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Texas senator defends Israel over killing of US activist

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By [David Edwards and Daniel Tencer](#)
Sunday, June 6th, 2010 -- 12:03 pm

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Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) believes the pro-Palestinian activists who were killed in a clash with the Israeli military had provoked the confrontation.

ABC's Jake Tapper asked Cornyn how the US should react after Israeli commandos killed Furkan Dogan, a dual US and Turkish national who was part of the aid flotilla bound for Gaza.



"It's become clear that Israel killed a US citizen in international waters with this flotilla incident," Tapper said. "What should the US response be when an ally kills a US citizen?"

"We don't know all the circumstances yet," Cornyn replied. "But it appears to be a premeditated provocation of Israel and an attempt to run the blockade that's existed since Hamas took over Gaza."

"They took over Gaza through elections, we should point out," Tapper said. "Elections pushed by the Bush administration."

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"They are entitled, as matter of their self-defense to look to see if weapons or other items are being smuggled in," Cornyn continued. "This was pretty clearly a premeditated provocation and it's unfortunate that lives were lost. ... If the people organizing this flotilla had been committed to peaceful activity, as opposed to provocation, this would not have occurred and Israel would have been able to examine the contents of the flotilla and they would have been delivered to the people of Gaza who needed help."

Cornyn is joining a growing group of US politicians -- on both sides of the political aisle -- who have come out in defense of Israel's killing of nine activists aboard a Gaza-bound aid flotilla last Monday, despite a loud chorus of condemnation from the global community.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) has come out in defense of Israel's actions. "Israel is one of our strongest and most important allies, and the United States stands firmly with Israel at this critical time," Reid **said in a statement**.

Some lawmakers have gone even further. California Democratic House Rep. Brad Sherman told reporters Friday that he wants to see US citizens who participated in the flotilla prosecuted under anti-terrorism laws.

"I will be asking the Attorney General to prosecute any American involved in what was clearly an effort to give items of value to a terrorist organization," **he said**.

This video is from ABC's *This Week*, broadcast June 6, 2010.



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