

# *Poll Shows Majority of Spaniards Oppose Joining U.S.-Led Coalition*

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Madrid, November 30 (RHC)-- The overwhelming majority of Spaniards are against their country's military partnership in a U.S.-led coalition that is supposedly bombing Takfiri Daesh terrorists in Syria, a poll shows.

The survey, published by El Mundo, Spain's second-largest daily, on Sunday, revealed that 54 percent of the respondents opposed the move, which is being contemplated by the government of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy. Thirty five percent of those polled approved of the measure, while the rest said they were undecided.

The coalition has been pounding purported targets belonging to Daesh inside Syria since last September without any authorization from Damascus or a United Nations mandate. The campaign has fallen severely short of dislodging the group.

Meanwhile, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad told China's Phoenix television in an interview published last week that terrorists harrying the country had grown in power after the United States and its allies started aerial strikes against purported Daesh hideouts.

On Saturday, at least 5,000 people gathered in Madrid to protest the government's potential involvement in the conflict in Syria. "No to War," chanted the demonstrators, who gathered outside the Reina Sofia museum in the Spanish capital.

Following the protest, Rajoy announced that he would hold off on any decision related to the subject. "Decisions have to be well thought through, as in any aspect of life," said Rajoy, adding that Madrid was also discussing the matter with its allies.

Observers say the Spanish premier is wary of rushing the matter, mindful of his predecessor Jose Maria Aznar's ouster from power after the 2004 Madrid bombings that killed 191 people. A year earlier, when the United States had sent its troops to Iraq, Aznar voiced support for the invasion, which has been the subject of widespread criticism for contributing to the expansion of terrorism rather than stopping it.

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