

Attempts to Block the Holding of the Conference of the Iraqi Resistance

Iraqi government demands Spain to prevent the activities in Gijon and Madrid

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Global Research, May 28, 2010

[Iraqsolidaridad](#) 25 May 2010

Region: [Europe](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [History](#)

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News Release from the State Campaign against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI)

“The Iraqi government has reported that it will demand that the Spanish government block the holding of conference activities scheduled in Gijón and Madrid between June 18-21. The conference, titled “International Conference on the Iraqi Political Resistance —Iraq, Sovereignty and Democratic Reconstruction,” has been organized by the Spanish Campaign against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI). According to the official note, the al-Maliki government will demand that Spain not allow the conference to be held, in which “persons will participate who are claimed [by the Iraqi government] to have lent financial aid and support to violence.” Through Ali Musawi, Press Secretary for the Iraqi Prime Minister and Director of the National Press Center, it has threatened Spain with “negative repercussions.” According to Arab media, the collaborationist Iraqi authorities may even demand the surrender of the Iraqi participants, the majority of whom have visited Spain previously and certain of whom have already obtained their entry visa”.

In a note released on Monday, May 24th by the presidential office of the acting Iraqi Prime Minister, Nuri al-Maliki, the Iraqi government has reported that it will demand that the Spanish government block the holding of activities planned in Gijón and Madrid between June 18th and 21st. The “International Conference of the Iraqi Political Resistance - Iraq, Sovereignty and Democratic Reconstruction,” has been organized by the Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI) [1]. According to the official note, the al-Maliki government will demand that Spain not allow this meeting to be held, which “will be attended by people claimed [by the Iraqi government] to have financed and supported violence.” According to Arab media, the collaborative Iraqi authorities may come to ask for the Iraqi participants to be surrendered, the majority of whom have visited Spain on previous occasions and some of whom have already obtained their entry visas for the event.

In the events planned for Spain, senior representatives from the main anti-occupation currents will be joined by Iraqi intellectuals and activists, as well as international figures and representatives from European and U.S. organizations. At the Gijón conference it is hoped that these groups will put forward a first joint statement, claiming legitimacy for the resistance to the occupation according to legal international parameters and expressly condemning all kinds of terrorism. Also, that Iraq’s integrity be defended and that the

various nationalities within the Iraqi people be acknowledged and respected, and that dialogue be the method for resolving problems between Iraqis. Finally, that political plurality be explicitly defended along with peaceful alternatives in power, according to the will of the Iraqi people expressed through the polls – along with the principle of equality in the duties and rights of all Iraqis, and recognition and compliance with all international accords relative to the protection of human rights.

Threats of “Negative Repercussions” for Spain

Ali Musawi, Press Secretary for the Iraqi Prime Minister and Director of the National Press Center told the official Iraqi newspaper al-Sabah on Monday “that the [Iraqi] government deplores the holding of such conferences, whose objective is to derail efforts toward stability and security in the country, and attack the democratic experience [in Iraq].” Ali Musawi reported that the Iraqi Foreign Affairs Ministry would send an urgent message to the Spanish government “via the diplomatic route (...) to stop the holding of the conference” in which, according to him – it is planned that Iraqi citizens “who support terrorism” will participate. According to al-Sabah, Musawi was quoted as saying, “The Iraqi government rejects the holding of such conferences, in Spain or any other country, which negatively affect the situation in Iraq.

The Arabic language newspaper Sharq al-Awsat also reported in its Tuesday, May 25th edition [2], that Ali Musawi had told it “that the Iraqi Foreign Affairs Ministry has mobilized itself to protest the holding of this conference, as well as any others with similar characteristics in any other country, and has informed its Spanish counterpart of its unhappiness over the issue and the possible negative repercussions that the conference might have on bilateral relations.”

Since January, 2010, a colonel from the Spanish Civil Guard has headed the European Union Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq —called “Eujust Lex”— whose objective is to train police, prosecutors and prison personnel. As confirmed by the U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden, in his visit to Madrid at the beginning of May, the Spanish Civil Guard will also train the Iraqi border police [3].

Since the holding of legislative elections in Iraq on March 7th, the country’s internal situation is dependent on Nuri al-Maliki, the acting Prime Minister, being able to remain in charge through the support of the minority Shiite group, the Iraqi Alliance, snatching the win from Iyad Allawi, who heads the list with the most support – 91 of the 325 parliamentary seats. In recent weeks, the Iranian regime has brokered the negotiations and imposed an agreement in Tehran – which includes al-Maliki’s re-election – an agreement that was finally accepted by Moqtada al-Sader [4], who was initially hostile to al-Maliki’s re-election.

Again according to Sharq al-Awsat, Musawi has indicated that the internal Iraqi government will ask the Spanish government to hand over the conference participants, against whom it has issued judicial arrest warrants. The majority of the Iraqi participants planning to attend the activities in Gijón and Madrid have visited Spain on previous occasions and some of them have already recently obtained their European Union entry visas.

Notes

1. See IraqSolidaridad: [International Conference of the Iraqi Political Resistance](#) and [Public Activities Program: Gijón \(Spain\), June 18-20, 2010](#)

2. "The Iraqi government protests the holding of a conference in Spain on the Iraqi resistance. An adviser to al-Maliki says the meeting will harm bilateral relations" ([Arabic](#)) [Al Sharq al Awsat, May 25, 2010](#)
3. El País, April 16 and May 9, 2010.
4. AP, May 23, 2010.

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