

Spain Sells Laser Guided Missiles to Saudi Arabia. Destruction and Death In Yemen vs. Unemployment in Spain

An Appeal to Spain's President, Pedro Sanchez

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Global Research, September 16, 2018

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

Theme: [Military and WMD](#), [US NATO](#)
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*Spain's President, socialist **Pedro Sanchez**, canceled a week ago the sale of 400 laser-guided missiles to the Saudis for humanitarian reasons (value of the missile contract € 9.2 million -US\$ 10.7 million). A couple of days ago, he reversed that noble decision, reinstating the sale, because the Saudis threatened cancelling their contract for 5 "Corvette" warships to be built by Navantia over the next few years, for a value of € 1.8 billion (US\$ 2.1 billion), providing work for some 6000 shipyard workers in one of the economically worst hit areas of Spain, Cadiz Province of Andalusia.*

So, to save jobs, Sanchez decided to sell the bombs after all - the very bombs that will further decimate the Yemeni population - kill masses of children and increase the untold, unfathomable misery for this poor country, strategically located on the Gulf of Aden.

The war ships, Spain is producing for the Saudis, are certainly not going to bring peace to the world either; they bring perhaps work to Spanish shipyard workers, but, Dear Mr. Sanchez, where are your ethics, where is your sense of Human Rights?

Would it not be more ethical to help Spanish workers find alternative jobs, or while they are looking, pay them unemployment at a decent level? Perhaps exceptional unemployment, because the reason for the unemployment in this case is 'exceptional' and ethical to the point that the workers would probably understand - a sense of integrity and conscience they may proudly pass on to their children.

To top it all off - Spain's Minister of Defense, **Margarita Robles**, pretends that the Saudis have to guarantee that the missiles will not be used against Yemenis. Whom does she think she is fooling? - Would the Spanish people be so blind to reality to believe this lie? - I don't think so. The Spaniards, having gone themselves through ten years of foreign imposed economic austerity hardship, an economic warfare of sorts, are more awake than believing dishonesties that serve the capitalist, profit-seeking war industry.

The Spanish bombs may substantially contribute to the killing of tens of thousands of Yemenis and among them countless defenseless children and women. The delivery of these missiles would be a tacit recognition and acceptance that the Saudis, supported by the US,

the UK and France, block vital food and medical supplies from entering Yemen, thereby starving literally millions to death. And most likely the Spanish warships are creating in Yemen or elsewhere even worse human suffering.

Instead, Mr. Sanchez - why not showing your heart and compassion for these innocent victims of western aggression, overriding your Minister of Defense, and block the sale of the 400 deadly missiles and the 5 killer Corvettes?

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According to Mint Press News (10 September, 2018), the UN estimates that nearly 20 million Yemenis could die from starvation this year. That's about 70% of the entire population, and that horrific number includes more than 2 million children. Two to three generations wiped out by the world's most criminal monster nations, the Saudis, supported by the US, UK, France specifically, and more generally, by NATO. About 500,000 of these children already show severe signs of malnutrition, which, if it lasts over an extended period of time, may cause severe brain damage and stunting, effects that might even be passed on to future generations.

Since the onset of the war which typically and conveniently is called by the west a 'civil war' which it is of course not - the US has supported the confrontation with over US\$ 200 billion of war planes and weapons, and the UK with missiles and bombs. This war of aggression by the US and western puppet allies, aiming foremost at dominating the country's geographic and geostrategic location, overlooking the Gulf of Aden and further to the east, the Arabian Sea, leading to the Persian Gulf, has created the worst humanitarian crisis in modern history.

Under international pressure and a UN appeal, the Saudis have offered US\$ 300 million worth of humanitarian aid - food and medication - with deadly strings attached. They have weaponizing this humanitarian aid, by closing the main ports of entry, especially the one of Hodeida, so the aid could not reach the population in need. Yemen relies for 80% of her food supply on maritime imports, 90% of which normally enters through the Red Sea port of Hodeida.

The Saudis - always with the explicit support of Washington - targeted on purpose key survival installations, like water supply and sewerage systems, agricultural fields, market places, food storage sites, power generation and electricity grids, hospitals, schools, basic transportation infrastructure - all to create the most abject scenario for starvation and disease, especially intestinal diseases, dysentery, cholera, from lack of drinking water and sewage pollution. With a currency that loses every day more of its value and skyrocketing food prices, three quarters of the population depends on humanitarian aid - most of which is blocked at the points of entry.

The last remaining lifeline for about 18 million Yemenis is the port of Hodeida. In fact, the assault on the port city of Hodeida is led by another U.S. Gulf coalition ally, the United Arab Emirates. The deadly operation to capture Hodeida is dubbed "Golden Victory", putting up to a million people into an open prison of sexual torture, rape, starvation and uncountable other war crimes. According to UN estimates, a quarter-million men, women, and children could die from the military assault alone should the US-backed coalition continue its invasion of Hodeida. Saudi warplanes have already bombed school buses with children and

buses of refugees fleeing the airstrikes, killing hundreds.

Mr. President Sanchez, you must be aware of this abysmal situation and crime that your 400 guided missiles would worsen – more bloodshed, more suffering, more children killed? – Aren't you?

And if you are, Mr. President, don't you think that the humanitarian gesture that you first intended, not selling these bombs to the Saudis – would by far outweigh the unemployment of 6000 shipyard workers? – An unemployment that your government could easily resolve, if not on a regular, then on an exceptional basis for the exceptional cause of avoiding more killing and more suffering, or what the UN describes as an outright genocide.

But there may be more at stake than meets the eye. Despite some fierce opposition, the US Congress has again voted for unquestioned support for Saudi Arabia's war on Yemen. Foreign Secretary Pompeo has made it clear that he expects allied nations, especially NATO nations, of which Spain is one, to follow the US lead in supporting the Saudi-led hostility against a nation already eviscerated, for all practical purposes.

Was this perhaps understood as a threat of US sanctions, in case you disobey this tacit order, Mr. President?

Dear Mr. Sanchez, you would have a brilliant and simple legal reason for NOT selling these deadly and destructive weapons, missiles and warships, to the Saudis. The Spanish Constitution, like the Constitutions of most European countries, prohibits selling weapons to countries *“when there are indications that these weapons could be used against inherent human dignity”*. In addition, the common position of the EU recommends and insists that her members refrain from selling arms when there is a risk that they are used to violate Human Rights.

Of course, any EU law or regulation is easily overruled by the Masters from Washington. That's why it takes guts – and a more – for a President, a socialist and humanitarian at heart, one who in his first 100 days in office has already done a lot of good at home, by undoing some of the disastrous social laws of his conservative predecessor, who was forced out of office in the midst of modern Spain's scandal of worst corruption – hence, for you Mr. President, to resist the pressure from outside as well as from within – would be sending an important message of moral and ethics to the world.

Mr. Sanchez, you would be a hero, not only for Spain and the Spanish shipyard workers, who would most certainly applaud you, but for the entire world. You would demonstrate that your ethics cannot be compromised by money or political pressure. This would, indeed, be a novelty for our neoliberal western world.

And your personal benefit, Mr. Sanchez: You could again sleep at night.

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