

Report says Spain granted 46 contracts to Israeli military firms since Gaza war began



An Israeli soldier inspects ammunition in Sderot, Occupied Lands, on Oct. 9, 2023. (Photo by Getty Images)

Madrid, April 27 (RHC)-- Despite promising to halt weapons trade with Israel, Spain has reportedly signed 46 contracts worth over ?1 billion with Israeli military firms since the Gaza war began.

The revelation came after Spain scrapped a controversial ammunition contract with an Israeli supplier for its Civil Guard, sparking internal divisions in Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's fragile Socialist coalition in recent days.

While Sanchez – one of Europe's most vocal critics of Israel's war on Gaza – halted arms transactions with Israel after the regime launched the October 2023 war against Gaza, the Barcelona-based Centre Delàs found that Spain, nevertheless, approved 46 military deals worth ?1.045 billion (\$1.2B) with Israeli firms.

According to a statement released by the think tank on Friday, which previewed an upcoming report, out of the 46 contracts involving rocket launchers and missiles, 10 have yet to be formalized. While some contracts involved maintenance or upgrades of existing equipment, others represented new agreements that “could increase the dependence... on an industry essential to perpetrate a genocide.”

“If the government had agreed a comprehensive arms embargo on Israel that included, among other measures, imports and bans on hiring Israeli [military] companies or their subsidiaries, none of these contracts would have been signed,” the statement added.

The report's co-author, Eduardo Melero, told AFP, “It is clearly demonstrated that the government lied, there was no pledge, that was pure propaganda.” Melero explained that under Spanish law, protective gear like bulletproof materials qualify as defense equipment, meaning their purchase directly violates the government's commitment to halt arms trade with the Israeli regime.

A Spanish government source said it had decided to stick to its October 2023 commitment not to provide Israeli companies with arms or revenue flows “and nor will it do so in future.”

Israel criticized Spain's decision to scrap the bullet supply contract for the Civil Guard, arguing the government was “putting political motives above security needs.”

Last year, Spain urged other EU nations to halt the bloc's free trade agreement with Israel in response to its continued aggression in the Gaza Strip. The diplomatic push coincides with escalating Palestinian casualties in Gaza and a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in the blockaded territory.

Since the beginning of Israel's aggression on Gaza, the number of Palestinian fatalities has surpassed 51,350.

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