

# Filmmaker releases smuggled footage from Israeli assault

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More than 60 minutes of video footage taken aboard the MV Mavi Marmara during the May 31 Israeli commando raid has been publicly released by Iara Lee, an American filmmaker and activist. While her video cameras and other footage were seized by Israeli troops in the raid, Lee managed to conceal the one hour-long video during her detention by Israeli authorities. The graphic footage shows some of the Turkish activists after they had been shot, with their colleagues desperately trying to offer assistance and first aid.

Lee's video also provides definitive proof of an earlier report published in the British *Independent* that Israeli troops who raided the aid flotilla in international waters carried with them a booklet with the names and photographs of many of the individuals on board. Before the camera, one person in the video flicks through the pages of the booklet, which was found on one of the Israeli soldiers who was hurt during the raid. The list indicates that Israeli intelligence and military operatives had identified people aboard the aid vessel whom they wanted to either kill or detain.

The video footage also provides some indication of how shocked people were on board the ferry when they realised that the troops were using live ammunition. At one point an unidentified woman tries to communicate with the commandos using a loudspeaker, saying: "All the passengers are sitting down! We are civilians taking care of injured people! Don't use violence! We need help for the people! Don't use violence against the civilians!"

Iara Lee told *Democracy Now!* that minutes after the shooting had began: "We had the megaphone in our rooms, in every room on the ship, saying, 'Stay quiet

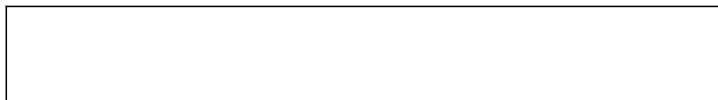
and calm. They're using live ammunition. There is no way we can resist. They are taking over the ship. Just stay calm and don't resist at all.' You know? The other boats, they used rubber bullets and tear gas; they didn't kill people. But in our ship, they came to kill."

She added: "I just know that when they call us like a hate boat, this is insane, because obviously we were there to bring humanitarian aid to Gaza, and they were the ones using live ammunition, to the point when they did the autopsy, the people who are found dead, they had like thirty bullets. So, can we say the Israeli navy and the commandos, they came to play ball with us? No, they came to kill."

In a press conference held at the UN headquarters in New York last week, the filmmaker explained that her ability to smuggle the footage out of Israeli detention was partly due to the fact that the Israeli soldiers who were ordered to search everyone with the aid flotilla were "young people who didn't seem to want to be there". Lee said she hoped that an expert analysis could be made of the audio on the footage to try to establish exactly when live ammunition was first fired.

The footage underscores the criminal character of the US and Israeli attempt to block any international investigation into what happened on May 31 in the Mediterranean Sea. (See: "US backs Israeli inquiry into aid flotilla massacre")

The following is a link to the footage on YouTube.





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