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**SPAIN'S PEACE PROMOTION
IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

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Abstract

Spain is playing a largely multilateral role in the eastern Mediterranean. In Lebanon, the Spaniards comprise one of the largest European battalions in UNIFIL and are set to assume lead-nation status with the next rotation. Lebanon also receives ten times more foreign aid than Syria from Spain, mainly via UN bodies and NGOs. Spain provides aid to the Palestinians, primarily via UNRWA and UNDP, while being involved in the two ESDP civilian missions for police reform and border management. Spanish regional and municipal contributions also play a positive role in fostering more subtle but equally important bilateral relations across the sea. This sub-national aspect of decentralized power distribution is exemplary of contemporary democratic practices, particularly as Spain prepares to be at the helm of the supra-national EU Presidency in 2010.

Executive Summary

Spain's role in the eastern Mediterranean is largely multilateral and has increased significantly and congruently with the development of EU rapid response mechanisms. Since the unilateral Israeli military withdrawal and Jewish settler evacuation from the Gaza Strip in the summer of 2005, Spain has played a role in the two European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) civilian missions: EUBAM-Rafah, to monitor the passage of people and goods through the Rafah crossing point on the Palestinian side of the Gaza-Egypt border; and EUPOL-COPPS, to reform the Palestinian civil police force, uniquely in the West Bank now, with headquarters in Ramallah and training grounds in Jericho, but originally meant to include all Palestinian territory.

Since the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War, Spain deployed one of the largest EU member state battalions and leads Sector East of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) area of operations in South Lebanon. With headquarters in Camp Cervantes in Marjayoun, Sector East is considered the most complicated south of the Litani River, due to the mountainous terrain, varied demographic composition, and the two prominent and controversial border issues, Ghajar village and Shebaa farms. Spain is also carrying out an ambitious array of development projects throughout Lebanon, with the Spanish contingent area marked as a priority zone. Some synergies therefore do exist between the Spanish contingent and NGO activities, but Lebanese political turmoil, security threats, and other coordination difficulties continue to obstruct the emergence of a more constructive Spanish role in Lebanon. Spain's foreign aid contribution to Lebanon remains ten times higher than what the Spanish government provides to Syria, through the official development branch of the Foreign Ministry, the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID).

On the regional level, Spain exemplifies a unique form of federalism in the European Union. Perhaps only Germany's Landes enjoy more autonomy than Spain's autonomous regions, which in certain cases, like in Catalonia, are developing solid development cooperation plans to ameliorate North-South relations. This demonstrates not only high levels of decentralization, but also degrees of autonomy that permit strong bilateral and sub-national relations to form with other regions and cities across the Mediterranean Sea, such as between Tortosa and Tartus, Syria, and between Barcelona and Gaza.

This report is based largely on a visit to Lebanon and Syria in the summer of 2008. The regional political context during the interviews (24 June – 3 July 2008) came in the aftermath of clashes between 8-13 May 2008, which led to the armed control of West Beirut by Lebanese Hezbollah (Party of God) and the subsequent Doha agreement reached in Qatar on 21 May 2008. The visit also coincided with the “Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701” on 27 June 2008 that stressed an “unprecedented” number of Israeli violations of Lebanese sovereignty, ascending to 692 over-flights in March and 724 in April. However, peace-oriented initiatives were revamped between Israel and Syria concerning the Golan Heights via the mediation role of Turkey in May 2008, followed in June by exploring possible talks with Lebanon over the occupied Shebaa Farms, implementing a truce with the Palestinian Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) in Gaza via Egypt, and a prisoner-swap with Hezbollah via Germany. All are still pending to proceed.

This report is also based on repeated visits to the Palestinian territories (the Gaza Strip, West Bank and Jerusalem) to evaluate the effectiveness of the two ESDP missions. Interviews occurred during the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in August 2005; then shortly after the Palestinian legislative elections in January 2006, thus highlighting the immediate effects of the international boycott of Hamas on both EUBAM-Rafah and EUPOL-COPPS; visits in 2007 and 2008; as well as after the Gaza War last December 2008-January 2009. This report is also based on interviews in Lebanon in June 2009 regarding Spain’s participation in the Criminal Investigation Project and SAROL.

The focus of this report is on Spain’s participation in multilateral conflict management with prospects for resolution measures with the three Arab states still technically at war with Israel – Lebanon, Syria, and the Palestinians – and therefore does not provide detailed analysis of Spain’s relations with Egypt, Jordan or Israel. For reasons of accessibility, Spain is most active in Lebanon, which is evident here. This report does not intend to belittle the importance of peaceful relations, but rather emphasizes Spain’s incremental engagement in attempting to be a physical buffer and provide parallel development funds to increase prosperity and thus help diminish the possibility of violent conflict. As depicted by Spain’s presence in Lebanon, the tandem of military presence and civilian development has not led to closer civil-military cooperation (CIMIC), something Spain could help reconcile upon assuming the lead-nation role of UNIFIL and the EU Presidency in 2010.

SPAIN & UNIFIL

After the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War, Spain joined France and Italy as the largest troop contributing EU Member States for the strengthened UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). During “Operation Libre Hidalgo” on 30 October 2006, Spain sent a 1,100 contingent, the maximum authorized by the Spanish Council of Ministers, comprising largely of the Spanish Legion and commanded initially, and then again at the time of the visit, by General Juan Bautista García Sánchez, who led the construction of Camp “Miguel de Cervantes”. Camp Cervantes is near Marjayoun and is the headquarters of Sector East, which includes a Polish logistics unit, a Chinese medical unit, and a Malaysian Force Protection unit. Spanish ground troops have a four-month tour; rotation for higher officials is six months. This high turn-over rate has led to a lack of continuity which is a common trait of other contingents in UNIFIL and other peace-keeping operation which Spain could address.

In late May 2008, the Spanish Congress approved sending a patrol vessel with 90 sailors to the European Maritime Force (EUROMARFOR), created in 1995 by Italy, France, Portugal and Spain, and which is now part of the Maritime Task Force (MTF) linked to UNIFIL – also the first peace-keeping mission in UN history to have a naval force, which includes 3 German vessels, 2 from Turkey, and 1 from Greece, Italy and Indonesia (see Map: UNIFIL Deployment, June 2009). Belgium, France, and Spain no longer have vessels deployed. Spain’s sea deployment exceeded its established national limit of 3,000 troops in peace-keeping missions, and was readjusted at the time with the incorporation of an El Salvador unit in the Spanish area of operation in South Lebanon. Just as MTF replaced the Israeli naval presence along the Lebanese coast after the 2006 war, EUROMARFOR could explore the possibility of also relieving Israel’s security concerns along the coast of Gaza. Like in Lebanon, this would be an important step to ending the Israeli sea siege, and in this case to restore the 40 kilometers along the coast by 20 kilometers out to sea allocated to Palestinians for fishing under the Oslo Accords;

both of which would strongly improve the perception of Spain and Europe amongst the Arab population in the Eastern Mediterranean and broader Arab-Muslim world.

Spain leads Sector East of UNIFIL operations south of the Litani River, which consists of contingents from India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Nepal. This sector is more complicated than the Italian-led Sector West for numerous reasons: it is mountainous and has 70km of Lebanon-Israel border, whereas Sector West is flatter and has 40km. While Blue Line demarcation efforts are underway in Sector West, the Sector East area has a 7km bottle-neck between the northern-most Israeli settlement of Metula and the end of the UNIFIL area of operations in South Lebanon. As the narrowest and closest point of encounter between Israel and Lebanon, this thin passage is likely to be a point of future hostilities which would separate the UNIFIL areas of operations. Sector East also includes the highly controversial issues of the divided Alawi village of Ghajar and the Shebaa Farms occupied by Israel.

Lastly, a more diverse ethnic configuration exists in Sector East, which includes a Sunni pocket, a Christian corridor, Druze enclaves, and the larger Shia population, which remains most prevalent throughout Sector West. Along with the terrorist attack against the Spanish contingent on 24 June 2007, these demographic and geographic complexities in Sector East have provided ample initial experience in peace-keeping and crisis management, the lessons of which will prove useful when Spain assumes the lead-nation status of UNIFIL. An example of how Spain has built good relations with the Lebanese is that Camp Cervantes has employed 300 local staff divided equally according to different ethnic backgrounds from neighbouring villages. Every other Sunday, Camp Cervantes also hosts a “souq” (market) with 30 shops for villagers to sell their goods. This local interaction is positive for relations with the Lebanese, contrary to the French battalion that rumbles around the narrow countryside roads in cumbersome white tanks. The Spanish contingent also provides language classes to locals, which could be compared to drinking tea with the Indian contingent.

The Spanish contingent suffered the most casualties (6) by a terrorist attack against UNIFIL since the end of the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War. Consequently, the Spanish contingent went from methodically debunking numerous arms caches with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) within its area of operations to not carrying out any disarming-related activities, except Counter Rocket Launching Operations (CRLOPs), which have continued since the beginning throughout the entirety of the UNIFIL area of operations south of the Litani River. Despite lack of evidence, both Sunni elements and Hezbollah were suspected of being behind the attack, similar to Hezbollah's presumed implication in the attacks against the French, Italian and U.S. Multi-National Force (MNF) in the early 1980s. Regardless of conclusive evidence about the culprits, going from a more pro-active implementation of UN SC resolution 1701 to a more passive position reflects the ambiguity of the mandate, in reference to resolution 1559 which calls for the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias. Although 1701 implicitly refers to Hezbollah, the Party of God was defined as a legitimate national resistance group by the Taef Accord, which was integrated into the Lebanese Constitution by the parliament in 1989-90. Moreover, Hezbollah has gained large popularity for ending the Israeli occupation and for its performance during the 2006 war, and enjoys democratic representation in the Lebanese Government. One glaring question comes to mind: how is UNIFIL to assist LAF in disarming Hezbollah when it is a state actor? Ironically, as the more "robust" UN peace-keeping force was perceived as protecting Israel from Hezbollah, primarily in Lebanon and due to comments by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, UNIFIL contingents now have come to rely on Hezbollah for security-related issues.

Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

In large part to rectify any misperception of its presence in South Lebanon and to win the "hearts and minds" of the local population, the Spanish contingent is involved in quick impact projects, which are implemented and coordinated by the Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) unit. The 8-person Spanish CIMIC unit relies on the €60,000 per month from its Defense Ministry to be used in a flexible manner both in the respective

amounts and nature of the projects. 600 projects have already been carried out, such as repairing village roads, cemetery walls ('Ain 'Arab village), and the entrance room of a mosque (al-Wazzani village). All national contingents can also apply for a maximum of \$25,000 to UNIFIL Headquarters in Naqoura, which reserves the right to impose limitations on projects, such as refusing to fund religious-affiliated reconstruction. Compared to the 2-person Belgian CIMIC unit and its \$6,500 per month, the Spanish contingent could carry out many more projects with much more publicity. Nevertheless, public awareness in Lebanon and Belgium about Belgian CIMIC activities is higher due to an advanced media campaign explaining what the contingent is doing. The Belgian CIMIC, for example, disseminates pamphlets on how to prevent basic burns in household and schools. Very few people know what Spain is actually doing in small and medium reconstruction level projects in South Lebanon, nor in de-mining efforts.

De-mining: UNMACC & LMAC

Spain and Belgium are also involved in de-mining activities. Belgium operates in its area of operations primarily around Tibnin, a hilltop village hosting the headquarters of the Belgium-Luxembourg Battalion (BELUBATT) and of Sector West, led by Italy. Based on a briefing with the Belgian contingent, villagers prefer to have their fields de-mined rather than their homes and civilian areas, so crops can be harvested more easily, but they have gone ahead and cultivated their land regardless of the mine threats, which has led to numerous unnecessary deaths. De-mining is considered a Belgian CIMIC priority since it is relatively easy to execute and provides a quick impact that is visible to the local Lebanese population. Cleared square meters of lands can be easily visible and publicized.

In Spain, the Defense Ministry carries out training programmes (each for 25 Lebanese) in de-mining techniques and shares the total cost of approximately €156,000 for each course with the Foreign Ministry's development agency. Since 2007, three courses have been completed. This is a relevant example of inter-agency cooperation, which however

remains rather limited (see “Spanish Development Cooperation in Lebanon” below). The Spanish brigade contingent has trained over 50 de-miners within the LAF, and Spain is also active in de-mining efforts outside of its Sector East area of operations, and contributes 2 Battle Area Clearance (BAC) teams (one at Deir Mimas village, another at Majdel Silm village near Tibnin) to the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC), which covers de-mining efforts across South Lebanon since the unilateral Israeli withdrawal in May 2000. As a poignant point of comparison mentioned by UNMACC staff at their headquarters in Tyre, 25,000 sub-munitions were cleared in Kosovo over two years, whereas some 146,000 cluster bombs have been cleared in South Lebanon since 2006.

Just as UNIFIL is meant to provide the environment to enable the LAF to deploy in South Lebanon to execute their sovereign rights, so UNMACC is meant to be a transitional means for the Lebanese Mine Action Centre (LMAC) to assume full responsibility for the de-mining of its sovereign territory. As such, UNIFIL is engaged in delineating the Blue Line with a series of blue “dumb-bell” barrels within a “safe corridor”, which is cleared by de-mining teams. Since the blue barrels need to be within 1 meter of the Blue Line agreed upon by Israel and Lebanon, it appears the United Nations is advancing the notion of turning the Blue Line into a de facto national border. Despite this controversy, neither Israel nor Hezbollah endorse de-mining for tactical reasons: Israel does not want Hezbollah close to the border, and Hezbollah does not want Israel to invade easily – so the mine fields adjacent to the Lebanese side are not being de-mined. As a result, Lebanese sovereignty is depleted, which affects farming and agriculture, whereas adventuresome Israeli farmers can toil lands beyond their physical technical fence up to the evasive Blue Line. Such inconsistencies and intangible lines are a source of frustration for the Lebanese, and have led to “Lebanese” violations of the Blue Line, most predominantly by cows, particularly in the Sector East, where they are allowed to roam randomly and freely by the Indian contingent, for obvious sacred reasons.

Spain has not allocated funds to UNMACC yet, but does plan to make a €1 million contribution, and could also explore how to strengthen LMAC with better equipment. These material or financial contributions could be channelled via bilateral means and donor meetings. A positive example of such engagement is the Canadian pilot project in Sector East around the village of Addaïsseh, near Markaba, where 15 mine fields are to be cleared over a 3-month period, starting in July 2008. Based on the efficiency and effectiveness of this pilot project, this initiative could be replicated in other areas of Sector East that are near but not adjacent to the Blue Line. UNMACC maps in Tyre show the numerous “red” areas that could be de-mined without infringing upon the Israeli concerns that the Blue Line will be a mine-free zone. Equally important from the Lebanese side, former Israel Defense Force (IDF) positions left over from the “security zone” period, could also be converted into UNIFIL and LAF positions, such as occurred in Addaïsseh where the Nepalese contingent set up a UNIFIL post.

Ghajar Village and Shebaa Farms

The Spanish contingent has erected a short fence along the western side of Ghajar village which is meant to keep out contraband and smugglers. This initiative by Spain means that its troops, rather than Israeli soldiers, patrol the northern part of Ghajar in Lebanon; Israel maintains control of the Blue Line through the village. Controversially, this is also where Israel pumps water from the Wazzani Springs of the Hasbani River on Lebanese territory, but with the consent of the Lebanese Government. And herein lies the inherent ambiguity of a peace-keeping mission such as UNIFIL: Spain’s presence there can be perceived as endorsing the Israeli presence in Ghajar and an essential violation of the Blue Line since the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War, but according to interviews it can also be seen as a pre-emptive measure to prevent this “hot zone” from erupting, and thus to manage the conflict on a micro-level.

The Shebaa Farms also present a perplexing scenario for the Spanish contingent. Israel still occupies the Farms, just as it does the Golan Heights; both of which initially and

historically belonged to Syria. But Syria now only maintains sovereign claims to the Heights, leaving the Farms to Lebanon. This generous gesture to its smaller neighbour of course gives its Shia ally Hezbollah a reason to keep up the armed resistance against Israel. Spain monitors this portion of the Lebanese-Israeli border closely, but effectually can do very little to prevent hostilities from flaring up. In fact, the repeated wars have never been caused by Shebaa. Occasional Hezbollah mortars and Israeli responses occur, just as do the Israeli over-flights, but Shebaa is more a symbolic piece of territory, one that Israel could relinquish without losing political face or military force. Spain could easily fill the security void when and if Israel were to leave for the Lebanese Army to fill accordingly.

Spanish Development Cooperation in Lebanon

Though UNIFIL and UNMACC are both mandated to coordinate and transfer responsibility to their Lebanese counterparts, these UN agencies are crisis management mechanisms. Despite the fact that other international efforts to assist Lebanon led to the massive disbursement of “emergency” aid to destroyed Palestinian refugee camps, such as Nahr al-Bared and Beddawi, Lebanon is not an “under-developed” country. Longer-term development projects need to be encouraged and implemented with increasing official Lebanese ownership to ensure that the Government of Lebanon assumes a respectable sovereign presence in the South. On the basis of creating this necessary environment for national reconstruction and resolution, Spain is also active via its cooperation agency and NGOs on the ground in Lebanon.

Since the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID) – a branch of the Spanish Foreign Ministry – officially has made South Lebanon and in particular the Spanish UNIFIL contingent area of operations in Sector East a priority for development projects. Since the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture is not active in the South, Spain assists in restoring a degree of development via AECID and the Catalan Regional Development Agency, both of which fund the Action Contra el Hambre (ACF) project for the formation of service centres, the provision of ploughing and pruning devices, vaccinations for sheep and goats, and water sanitation for 2008-2012, totalling around €3 million. Three out of the four zones of the ACF project fall within the Spanish area of operations and the fourth is in the adjacent village of Hasbayya. The other Spanish NGO, Fundación Promoción Social de la Cultura (FPSC) received €3 million from AECID for a three year agriculture project, which includes – along with an irrigation system for fruit trees and vegetables – a milk processing plant in the village of Khiam next to Marjayoun where the Spanish Camp Cervantes is located and where ACF recently moved its headquarters.

There are therefore areas of common interest involving Spain's military presence and development projects in South Lebanon, which could be optimized by higher degrees of coordination between the Ministry of Defense and AECID in order to address the current dislocation between rapid response projects inherent to CIMIC and more long-term development projects. The lack of continuity is traditionally due to the short-term nature of CIMIC projects and to the four-month terms of military personnel, which according to a Spanish NGO, decreases "retaining knowledge capacity"; but it is also due to unwillingness on the part of NGOs to communicate better with the military apparatus. To preserve their independence and the integrity of the humanitarian space, AECID-funded NGOs maintain their distance from Ministry of Defense activities to not be confused with CIMIC projects carried out within the framework of UNIFIL. One Spanish NGO, for example, opened an active campaign to explain why and how it was not part of UNIFIL, as it was misperceived to be by the population. The NGO went so far as to take off the Spanish flag from its vehicles and to only include the AECID logo. Such measures are not conducive to a joint representation of Spain's role in Lebanon, or in broader peace-building efforts in which the Spanish Cooperation Strategy "will achieve its goals if it is capable of effective coordination with all the actors".¹

Despite the claim to geographic priority, of the five Spanish NGOs active in Lebanon, only the two mentioned – FPSC and ACF – have projects in the Spanish area of operations. The other three, Movimiento por la Paz (MPDL), Solidaridad Internacional, and Ayuda, Intercambio y Desarrollo (AIDA), are also active in the South, but in the Sector West and north of the Litani River. MPDL for instance focuses on assisting the livelihoods of Palestinian refugees by organizing vocational training for some 250 Palestinian women over three years in Saida and Tyre. This is part of a regional project started in 2007 and funded by AECI (€4 million) including three activities in Jordan and six in Palestine, all geared toward helping young Palestinians. MPDL is also engaged in two European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO)-funded projects for house rehabilitation in the Beddawi and Nahr al-Bared Palestinian camps next to Tripoli in northern Lebanon, as well as another ECHO-funded project with the Lebanese Red Crescent in Saida, the Bekaa Valley and Beirut for paediatric surgery in Palestinian

¹ See *Peace Building Strategy Paper, Spanish Development Cooperation, Executive Summary*, 2008, available at: www.maec.es or www.aecid.es

camps. During the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War, MPDL provided food distribution at centres in the Sunni-predominant coastal city of Saida to some 40,000 displaced persons, and following the war provided psychosocial support to children at a centre in Nabatiyyeh, the predominant Shia city in South Lebanon, where 'Ashoura is celebrated every year in commemoration of the deaths of Ali' son, Hussein, at the famous Battle of Karbala in 680AD.

Solidaridad Internacional is also involved in a four-year regional project for Palestinian refugees with AECID (2008-2012). Though the project focuses on the West Bank, the Golan Heights and Jordan, the Lebanese component addresses the promotion of human rights (Palestinians are still banned from over 70 jobs in Lebanon) and advances the acquisition of identity document papers for Palestinians without I.D. Like the Catalan funds provided to ACF in the South, the Basque regional government provided some €150,000 to Solidaridad Internacional for a short emergency project (April-September 2008) to ameliorate basic nutrition and health standards for displaced Palestinian refugees in the Nahr al-Bared and Beddawi camps. For post-conflict restoration in these same camps, AECID also funded an emergency project (October 2007-February 2008) for training in basic hygiene maintenance. The last Spanish NGO, AIDA, carries out projects mainly related to agriculture, in the Beqaa Valley in particular, but also assists in material provision for schools affected by the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War and provides needs based humanitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees in Lebanon – the only country in which AIDA carries out projects in the Middle East.

Also north of the UNIFIL area of operations, the Spanish Foreign Ministry has pledged to provide €3 million for the construction of 110 houses outside the boundaries of the Palestinian camp, Ein Helweh, in Saida, which is meant to prevent overcrowding. And broader still, Spain disbursed between 2006 and 2008 a total of €25 million to the Lebanese Recovery Fund (LRF), which is administered by the UNDP. LRF is chaired by the Lebanese Ministry of Economy and Finance, and has a Steering Committee that includes the UNDP and Sweden, Spain and Romania as primary donors, which gives Spain the opportunity to earmark projects, such as the three phases of the CEDRO

project for renewable energy to which Spain contributed €7.5 million. Indicative of the “special attention” given to Lebanon by the Spanish Foreign Ministry despite the fact that it does not qualify as an under-developed country, in comparison to little Lebanon, Spain’s AECID has a €1 million budget for projects in Syria.

Criminal Investigation Project & SAROL

Also on a multilateral level, Spain is engaged in the “Criminal Investigation Project”, launched by the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF) and funded by the European Commission (€3 million). The project is meant to bolster the technical capacity and performance of the ISF in order to strengthen the rule of law. According to the first Newsletter (Issue 1, May-July 2008), the “aim is to tackle organized and terrorist crimes perpetrated by professional groups who have both the financial capacity and expertise to carry out such crimes and avoid detection.” By coincidence or not, the memoranda of understanding for the Criminal Investigation Project was signed shortly after the eruption of hostilities in May 2007 between the ISF and the extremist Sunni group, Fatah al-Islam, in the Palestinian camp of Nahr al-Bared. ISF began the fighting without informing the Lebanese Army, which then engaged in long battles and eventually routed Fatah al-Islam in early September 2007.

Improving the Lebanese judicial police with seminars and training programmes is carried out by specialists from France, Great Britain and Spain. Spanish trainers from the Guardia Civil with technical assistance from FIIAPP gave courses (30 June – 11 July 2008) to members of the Lebanese judicial police and information department on how to obtain and use criminal information. 12 Guardia Civil officers were deployed, and there is room for greater Spanish contribution, in light of the “proyecto de agrupación de proyección exterior (APEX),” now being developed in Spain with a budget of €420 million. Other areas of interest for Spain include creating joint teams to

intervene effectively in crime scenes, modernizing the structure and functioning of criminal laboratories and introducing means to counter corruption. Though these measures clearly fall within the generic activities of comprehensive security sector reform, the Criminal Investigation Project is also an example of how the European Union is increasingly playing a role in implementing counter-terrorism tactics in the Middle East. Due to severe abuses of prisoners by ISF personnel, a new element to be introduced into the project is monitoring respect for human rights, also to be managed by a Spaniard.

The Criminal Investigation Project created the training momentum and strategic planning foundation during 2008 for the launching of the European Security and Rule of Law (SAROL) in September 2009. This second European Commission project aims, according the Criminal Investigation Project Newsletter (Issue 4, 2009), to “train the trainers in order to sustain the skills acquired during the first project and to promote the fullest co-operation between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice in criminal investigation.” (p.4) SAROL has a budget of €4 million, and will follow-up on the training courses financed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) at the Aaramoun simulation platform just south of Beirut for ISF personnel in May 2009. These efforts are very similar to the EUPOL-COPPS civilian mission, which has amplified in the West Bank to include a Rule of Law branch alongside the civil police reform efforts, therefore providing a more comprehensive approach to security sector reform. Spain, like other EU Member States, can contribute a savoir-faire acquired from years of refining the professional techniques of law enforcement.

SPAIN & ESDP

Spain’s multilateral military engagement in Lebanon is mirrored by engagement in the two European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) civilian missions in the Palestinian territories. Both missions have confronted immediate difficulties in implementation and effectiveness, but Spanish participation has been consistent. This consistency provides a

platform for a political presence in the Eastern Mediterranean when and if negotiations between conflicting parties overcome some serious and painful hurdles. However, in the meantime, though Spain's efforts are in line with the international community, this course of action (or inaction as in Gaza) may not be entirely conducive to constructive dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians, and between the different factions of Palestinians waging internal political war for power. Indeed, standing by and watching is perceived now by the broader Arab-Muslim world as simply taking sides in the Palestinian stand-off.

The European response to Israel's withdrawal from Gaza was hailed as an immediate success for its rapidity, and indeed, within a matter of weeks a large ESDP mission had been sent in November-December 2005 to monitor the Rafah crossing point on the Palestinian side of the Gaza-Egypt border. The Palestinian Authority (PA) in Ramallah attempted a return, but Hamas had won large swathes of popularity for making Israel's occupation of Gaza untenable, while also providing basic social services, via education and sports, where the PA had often pocketed international donor money. The proof of the "cleaner" Palestinian candidate was provided with the 2006 legislative elections that Hamas won easily. The Islamic victory came directly after the EUPOL-COPPS was established in early January 2006 to reform the Palestinian civil police force. With the international boycott of Hamas, EUPOL-COPPS activities in Gaza ceased, and with time, over the past four years, came to concentrate uniquely on buttressing and training the civil police in the West Bank, as well as introducing a much-needed Rule of Law branch to reform the judicial system, thus creating synergies between the process of detention and prosecution. Similarly, EUBAM-Rafah efforts to re-engage in Gaza were officially suspended after Hamas pre-emptively took-over the Strip in June 2007, and the passage of Palestinians ceased for long periods (see Graph of Rafah Crossing). The European civilian mission has been on stand-by ever since, waiting at a beach resort called Dan Gardens in Ashkelon, Israel.

Spain's contribution to the European missions has been conditioned by the three red lines imposed by Israel, which refuses to talk with Hamas until the Islamic movement:

1) recognizes Israel, 2) renounces violence, and 3) accepts all previous agreements with the PA. Of course, if Israel had demanded such conditions before the 2006 elections, it is unlikely Hamas would have participated at all. Already sceptical about participating at the time, Hamas entered the official political game in large part to set the record straight with Fatah – their long-time national rival – but never expected to win a landslide victory. Fatah’s refusal to accept the election results turned this rivalry into a deadly feud that is currently set in a dreary deadlock, as Hamas controls Gaza and Fatah holds the West Bank. Whether intentionally or not, Spain has contributed, with the other contributing EU member states, to the further division of whatever remains of Palestine.

Regional Spanish Development Cooperation

On a sub-national level, Spain has contributed to fostering better bilateral relations between more ostracized countries and controversial parts of the Eastern Mediterranean, such as with Syria and Gaza. The importance of these lesser-known relations is tremendous. The wealthy north-eastern Spanish region of Catalonia is a case in point: while the regional government, like the Basque Country government, provides substantial funds through the multilateral mechanism of the UNRWA for Palestinian refugees, the municipality of Tortosa has engaged in a “sister-city” exercise with Tartus, on the Mediterranean coast of Syria; and the municipality of Barcelona has engaged in a similar exchange with the Palestinian city of Gaza.

Similar to Spain’s development aid to Lebanon, in the Palestinian territories, the regional governments of the Basque Country and Catalonia both funnel funds through UN bodies, such as UNRWA and UNDP. In their Plan Director, 2007-2010, the Catalans have provided €900,000 to mental health and general psycho-social care to UNRWA: €430,000 in 2008 and €470,000 in 2009. The Basque regional government also provides assistance to the Palestinians via UNRWA since 2006. Previously and continuously, the Basques have relied on their own NGOs to carry out projects since 1988, mainly providing medical material and emergency attention, as well as training

and educating youth and women. These mini-projects began to amount to hundreds of thousands of euros and soon the Basque regional government saw that, having increased the resources and diversity of its development and cooperation activities to such a degree, it was necessary to create a regulatory law, which went into effect on 22 February 2007 as the Law of Cooperation and Development.² The Catalan government equally found the need to create a regional agency for cooperation and development, the Agencia Catalana de Cooperación al Desarrollo (ACCD), and has taken the matter one step further in the preparation of a strategy for regional foreign cooperation.

Catalonia's development cooperation outside of Spain began during the 1990s Balkan wars with foreign aid being sent from Barcelona to Sarajevo. Though largely focused on assisting supra-national entities such as the UN, the sub-national efforts to reinforce local government ties proved equally efficacious. In September 1997, an agreement of "Amistad y Cooperación" was signed between the mayors of Barcelona, Tel Aviv and Gaza, under the supervision of former EU Special Envoy to the Middle East Peace Process, Miguel Ángel Moratinos. Barcelona has been involved in four projects in Gaza since then. 1) The "Peace Park" in the Tal al-Hawa neighbourhood in southern Gaza was built between 2000-2003, with a set-back of one year when Israel bombarded the area in 2002, and thus finished in October 2004 and inaugurated in March 2005 by the mayors of Barcelona, Joan Clos, and the Mayor of Gaza, Nasri Khayal, as well as current Spanish Foreign Minister Moratinos. Barcelona contributed the entirety of the funds for the project totalling €318,000. During the Israel war on Hamas in December 2008-January 2009, the "peace park" was destroyed when Israel invaded; plans to rebuild the housing units, parks and gardens are ongoing. 2) The East al-Nasser Urbanization project, to which Barcelona contributed €500,000, one-third of the total, between 2005 and 2008 was successfully completed and still standing. 3) Mental health training in Barcelona and Gaza; and 4) summer camps for UNRWA children. Forthcoming is another project in Tal al-Hawa to build a new market between 2010-2012 to spur economic growth and improve the general Gazan livelihood.

² Ley de Cooperación para el Desarrollo, 1/2007, p. 4: "la Comunidad Autónoma ha ido incrementando el volumen de los recursos y la diversidad de las acciones de cooperación, hasta el punto de haberse hecho necesaria una regulación con rango de ley."

While the impact of these initiatives is much more subtle and less known than the larger and more visible national engagement of Spain in Lebanon, the regional and municipal contributions are equally important because they bring to light how Western democracies can promote and export their various forms of decentralized and federal political systems without using political force or military intervention. How Spain grapples with the emerging regional development cooperation strategies in tandem with representing and consolidating a supra-national EU foreign policy will define in large part the future of European nation-states. This tension between sub-national and supra-national entities is entirely positive and an often over-looked corner-stone of contemporary European multilateralism. Spain embodies this multilateralism, both within and beyond its national borders, and therefore has an important role to play in advancing further both the European Union's nascent supra-national foreign policy and the sub-national regional and municipal contributions to foster positive bilateral relations with neighbours around the Mediterranean and beyond.

RECOMMENDATIONS: SPAIN & THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

These recommendations are relevant for Spain's eventual lead-nation role of UNIFIL, and can be applied to Spain's foreign policy around the Mediterranean, particularly after the 2009 Gaza War and in light of Spain's upcoming and shared 2010 EU Presidency.

- *Create a peace-building operations unit in the Spanish Prime Minister's Office.* This unit would communicate directly with a unit staff member embedded in the respective Spanish Embassy. To ensure complementarity between quick impact CIMIC-UNIFIL projects and longer-term NGO-AECID development projects, the unit staff would oversee coordinated efforts and shared goals, in this case in Lebanon and from Beirut. This unit could be endorsed by a National Security Strategy paper emanating from the Prime Minister's Office and inclusive of both the Foreign Affairs and Defense Ministries.
- *Improve visibility of Spain's presence in Lebanon.* Marketing and disseminating both Spanish NGO and Spain's UNIFIL contingent activities is important for public awareness in Lebanon, where misperceptions have confused their roles, and in Spain, where clear restrictions need to be lifted for more informative media coverage to occur. The Spanish Embassy in Beirut could also publish regular Newsletters to highlight recent results, current progress and remaining areas to focus on in subsequent projects.
- *Exert parallel political pressure.* More diplomatic efforts can be exerted by the Spanish permanent mission to the UN to voice concerns from Tri-Partite (Israel, Lebanon, and UNIFIL Force Commander) meetings, to diminish respective violations of national sovereignty. Spain could also influence decision-making by having officials appointed to UNIFIL positions within the Political Affairs office of UNIFIL headquarters in Naqoura.

- *Strengthen the role of the Government of Lebanon in development.* As part of the international community's peace-building and state-enhancing efforts, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (March 2005) needs to be implemented fully in Lebanon especially in the areas of coordination, alignment and capacity-building. Lebanese ownership of projects remains a pivotal area to increase the legitimacy and influence of the Lebanese Government, especially in the South.
- *Enhance crisis management tools.* In Lebanon, Spain could also increase activities via the multilateral EU Commission-promoted security sector reform exercises such as the Criminal Investigation Project and the European Security and Rule of Law (SAROL) project. Spain could provide more funds, material and professional trainers to help advance the project, while keeping a close eye on adherence to human rights by the Lebanese ISF. Spain could also play a more pronounced monitor role and provide more technical assistance for the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Force in the north and south, but must be wary to not push for an ESDP mission along the northern Lebanese border, without explicit consent from Syria.
- *Encourage the deployment of EUROMARFOR along the coast of Gaza.* Based on the precedent of the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force, EUROMARFOR could relieve Israel of its security concerns along the coast of Gaza. Via an official letter of invitation from the PA President (like the letter from Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora to Germany), requesting the deployment of an international naval presence would permit basic Palestinian fishing and sea trade to resume, as stipulated in the Oslo Accords. Breaking the blockade of Gaza is in the long-term interest of all parties involved – even and most of all Israel. Such measures would undoubtedly succeed in better managing and eventually resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as push Spain to the forefront of EU foreign policy in the Mediterranean.

- *Make regional and municipal engagement a priority.* Spain's national role around the Mediterranean Sea is certainly important, but equally relevant is the sub-national role played by regional and municipal entities in fostering better bilateral relations, often where national administrations may feel restricted due to pressure from global players. Regional contributions are noteworthy of course for international bodies such as the UN, but municipal engagement via the sister-cities initiatives needs to be encouraged and replicated further. The future is more than ever linked to sustainable development as close to water as possible.

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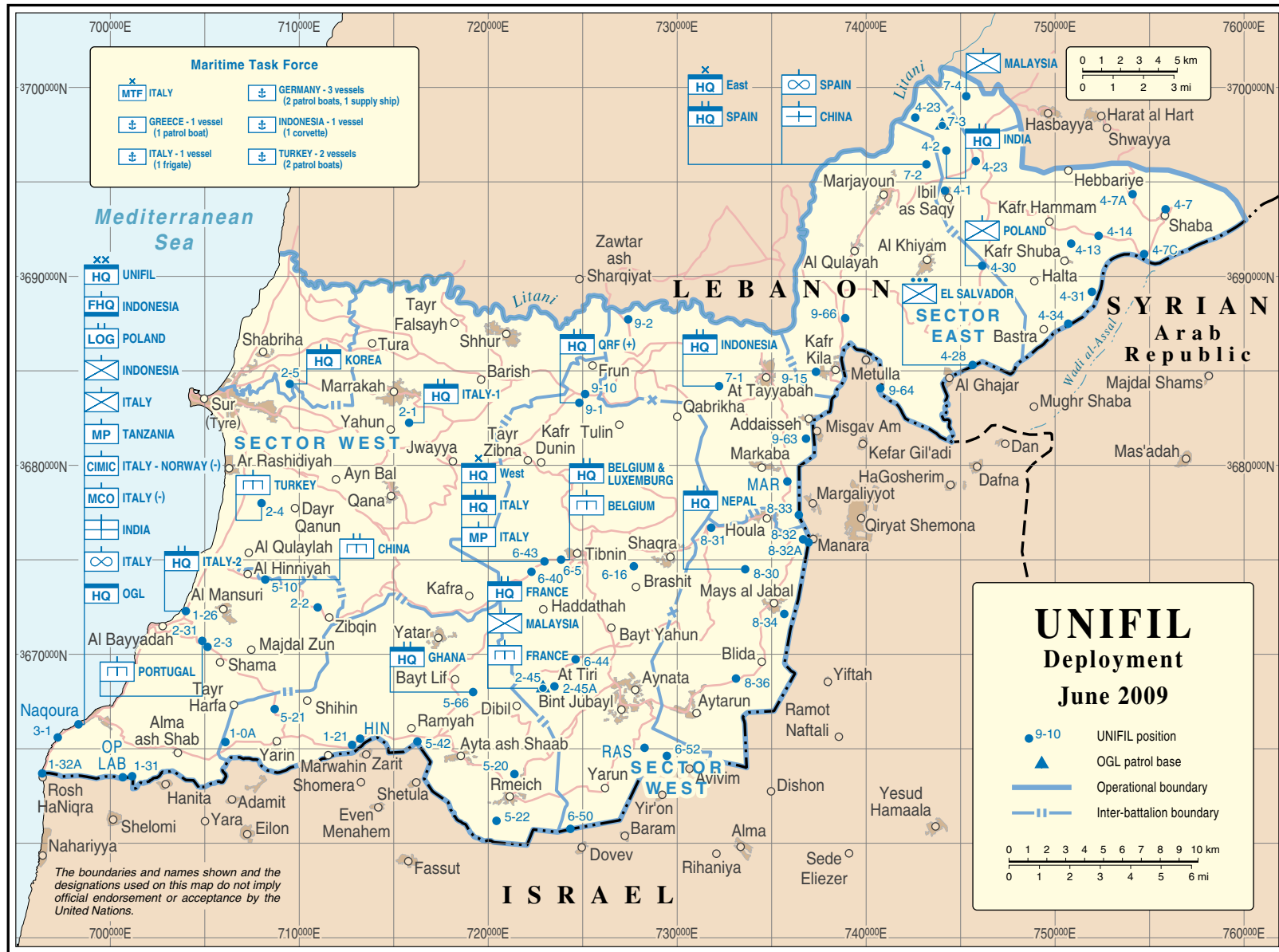
The following meetings in Beirut with four of the five Spanish NGOs in Lebanon included: Dominic Carroll, Head of Mission, Acción Contra el Hambre; Jean-Christophe Saint-Esteban, Country Coordinator, Movimiento por la Paz; Vanessa Moya Aliaga, Country Coordinator, Solidaridad Internacional; and Pablo Barrera, Middle East Representative, Fundación Promoción Social de la Cultura.

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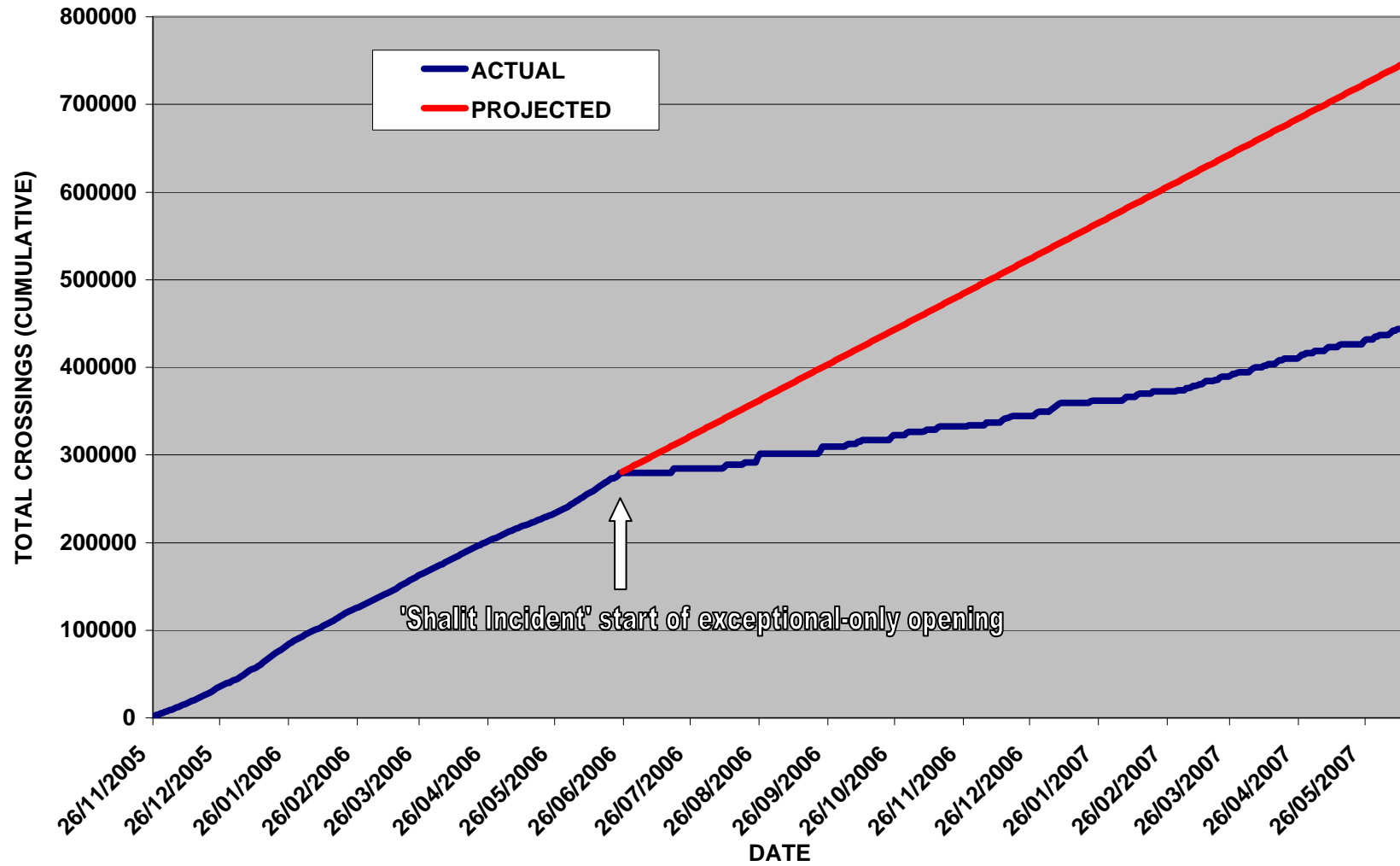
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TOTAL CROSSINGS AT RCP - ACTUAL AND PROJECTED - 25 NOVEMBER 2005 TO 13 JUNE 2007



Source: ESDP civilian mission EUBAM-Rafah