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Israel faces legal action for abuse of Gaza flotilla captives

Widespread allegations of brutal treatment of activists and open mockery by far-right Israeli minister Itamar Ben-Gvir are at the heart of the inquiries

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Italy has launched a probe into far-right Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's alleged mistreatment of multinational activists who took part in an aid flotilla bound for Gaza, days after a similar investigation was opened by France. It comes as the EU is considering sanctions on Ben-Gvir over the alleged abuse.



© X / itamarbengvir

The scandal was triggered by the

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IDF's interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla in May, an international civilian initiative set up to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza. Activists have repeatedly attempted to reach the Palestinian enclave over the years, but their vessels have ended up attacked, sunk, burned, bombed, or stopped by Israeli forces.

The enclave remains in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Nearly its entire population of approximately 2.1 million is displaced, while roughly 60% of Palestinians in Gaza have lost their homes during the latest war between Israel and Hamas.

The latest attempt to run the blockade was no exception – the ships were boarded by the Israeli military in international waters off Cyprus and over 400 activists were detained. The detainees were expelled after a few days in custody, alleging widespread mistreatment at the hands of the Israeli forces, including beatings, torture, sexual assault, and outright rape.



While Israel has repeatedly taken an extremely heavy-handed approach to those involved

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in such endeavors, the latest incident was further aggravated by the actions of Ben-Gvir. The minister showed up at a prison ship housing the detainees waving a large Israeli flag, taunting the kneeling and bound activists and urging the government to jail them for a long time. He also posted the video online.



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The stunt garnered Ben-Gvir widespread international condemnation, as well as some criticism at home. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sought to distance himself, stating that the behavior was *"not consistent with the values and norms of the State of Israel."* Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar slammed Ben-Gvir's prison ship stunt as a *"disgraceful display,"* accusing the minister of causing great *"harm"* to Israel and jeopardizing efforts to fix the country's

international image. The right-wing politician stood by his actions however, accusing Sa'ar of submitting to *"supporters of terrorism."*

Multiple nations have formally condemned the treatment of the Global Sumud Flotilla activists, with some also taking aim at Ben-Gvir. France banned the minister from entry days after he published his stunt, citing his *"reprehensible actions towards French and European citizens."* Poland also imposed a travel ban on the minister, while Ireland last week barred Ben-Gvir, as well as extreme-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, from entering the country over the flotilla case and anti-Palestinian remarks.

Last week, France opened a preliminary investigation into suspected *"torture"* and *"war crimes"* against the crew of the Gaza-bound flotilla. Italy, which has emerged as a strong supporter of Israel in the conflict with Hamas, reportedly took similar action on Monday. Italian prosecutors have begun an investigation of Ben-Gvir on suspicion of torture and kidnapping of the country's nationals among the activists.



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The Italian probe was openly mocked by the recalcitrant minister, who said he would not “shy away from one investigation or another and will continue to stand proudly alongside our fighters.”

“The land of the Boot has become the land of the flip-flop,” he added, referring to Italy’s geographical shape and an apparent shift in its position towards Israel.



The remarks landed poorly in Rome, with Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani lashing out at Ben-Gvir. “Unacceptable words that we send back to the sender; they are not worthy of a minister,” Tajani wrote on X on Tuesday.

The probes come as the EU is expected to consider imposing restrictions on the Israeli firebrand. The flotilla incident has also reignited the drive for broader measures against West

Jerusalem, including the potential suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

While the sanctions against Ben-Gvir are expected to be discussed as soon as next week, it remains unclear whether the bloc will adopt them given the lack of consensus. The Czech Republic has vowed to block any anti-Israel initiatives even if it means opposing all the other member states.

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 **El Calambre** 6/11/2026 at 7:52 AM

1

If it's Israel, there is no need for an inquiry or trial – because it is ALWAYS guilty of crimes against humanity.

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 **Jõa** 6/11/2026 at 6:25 AM

0

Well, the flotillas are actors paid to be a pain in the... neck for Israel. Telling lies is written into the script. Enjoy!

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 **Tommy Prince** 6/11/2026 at 5:40 AM

1

Make it 110.

[Reply](#)

 **James Kwaateng** 6/11/2026 at 4:27 AM

2

Do the judges themselves speak the truth when Israel and the privileged societies are the suspected culprits? Have Israel and America ever been banned from international sports? But Russia is currently banned.

[Reply](#)

A Anton hart 6/11/2026 at 4:12 AM

3

Israelis should be banned from travelling outside Israel because they simply have no manners, are arrogant, aggressive, dishonest and find great pleasure in abusing locals. They are simply foul and if they come into foreign countries then any misbehaviour should be met with harsh prison sentences preferably with hard labour.

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V Velo Cast 6/11/2026 at 4:09 AM

0

They put them in a Prostration position, meaning their kneeling and placing seven specific parts of the body on the ground must always face the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca. But, that is not the case here because they facing the ship's containers. 🦜

[Reply](#)

Covert 6/11/2026 at 3:29 AM

1

Legal action on chosen Zionist ethno-supremacists?? Good luck with that. They will investigate themselves and find no wrongdoing as usual 🙄

[Reply](#)

J Jay Yoo 6/11/2026 at 3:26 AM

1

They raped an East Asian woman and tortured. That country president pledged the revenge.

[Reply](#)

Boredom Inc 6/11/2026 at 1:51 AM

0

Jews, ashamed of nothing and offended by everything. They make me want to puke for humanities sake! Earth Cancer that needs to be dealt in a similar fashion.

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