

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3131

To direct the Secretary of State to submit a report on whether any support organization that participated in the planning or execution of the recent Gaza flotilla attempt should be designated as a foreign terrorist organization and any actions taken by the Department of State to express gratitude to the government of Greece for preventing the Gaza flotilla from setting sail in contravention of Israel's legal blockade of Gaza, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 6, 2011

Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. CARTER, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. SIRES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of State to submit a report on whether any support organization that participated in the planning or execution of the recent Gaza flotilla attempt should be designated as a foreign terrorist organization and any actions taken by the Department of State to express gratitude to the government of Greece for preventing the Gaza flotilla from setting sail in contravention of Israel's legal blockade of Gaza, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) Since 1948, the United States, Greece, and
6 the international community at large have recog-
7 nized Israel's right to exist and to defend itself and
8 conduct legitimate self-defense.

9 (2) Since 2001, Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic
10 Jihad and the other Palestinian terrorist organiza-
11 tions operating in the Gaza Strip and supported by
12 Iran and Syria have launched over 10,000 rockets
13 into Israeli civilian populations and across Israeli
14 territory.

15 (3) Since the beginning of 2010, Israel has pro-
16 vided over 100,000 tons of aid to the people living
17 in Gaza.

18 (4) Israel's blockade is acknowledged by the
19 United States as necessary and legal given Hamas'
20 control of Gaza, intention to secure greater weap-
21 onry for aggressive purposes and open desire to de-
22 stroy Israel.

23 (5) According to sources, the United Nations-
24 commissioned Palmer Report which was released on
25 July 7, 2011, concludes that the Israeli naval block-

1 ade on Gaza is legal and is in accordance with inter-
2 national law.

3 (6) The Israeli Government has repeatedly indi-
4 cated that any desire to provide humanitarian mate-
5 riel to Gaza can be done through the port of Ashdod
6 then delivered to Gaza by land.

7 (7) Recent past history has suggested that the
8 sole intent of the flotillas is to provoke an Israeli
9 military response in the international waters of the
10 eastern Mediterranean Sea.

11 (8) The Central Intelligence Agency and the
12 Department of the Treasury have determined that
13 flotilla organizers Free Gaza and the Insan Hak ve
14 Hurriyetleri ve Insani Yardim Vakfi (IHH), an Is-
15 lamic nongovernmental organization (known in
16 English as the Foundation for Human Rights and
17 Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief), have known
18 terrorist ties.

19 (9) In 2010, IHH organized a flotilla that in-
20 cluded the ship Mavi Marmara carrying 40 IHH
21 members, including Fatima Mahmadi, Ken O'Keefe,
22 Hassan Iynasi, Hussein Urosh, Ahmad Umimon,
23 and others with known links to Al Qaeda, Hamas,
24 and other terrorist organizations who were armed
25 with 100 metal rods, 200 knives, 150 military self-

1 defense vests, 50 wooden clubs, gas masks, and a
2 telescopic sight for a gun.

3 (10) The explicit objective of the Gaza Flotilla
4 organizers that set sail in 2010 was to breach
5 Israel's coastal security by breaking the lawful and
6 legitimate Israeli maritime security perimeter
7 around the Gaza Strip.

8 (11) According to a June 7, 2010, report by the
9 Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
10 (known by its Hebrew acronym MALAM), based on
11 security interviews of the Gaza Flotilla participants,
12 at least 40 of the 500 passengers aboard the Mavi
13 Marmara vessel were IHH operatives who boarded
14 the ship in an Istanbul port prior to the security
15 checks conducted at the port in Antalya, Turkey, to
16 which the other passengers, mostly humanitarian
17 volunteers, were subject.

18 (12) According to this Intelligence and Ter-
19 rorism Information Center report, these IHH activ-
20 ists were equipped with communications equipment,
21 flak jackets, and gas masks.

22 (13) The group operated with a clear internal
23 hierarchy, with specific activists nominated as fight-
24 ing commanders and who turned the upper deck of

1 the Mavi Marmara into its headquarters, blocking it
2 off to other passengers.

3 (14) In the most recent organization of a Gaza
4 flotilla, Greece worked with the Israeli Government
5 in order to prohibit any violations of Israel's legal
6 blockade of Gaza.

7 (15) Greece has proven itself to be a strategic
8 partner and ally of the United States in anchoring
9 political stability and advancing economic develop-
10 ment in the Balkan and Black Sea regions of south-
11 east Europe and Eurasia, in the Middle East and
12 northern Africa, and throughout the eastern Medi-
13 terranean Sea.

14 (16) Greece is an active participant in peace-
15 keeping and peace-building operations conducted by
16 international organizations, including the United
17 Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
18 (NATO), the European Union (EU), and the Orga-
19 nization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
20 (OSCE).

21 (17) Greece acted without hesitation in prohib-
22 iting any Greek-flagged or foreign-flagged vessels
23 from setting sail out of Greek ports into the water
24 of the Gaza naval blockade.

1 (18) Pursuant to a decision by the Minister of
2 Citizen Protection, Mr. C. Papoutsis, the departure
3 of ships with Greek and foreign flags from Greek
4 ports to Gaza was prohibited on July 1, 2011, and
5 the Hellenic Coast Guard ordered that all appro-
6 priate measures be taken for the implementation of
7 such decision.

8 (19) The Greek Government worked diligently
9 to ensure the safety of even the organizers of the flo-
10 tilla knowing that their reckless, irresponsible, and
11 provocative acts against a sovereign country engaged
12 in self-defense could result in great bodily harm or
13 even death to themselves and other individuals.

14 (20) The Greek Government took more extraor-
15 dinary measures to ensure that the broader mari-
16 time area of the eastern Mediterranean Sea would
17 be continuously monitored by electronic means for
18 tracking, where applicable, the movements of the
19 ships allegedly participating in such an illegal cam-
20 paign.

21 (21) Greek authorities boarded ships and took
22 into custody several individuals, including Captain
23 John Klusmire of the ship Audacity of Hope as it
24 violated Greek Coast Guard orders by setting sail
25 without permission.

1 (22) Greek authorities acted in accordance with
2 the recommendation of the Quartet—the United
3 States, the European Union, the United States and
4 Russia—as it urged countries to prohibit Gaza-
5 bound flotillas that would serve solely to escalate
6 tension in the Middle East.

7 **SEC. 2. DECLARATION OF CONGRESS.**

8 Congress—

9 (1) notes the important role that Greece has
10 played in the wider European, Eurasian, and Middle
11 Eastern regions, and in the community of nations by
12 promoting, peace, freedom, democracy, and security;
13 and

14 (2) stands behind Israel for its sovereign right
15 to defend its citizens and its territory, and specifi-
16 cally for its actions to prevent the import of offen-
17 sive weaponry into the hands of Hamas, Palestinian
18 Jihad, and other terrorist organizations in the Gaza
19 Strip.

20 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

21 It is the sense of Congress that the United States
22 should take appropriate diplomatic steps to express grati-
23 tude to Greece for upholding the rule of law in preventing
24 hostile forces from violating a legal naval blockade of Gaza

1 by Israel and thereby advancing the security of its ally
2 Israel.

3 **SEC. 4. REPORT.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than six months after
5 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
6 State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs
7 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
8 Foreign Relations of the Senate a report on whether any
9 support organization that participated in the planning or
10 execution of the recent Gaza flotilla attempt should be des-
11 ignated as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to sec-
12 tion 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
13 1189).

14 (b) CONTENTS.—The report required under sub-
15 section (a) shall include information on the following:

16 (1) The sources of any logistical, technical, or
17 financial support for the Gaza flotilla ships, includ-
18 ing the Audacity of Hope, that were set to set sail
19 from Greece on July 1, 2011.

20 (2) Any actions taken by the Department of
21 State to express support and gratitude for the prin-
22 cipled stance taken by the Government of Greece to
23 prevent the recent Gaza flotilla attempt to violate
24 Israel's lawful blockade of Gaza.

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