

Spain Briefing: September and October 2024

Reporting period: 1st September – 31st October 2024

Spain National Developments

The contradictory actions of the Spanish state towards Palestine since October 7th 2023:

- Foreign Minister “Albares [discusses](#) the situation in Gaza with the Palestinian Prime Minister”.
- The King of Spain, Felipe VI, receives the [credentials](#) of the Ambassador of the State of Palestine.
- Podemos¹ coordinator of Murcia, Javier Sánchez Serna, [denounces](#) “the use of the Official Secrets Act to avoid reporting on the purchase and sale of arms to Israel in the midst of genocide and ethnic cleansing”. According to a recent [report](#) by the Center Delàs per la Pau, “Since October 7th, Spain has sold weapons worth one million euros and purchased Israeli military and defence goods and services worth more than one billion euros”. In 2014, the CNI² launched a confidentiality agreement with the Israeli Ministry of Defence which granted total secrecy to arms operations between the two countries [indefinitely](#). Beginning of October, President Sánchez [affirms](#) that “Since last October 7, Spain has not exported any type of weapons or military material to Israel. It is urgent that the International Community stops exporting weapons to the Netanyahu Government”. Podemos leader, Ione Belarra, [responded](#) “Spain has continued to sell, buy and allow the transport of weapons to Israel during the genocide, as certified by the Center Delàs reports. That a president lies like this degrades our democracy. Stop making us complicit”. Some weeks later, Podemos [conditions](#) its support for the Government on breaking with Israel”.
- The Spanish Government [condemns](#) electronic attacks in Lebanon that took place in Lebanon, which have caused dozens of deaths and thousands of wounded, with numerous victims among the civilian population.
- Spanish President Sánchez issues a joint [statement](#) with his counterparts of France, and Italy condemning the targeting of UNIFIL by the IDF. Since the statement, UNIFIL has been [targeted](#) several times.

¹ Unidas Podemos: UP (in English “united we can”) left wing political party in Spain, currently in the opposition.

² CNI: Centro Nacional de Inteligencia- National Intelligence Center

- The Ministry of Defense has [excluded](#) Israel from the International Defense and Security Fair (Feindef), the largest showcase for the arms and military equipment industry in Spain, which will be held between May 12 and 14 next year.
- Second vice-president, Yolanda Díaz³, is faced with the Assembly of Students for Palestine, in an event at the Granada University. The students [reprehend](#) Díaz and the Central Government for being complicit in the ongoing genocide and the aggression on Lebanon, as well as for the lying about the aforementioned export of arms to Israel since October 7th.

Funding a genocide and illegal settlements

- The illegal council of “Gush Etzion”, located in Al Makhroun, one of Bethlehem’s last green areas and part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Battir, has brought settlers, the Jewish National Fund (with offices worldwide) & a [Spanish](#) company (OSSA) built the infrastructure to make it easier for settlers to arrive. It has been key in expanding the presence of settlers in the area as well as in fragmenting Bethlehem east/west.
- Spanish banks have [financed](#) the production of weapons for the Gaza genocide with 4.188 billion dollars. A [report](#) by the Delàs Centre reveals that a dozen financial institutions in our country have granted loans or invested part of their funds in seven companies that supply arms and ammunition to Israel.

Palestine solidarity movement goes on strike:

- On September 27th, a [general strike](#) was organized by over 200 unions & NGOs across major Spanish cities to demand immediate severance of ties with Israel. Over 150,000 people participated in the combination of rallies and actions that took place in most of Spain’s cities.

Repression of the Palestine solidarity movement:

- VOX took pro-Palestinian España activists from the [Samidoun](#) network to the National Court for speaking out against genocide. On October 29, they were called to make their first statement before the National Court for an alleged crime of glorifying terrorism. The accused made a brief statement to the media upon leaving, along with Amnesty International and the Palestinian Community of Madrid. Jaldía Abubakra, one of the defendants, states bluntly: “Those who should be in the dock are the

³ SUMAR: Sumar (in English “Unite” or “Add up”) is a left-wing to far-left electoral platform—constituted as an instrumental political party for the 2023 Spanish general election and stems from left wing party PODEMOS. SUMAR is currently part of the ruling coalition government of Spain.

Netanyahus and the Bidens, who are carrying out a genocide in real time before the passive gaze of the so-called international community.”

- On October 6th the National Police [cracked](#) down violently on an antigenocide demonstration in Santiago de Compostela.
- Judge Carlos Valle has [dismissed](#) the complaint against an Israeli agent who brandished his [pistol](#) towards protesting students, during a protest against the participation of the Ambassador of that country in an event held at the Complutense University in Madrid in February. He is a person legally accredited as [diplomatic](#) personnel in functions of protection of the Honorable Lady Ambassador of the State of Israel’ adds the Spanish Police.”

National Security & Counter-terrorism

- “The Euro-Arab Foundation publishes an analysis of Operation [Escribano](#) with recommendations for the prevention of violent extremism in prisons”. This [report](#) only examines what the authors call “Islamist radicalization”. This document contradicts any previous work⁴ done to dismantle the racist and discriminatory procedure and surveillance of Muslim prisoners. It is also notable, that this very foundation occupies spaces in the fight against anti-Muslim [racism](#), which are key to Muslim communities.
- Elcano think tank [celebrates](#) the “11th Elcano Forum on Global Terrorism ‘The current threat of Islamist terrorism to the West’”. Resistance groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah are portrayed as “actors [that] are linked to a wide range of terrorist activities in Western societies”, together with real terror groups such as ISIL and AlQaeda. Speakers are the pundits that fill the mainstream press with periodical alarmist and biased articles.
- “[Defense](#) Minister Margarita Robles highlighted Spain's leadership in coordinating capacity-building assistance in African partner countries in the Sahel and West Africa in the fight against ISIS”. In the same act, Robles admitted that “the Spanish Armed Forces continue to provide support to security and counter-terrorism in Iraq alongside our allies in the NATO Mission in Iraq (NMI). For this mission, Spain has 178 troops deployed”.
- “Five imams arrested in the last year for their terrorist links or for constituting a threat to security. The imams were arrested in Huelva, Madrid, Badajoz, Zaragoza and Catalonia; four of them for terrorist activities and another for his radical beliefs.” Some of them are arrested to be [deported](#) with no trial for an assumed incompatibility with “Western societies”.
- One case of a deported imam in 2022, Mohamed Said Badawi, who now lives in Morocco, was smeared by the Spanish press calling him in the titles of the articles “expelled [jihadist](#)” or “protected [Salafist](#)”. He was never tried and there was never

⁴ Operation [Nova](#), the [FIES files](#), etc.

proof of that affirmation, which begs the question of the hundreds of Muslims in the Spanish state that are put in that category with no due process and no accountability for the press or its sources.

- The [ECHR](#) rejects a claim by a Moroccan imam who was expelled from Spain for being “a danger to national security”. Among the given reasons by the Spanish state, and now the ECHR, is that “his wife wore the niqab both in summer and winter, even using black gloves that left only her eyes exposed”. This sets another discriminating precedent.
- “Internal Affairs investigates [13.000 agents](#) linked to the ultra-right platform ‘Primavera Española’” (Spanish spring). A group made up of agents of the National Police Corps (CNP), has captured the attention of the public and the authorities after being singled out for its links to the far right, the glorification of police violence, the applauding of actions such as shooting suspected criminals at close range, among others.
- “Controversy in Algeciras over invitation to imam investigated for financing jihadism”. This is the [title](#) of several news pieces. As reported in previous briefings⁵, the imam who is smeared is the elected president of the Islamic Commission of Spain⁶, imam Aiman Adlbi who, to date, has not been tried. Vox⁷ calls for the [closure](#) of the mosque that invited Adlbi.

Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism

Cases:

- Spanish police [investigate](#) possible hate crime after Moroccan rapper found beaten to death in Murcia. Said, 30, was known in the rap scene for tackling social issues such as racism and Islamophobia in his songs.
- “Almonte residents organize night patrols to [hunt](#) for immigrants”. The breeding ground for the incidents in [El Ejido](#) in 2000 is now being repeated in the town of Huelva, where a significant migrant population is concentrated, an essential workforce for the production of red fruits.
- VOX leader in Terrassa [accused](#) of alleged hate crime for appearing publicly in a T-shirt that “Islamism out” and “More walls, fewer Moors”.
- A fight between two children that leads to an Islamophobic attack on a mother in [Seville](#): “Go back to your country, I’m going to tear off your veil”.

⁵ December 23- January 24 National Policy Briefing.

⁶ The Islamic Commission of Spain is the main interlocutor between the State and Muslim communities.

⁷ VOX: Vox is a far-right national conservative political party, currently in the opposition.

- There were no “Arabs with weapons”. A young man [wrongly](#) warned on Saturday about the presence of “two men with weapons” in a car park in central Madrid and the eviction was used on social media to spread racist and anti-Arab messages.
- “Six months in prison and a 960 € fine for an Islamophobic [attack](#) on two women in Alzira” in 2017. According to what both defendants have confessed, “they grabbed the two victims by the hair, pushed them and punched and scratched them, causing injuries”.
- 17 years old soccer player, Lamine Yamal, suffered [racist](#) insults during a match by Real Madrid fans: “Fucking men⁸. Selling handkerchiefs at traffic lights.”.

⁸ MENA: Acronym used to describe unaccompanied foreign migrant minors, mostly arriving from the north of Africa. It is also used to dehumanize and as an insult.