



PRESS RELEASE

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Land Convoy Mission Status: Ten Negotiators Detained Without Consistent Consular Access Amidst Bureaucratic Warfare

May 28, 2026

Tripoli, Libya — The Global Sumud Land Convoy was forced to conclude its overland humanitarian mission to Gaza, following obstacles including bureaucratic warfare, violence against unarmed and peaceful participants, and the detention of 10 persons who attempted to meet with eastern Libyan authorities to negotiate the convoy's safe passage to Egypt. The convoy of 230 participants from more than 20 countries, including doctors, engineers, educators, lawyers and ecobuilders, alongside 7 ambulances, 20 mobile homes, and 10 aid trucks loaded with life-saving supplies and was intended for the besieged civilian population of Gaza.

Traveling overland through North Africa in coordination with the Global Sumud Flotilla's sea mission, the convoy represented a unified civilian-led effort operating simultaneously. After months of prior communication and repeated negotiation attempts, including assurances of safe passage, the convoy was blocked by eastern Libyan authorities at Sirte.

Bureaucratic Warfare

In the months preceding the launch of the Global Sumud Land Convoy, requests for authorisations, permits, and facilitation of the convoy's safe passage along its route starting from Mauritania all the way to the Rafah Crossing in Egypt were sent to over 20 governments, including Libya and Egypt, the latter of which responded positively and advised organisers to coordinate efforts with local Red Crescent organizations as designated intermediaries between the Global Sumud Land Convoy and authorities in Egypt and Libya.

However, when the Land Convoy was close to Sirte, organisers were met with a public statement issued by eastern Libyan authorities on 14 May 2026, requiring the Land Convoy to transfer the humanitarian aid to the Libyan Red Crescent Society, and were informed that only Libyan nationals would be allowed to escort the aid to the Sallum border crossing, attributing these orders to Egyptian authorities.

Negotiators Arbitrarily Detained

In good faith, and in line with the moral responsibility to ensure life-saving aid and specialists reach the besieged people of Gaza as quickly as possible, the Land Convoy deployed a delegation on 19 May 2026 to deliver its written response to eastern Libyan authorities, agreeing to transfer the humanitarian aid to the Libyan Red Crescent who would guarantee its delivery through the Rafah Crossing and discuss the option of proceeding with a limited number of participants, prioritising specialists.

When the agreed deadline passed, and no response was received from authorities and the Libyan Red Crescent Society, on 24 May a 10-member negotiating delegation proceeded to discuss the agreed terms as previously suggested by the eastern Libyan authorities. Instead, they were ordered to board unmarked white vans, and transferred to an unknown location. Communication with the negotiators was cut immediately, and no information about their status was known until eastern Libyan authorities announced their detention the following day, when they were charged with violating “entry permit procedures”.

The detained negotiators, including two medical doctors, are: Alicia Armesto Nuñez (Spain), Laura Kwoczała (Poland), Jenelle Jones (USA), Dr. Maria Paula Giménez (Argentina), Dr. Lucas Ezequiel Aguilera (Argentina), Matías Álvarez Rodríguez (Uruguay), Ana Margarida França Santana Baptista (Portugal), Ashraf Khoja (Tunisia), Domenico Centrone (Italy), Leonarda Alberizia (Italy).

The detention of unarmed civilians for attempting to communicate with local authorities and a humanitarian organization as part of a previously agreed process, following repeated attempts to obtain permits and facilitate passage, constitutes a violation of international human rights and humanitarian law. It is noteworthy that these violations occurred within the context of mediations by the Libyan Red Crescent, a member of the International Federation of the Red Cross/Crescent (IFRC).

On the night of 25 May, more than 200 participants were encamped 10km away from the Sirte crossing when unmarked vehicles began encircling the camp. The participants were forced to evacuate, with some men and women being physically assaulted.

Continued Detention, Continued Blocking of Aid

The Global Sumud Flotilla condemns the use of violence against its participants and the detention of its negotiators as violations of international law.

We demand:

- Continued consular access for all relevant governments to the ten detained negotiators.
- The unconditional and immediate release of all ten negotiators.
- Full compliance with international humanitarian law, including the protections afforded to civilian humanitarian actors under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

We call on the governments of every country whose nationals are among the detained to intervene immediately and without equivocation.

The land and sea missions are not parallel efforts that happened to coincide. They are a single strategy operating on multiple fronts simultaneously. We continue because we must. We explore every pathway available to confront the siege and genocide, because inaction is complicity and complicity has a cost, and that cost is too high. The flotilla continues. Land actions continue. Legal actions continue. Solidarity continues. Until the siege is broken and every person is free.

About the Global Sumud Flotilla

The Global Sumud Flotilla is a civilian-led international coalition conducting maritime and land-based direct action to break the illegal Israeli siege on Gaza and stand alongside the Palestinian people in their pursuit of liberation.

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