



ELDH European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights

WITH LAWYERS
IN 23 COUNTRIES

EJDM Europäische Vereinigung von Juristinnen & Juristen für Demokratie und Menschenrechte in der Welt

EJDH Asociación Europea de los Juristas por la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos en el Mundo

EJDH Association Européenne des Juristes pour la Démocratie & les Droits de l'Homme

EGDU Associazione Europea delle Giuriste e dei Giuristi per la Democrazia e i diritti dell'Uomo nel Mondo

Equality Privacy Social Rights
No Racism Peace No Torture No War
Self-Determination of Peoples Democracy
Human Rights Rights of Migrants

Bologna, Donostia, Düsseldorf, Vienna, 25/05/2026

ELDH Statement

On the interception and ill-treatment of members of the Freedom Flotilla in Israel and afterwards on their arrival in Basque Country

The European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights (ELDH) strongly condemns the interception and ill-treatment of the Freedom Flotilla crew by the Israeli authorities, as well as the continuing impunity surrounding Israel's grave breaches of international law and international humanitarian law.

The attack against and arbitrary detention of members of the humanitarian flotilla constitute a serious violation of fundamental principles of international law, including the freedom of navigation in international waters, the prohibition of arbitrary detention, and the protection owed to civilians engaged in humanitarian action. The harassment, intimidation and criminalisation of human rights defenders and solidarity activists attempting to deliver humanitarian aid to the Palestinian population in Gaza are unacceptable and incompatible with Israel's obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

These events cannot be separated from the broader context of the ongoing assault against the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza, which has resulted in massive destruction, forced displacement, starvation, collective punishment and the killing of tens of thousands of civilians. Numerous international bodies, including the International Court of Justice, have warned of the risk of genocide and have ordered provisional measures binding upon Israel. Israel continues to disregard these obligations with the political, diplomatic and economic complicity of third States, including the European Union.

ELDH points out that the Spanish government itself has rightly called for the cancellation of the EU's Association Agreement with Israel and has imposed an arms embargo on Israel. Against this

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background, the Basque police's violent crackdown on the members of the peace flotilla is completely incomprehensible. It shows a complete lack of respect and empathy for the Basque activists on the flotilla and for what they had to endure as a result of their unlawful detention and mistreatment by the Israeli military and police.

Ill-treatment suffered by members of the Freedom Flotilla crew upon their arrival at Loiu Airport

ELDH also condemns the unjustified use of force by the police to which the crew members of the 'Freedom Flotilla' were subjected upon their arrival at Loiu Airport in the Basque Country at the hands of the Basque police. Reports concerning disproportionate police actions, intimidation and the obstruction of the reception and solidarity activities organised for returning activists are deeply concerning and incompatible with the principles of democratic policing and the protection of civil and political rights, including freedom of expression, assembly and solidarity actions.

At a time when humanitarian actors and defenders of international law are increasingly subjected to repression and criminalisation, ELDH reiterates its full solidarity with the members of the Freedom Flotilla and with all those peacefully acting in defence of the rights of the Palestinian people and the enforcement of international law.