leading to the deaths of at least three people and dozens of injuries in the chaos that ensued as desperate people tried to get food supplies.

The UN and other humanitarian organisations are boycotting the US and Israeli-backed initiative, accusing Israel of attempting to consolidate and control aid distribution across Gaza in a further weaponisation of food and starvation.

The World Health Organization has warned that Gaza is at risk of famine following months of prolonged food shortages amid Israel's punishing blockade, and that about a quarter of the population is in a "catastrophic situation of hunger, acute malnutrition, starvation, illness and death."

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