

Spain's Socialist Party-Sumar government complicit in the US-Israeli attack on Iran

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1 March 2026

Spain's Socialist Party (PSOE)-Sumar coalition government has formally distanced itself from the US-Israeli attack on Iran, while still providing logistical infrastructure located on Spanish territory to support the illegal operation.

On Saturday, Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez tweeted, "We reject the unilateral military action by the United States and Israel, which represents an escalation and contributes to a more uncertain and hostile international order." He then opposed Iran's right to defend itself, stating, "We also reject the actions of the Iranian regime and the Revolutionary Guard. We cannot afford another prolonged and devastating war in the Middle East."

The level of political cynicism involved is striking. While publicly invoking "de-escalation and international law," a posture adopted because this aggression faces mass opposition within the Spanish working class, Sánchez has allowed Spanish territory to be used as a launchpad for the imperialist attack.

The US aircraft involved made use of the US military bases at Rota (Cádiz) and Morón (Seville), longstanding US-NATO installations in southern Spain. They operate under bilateral defence agreements between Madrid and Washington that date back to the US defence pact with General Francisco Franco in 1953, and were used in the US-led illegal wars against Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and the Israeli genocide against Palestinians.

Pro-PSOE daily *El País* reported Sunday that two Navy anti-missile destroyers deployed at Rota, the USS Roosevelt and the USS Bulkeley, participated in the attack on Iran. According to US military sources, the two destroyers moved to the Eastern Mediterranean to reinforce Israel's Iron Dome, neutralizing ballistic missiles launched by Iran in retaliation.

El País noted, "The role that these destroyers have played in the defense of Israel and in the projection of US military power in the Middle East, as well as against

Russia through patrol missions in the Black Sea, evidences the key role that the Rota base continues to play in Washington's global strategy."

KC-135 and KC-46 aerial refuelling aircraft—crucial for long-range strike capabilities—are reported to have operated from Spanish bases to carry out in-flight refuelling tasks. US combat aircraft previously stationed in Spain and other regional locations have reportedly been redeployed to Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar in the days preceding the strikes.

The Strait of Gibraltar has constituted another strategic point in the operation. In recent days, the US aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford transited the strait en route to the Mediterranean.

The hypocritical invocation of "international law" deserves nothing but contempt. Over the past three decades, Madrid has supported every US-led war of aggression, from Kosovo to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. Only days ago, while condemning the US attack on and abduction of President Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela in the name of "international law," Sánchez worked with Washington to ensure Spanish oil corporation Repsol maintained its stakes in the plunder. Trump has since lifted oil sanctions, authorizing Repsol to resume operations.

Repsol's CEO, Josu Jon Imaz, confirmed the company is "preparing" to "restore and resume" daily operations, celebrating a "new window of opportunity." This "window" rests on a foundation of neo-colonial plunder. The Venezuelan state owes Repsol €4.55 billion (\$5.37 billion). Imaz acknowledged working in "close relationship" with both Washington and the new pro-imperialist Venezuelan authorities, headed by Delcy Rodríguez.

What passes for the Spanish "left" has formally opposed the US-Israeli attack, but its position is no less marked by political cynicism. Podemos, though no longer

in government, continues to give the support in parliament that the PSOE-Sumar government relies on to pass legislation.

Ione Belarra, the current secretary general of Podemos, described the attack as “illegal military interventions by the US and Israel that blow up international law,” calling them “the greatest threat to humanity.” Irene Montero, currently serving as a Member of the European Parliament and Podemos’s secretary for political strategy, declared: “The US and Israel are once again bombing Iran. Illegal aggressions that make the US and Israel the most dangerous criminals on the planet. How long will Europe remain silent, allowing these crimes? Spain must prevent the US from using our military bases and leave NATO now.”

Podemos promotes the fiction that European powers are passive spectators. “Make Europe Great Again” is its tacit motto. This is upper-middle-class politics aimed at promoting the delusion that multipolarity, with the European Union as a competing imperialist centre, represents a prospect for peace. The working class has nothing to gain, as European imperialism is driven by the same capitalist drive for plunder as the US, whether in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, or Africa.

In reality, the major European imperialist powers have been active participants in escalating confrontation with Iran. Weeks before the current strikes, the EU, with the backing of Sánchez’s government, moved to place Iran’s Revolutionary Guards on its “terror list,” facilitating US war preparations. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz declared that “the days of the Iranian regime are numbered,” while British Prime Minister Keir Starmer stated that his government “supports the goal” pursued by Washington.

Nor is this limited to Iran. European governments, including Spain, have backed Israel’s genocide against Palestinians, which has left over 70,000 dead. In NATO’s war against Russia in Ukraine, European powers helped instigate and fuel a conflict that has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of young Ukrainians in the “meat grinder” of eastern Ukraine, where total casualties now stand at 2 million.

Podemos is deeply involved in these imperialist crimes. While now denouncing US bases and calling for withdrawal from NATO, it was during Podemos’s time in government (2020–2023) that Madrid signed the agreement with Washington increasing the number of US destroyers stationed at Rota from four to six. The agreement also provides for the garrisoning of up to 3,800

US troops.

Podemos thus actively provided the infrastructure now used to attack Iran, while the minister representing Podemos in the coalition, Alberto Garzón, openly defended the agreement because the US military bases “create a large number of jobs.”

During Podemos’s time in government (2020–2023), Spain also deepened military, economic, and diplomatic ties with Benjamin Netanyahu’s far-right Zionist regime. Arms sales to Israel continued, and Madrid purchased hundreds of millions of euros’ worth of Israeli weaponry, including Spike missile systems. Spanish imports from Israeli military firms expanded. While Podemos ministers publicly accused Israel of genocide, weapons contracts and military collaboration went ahead.

After Podemos’s departure from the coalition, its successor formation, Sumar, entered government alongside the PSOE, ensuring the continuity of these war policies. This included the vast expansion of military expenditure. In 2018, real military spending stood at around 30 billion euros; in 2024, it reached approximately 55 billion; and in 2025, it exceeded 66 billion, representing an accumulated increase of nearly 123 percent over seven years.

Opposition to war cannot come from Podemos or Sumar, never mind the PSOE. Whatever their rhetoric, these are all pro-imperialist parties.

The working class in Spain and around the world must mobilize against the attack on Iran. Across Spain, Europe, and the US, growing social tensions driven by austerity, militarization, and attacks on democratic rights are increasingly bound up with imperialist war. Protests and strikes must be organized demanding “Hands off Iran,” the withdrawal of all US and other imperialist forces from the Middle East, an end to the Israeli genocide in Gaza, and the lifting of all sanctions against Iran.

A genuine fight against imperialist war requires the independent mobilization of the working class on an international and socialist basis. This requires new organizations and the building of a new political leadership: a Spanish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist movement.



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