



CUPE 3903 Exec: Calling for Chris Smalls' Release

The CUPE 3903 Executive Committee calls for the immediate release of Chris Smalls, co-founder and former president of the Amazon Labor Union, along with any others who were taken from the *Handala* and are still being detained. We further demand accountability for the treatment Smalls experienced at the hands of the IDF/IOF. We rise in solidarity with those who are attempting to supply much-needed items like food, baby formula, and medical supplies to Gaza amidst the ongoing genocide. In [Smalls' own words](#), the *Handala* is an "unarmed civilian vessel carrying humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people in Gaza" to resist their current deliberate starvation by the Israeli government.

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition [has reported](#) that the IDF/IOF used a level of force against Smalls, including physical assault, that it did not use against other abducted activists. This is extremely disturbing, especially in the broader context of systemic anti-Black racism and the disproportionate suppression of Black activists in Canada, the US, and abroad. We join the Freedom Flotilla Coalition in condemning this violence against Smalls and demanding accountability for the assault and discriminatory treatment he faced. We urgently condemn the weaponization of state violence against both labour leaders and people in Gaza and call on other unions to do likewise.

Chris Smalls [has been quoted](#) as saying, "People have to understand that unions have a responsibility to protect, to be the shield for the working class. And that doesn't exclude Palestinian people... an injury to one is an injury to all."

In [an Instagram video from July 16, 2025](#), while a crew member of the *Handala*, Smalls spoke of the *Madleen* and the *Handala* as feeding people hope, even if they are prevented from delivering their shipments of food and aid. Smalls ended his speech by calling for "love and solidarity."

We thank Smalls and other activists and journalists for inspiring hope, and we will not stop rising with them in love and solidarity.