



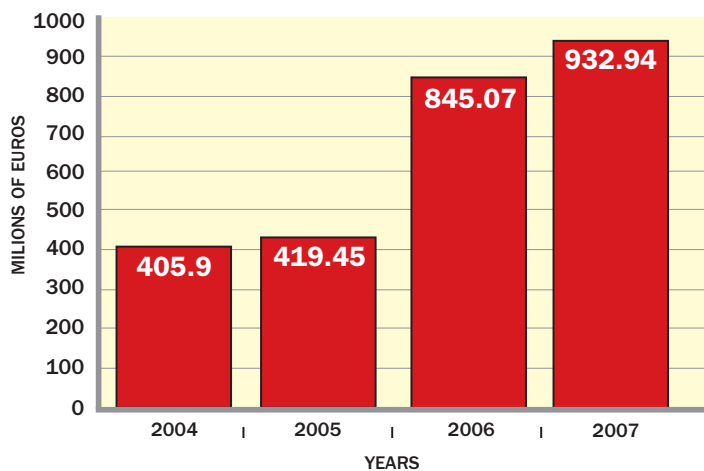
NATIONAL

ZAPATERO'S ARMED PACIFISM

Spain, eighth largest exporter of weapons with the PSOE

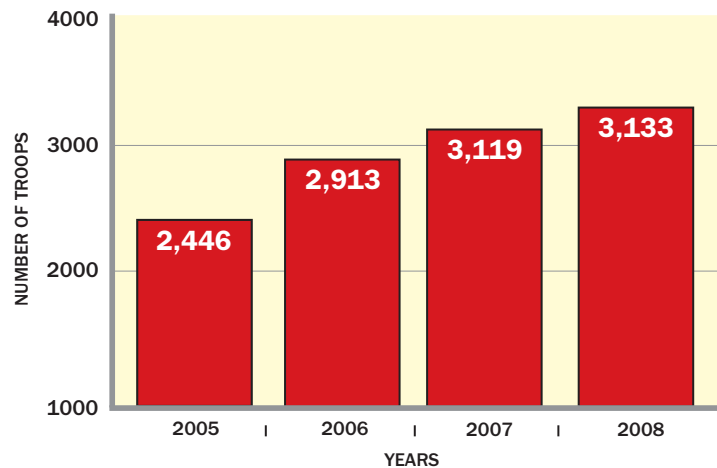
Ignacio Cosidó, MP, member of the Committee of Defence of the Congress. PhD in History

EXPORTS OF DEFENCE MATERIEL



Source: Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade

TROOPS IN INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS



Source: in-house design

The PSOE based its opposition to the Government of José María Aznar on the Iraq War. Once in power, it has insisted on using a radically pacifist speech which rejects the use of military force in all circumstances. But this sort of speech collides with the facts. With Rodríguez Zapatero, Spain has turned into the eighth largest exporter of weapons of the world, it has increased defence spending and its deployment of soldiers in areas of conflict. As it always happens with Zapatero, one thing is words, and another very different thing is facts. We have needed an economic crisis for Zapatero's neopacifist speech to turn into a reality.

Pacifism is one of the main axes of Rodríguez Zapatero's speech and of his Administration. A pacifism of words based on three essential premises:

- The first is that the use of military force is always counterproductive to the cause of peace. According to Zapatero, there is no threat whatsoever that justifies resorting to force to guarantee our security. He asserts that terrorism, severe as this threat may be, must be fought solely by police means and never by military intervention in foreign land. And that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction must be prevented through dialogue and negotiation, and never through force. Thus, he expects totalitarian states, that massacre their citizens or attack with impunity their neighbours, to be reconducted through persuasion and cooperation, and never through weapons. Indeed, for pacifist socialism the use of force is not only unable to solve these problems, but always complicates them more instead.

“With Zapatero, defending our sovereignty and our land is not the essential mission of our Armed Forces anymore, but just turning into another tool for civil protection”

- The second premise is the transformation of the Armed Forces into a sort of humanitarian government organisation with some self-protection capacity. Since war does not exist for Zapatero, the main mission of the army is not fighting, but rather assisting and helping civilians. In the domestic sphere, defending our sovereignty and our land from potential threats is not the essential mission of our Armed Forces anymore, as the Constitution envisages, but just turning into another tool for civil protection. Thus, Rodríguez Zapatero's great contribution to our military policy has been the creation of the so-called Military Emergency Units which, under his direct orders, act unarmed solely in civil missions. In the foreign sphere, the Armed Forces are now only able to act in humanitarian missions and as agents to promote development aid and, as a last resort, as interposition forces between belligerents. The use of weapons, in any case, is to be limited to the strictest interpretation of the principle of self-defence.

- The last premise of Zapatero's neopacifism is considering United Nations as a sort of universal Government within which all problems should be solved. There is therefore no legitimate source for the deployment of a military contingent outside the consensus of the UN Security Council. If no agreement can be reached due to the colliding interests of its members, he seems to prefer the cost of not acting at all rather than acting with that legitimacy deficit, although in Kosovo that legitimacy criterion was not applied. But today, Zapatero defends UN bureaucracy for any foreign operation as a guarantee of success.

This neopacifist doctrine has been enthusiastically assumed by the subsequent Ministers of Defence appointed by Zapatero. Thus, José Bono, shortly after his appointment, declared at a conference in Washington: “I am a Minister of Defence and I prefer to be killed than killing, as a personal moral conviction. I need moral conviction to be joined with planet legitimacy, and that legitimacy is provided by United Nations”. Zapatero’s second Minister of Defence, José Antonio Alonso, in a tribute paid to fallen soldiers in peace missions, apologized on behalf of the Government to the families of the soldiers who had died trying to accomplish those missions. Lastly, the current Minister of Defence, Carmen Chacón, had already declared in 2004 that war against human beings can be changed for war against cancer and misery, which surely shows her frustration over not being appointed Minister of Health or Cooperation, rather than Defence. Having already taken possession of her post at the Ministry, she has boasted several times about being a convinced pacifist, for instance, when she recently declared to the French paper *Journal du Dimanche*, “I am a pacifist woman and the Army is also pacifist”.

“Iran, Venezuela, China or Cuba are amongst our main clients of dual-use technologies”

Duplicating the exports of weapons

Rodríguez Zapatero’s neopacifist speech has been deeply incongruent up to now. The most relevant fact could be that the exports of Spanish weapons has duplicated since the Socialists came to power. Thus, according to the 2007 exports data of defence materiel and of dual-use items and technology, supplied by the Secretariat of State for Trade, the value of such exports increased from 405.9 million Euros in 2004, to 932.94 millions in 2007, which translates into an increase of 130% since Zapatero is in office.

Spain has a defence industry which, although medium-sized, keeps a competitive position in some technology niches. With a yearly turnover of some 3,600 million Euros, defence companies export more than 40% of their production. A sector which creates 17,000 direct jobs and which highly contributes to technology development, research and innovation.

In fact, it could well turn out that Spain’s exports of weapons greatly surpass the figures declared by the Government. According to the annual report of the defence and security industry sector, exports increased in 2006 to 1,443.09 million Euros. This figure, calculated over the basis of companies’ foreign turnover, is 70% higher than the 845.07 million Euros stated on the report supplied by the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade to the Congress that year. At the mandatory appearance before the Committee of Defence, the Secretariat of State for Trade was unable to clarify the reason for such a great difference.

In any case, the strong increase experienced by the Spanish foreign sale of defence materiel in recent years has turned Spain into the eighth largest exporter of weapons of the World behind the United States, Russia, Germany, France, Holland, United Kingdom and Italy, according to the latest yearbook published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in spite of our country still being far away from the sale volumes of the leading countries. Our position as 8th exporter of defence and security systems contrasts with Spain's 18th position in the ranking of defence spending.

“Having, at the same time, a pacifist discourse and a political reality that has doubled the exports of defence and that sells weapons to regimes with a dubious or absent democracy, is a deep hypocrisy and a great mistake”

Even more relevant is the fact that the increase of defence exports has not concentrated itself on our European partners, but mainly on other countries. This way, sales to EU member countries has decreased from 80% — total exports of weapons in 2004 — down to only 36,2% today. In this sense, the sale of naval platforms to Venezuela's military regime seems particularly reprehensible, being as it is a country which is sliding down a dangerously authoritarian slope and which is increasingly becoming a danger for the stability of the region. A second agreement for the sale of Military Transport Aircrafts was cancelled due to the US veto to facilitate certain subsystems.

Information in tune with the inclinations of the Socialist Government's foreign policy is that amongst the main clients of dual-use technologies, which can be used for civil ends but also military ones, are such dubious democracies as Iran, Venezuela, China or Cuba.

It is a positive thing when the exports of defence and security systems to our NATO allies or to countries strongly committed to democracy increase, demonstrating the growing capacity of our defence industry to sell in such a highly competitive market. Of course, most part of this increase is motivated by agreements that were negotiated and signed by the previous Governments of the Partido Popular, like the sale of frigates to Norway. In a couple of cases, like the sale of howitzers to a democratic country like Colombia, the Government has rectified its initial position and has ultimately decided to authorise the sale.

Therefore, the Government should not be criticised for having increased the exports of defence, what should be reproached is the hypocrisy of having, at the same time, a pacifist discourse and a political reality that has doubled the exports of weapons and has addressed them, in some cases, to countries with a dubious or absent democracy.

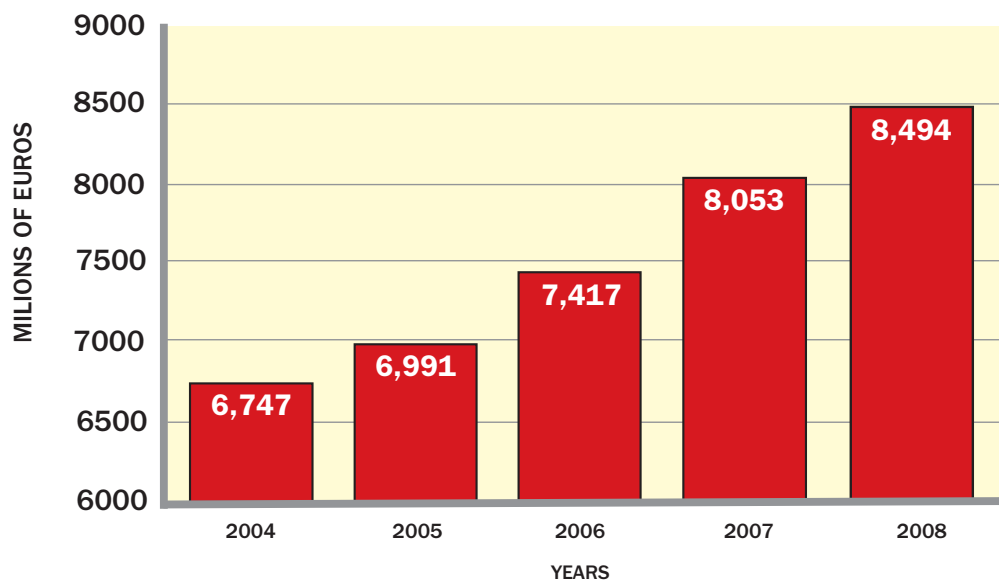
Camouflaging military expenditure

Historically, Spain has been one of the countries spending least in defence in relation to its economic potential. Nevertheless, it is a paradox that the Government most radically pacifist of our history is also, and at the same time, one of the Administrations which has increased military expenditure most. This way, the department's initial budget has grown between 2004 and 2008 by almost 2,000 million Euros, reaching 8,494 millions this year. This figure involves a 26% increase in military expenditure and entails a bigger growth in absolute terms than that of the Partido Popular's 8 years put together. Nevertheless, the arrival of Carmen Chacón to the Ministry has disrupted this upward trend with a historical cut of 3% of the defence budget for 2009, but this is probably due more to the economic crisis than to her pacifist nature.

“Zapatero’s incommensurable yearning for peace has led him to deploy Spanish soldiers around the whole world, even in some of the most dangerous scenarios of our planet”

The problem is that Spain's expenditure in defence is becoming increasingly obscure. To begin with, the final credits for the Ministry of Defence are 16% higher than those initially approved by the Parliament, which increases the budget by 1,300 millions, reaching 9,340 million Euros. To this figure we would also have to add another 342.5 million Euros directly invested by the Infrastructure Management for Defence and the Armed Forces Housing Institute in 2008. During these four years, as a whole, investments financed by the sale of land and housing of the Ministry of Defence have increased by nearly 2,000 million Euros more.

DEFENCE BUDGET



Source: Ministry of Defence

papeles@fundacionfaes.org

On the other hand, Zapatero is taking advantage of the Ministry of Industry's financing to purchase weapon systems, something which he used to criticise heavily back in the days when he was in the opposition. Therefore, in 2008 there will be a total additional investment of 1,308 million Euros for the purchase of tanks and fighting vehicles, ships, submarines, aircraft, helicopters, missiles and howitzers which will be paid by the programme of industrial-technological research and development of the department of Industry, Trade and Tourism. This figure reflects a 30% increase over the initial figure which, when in the opposition, Zapatero denounced as an "R+D militarization". As a whole, over the last four years, the credits of the Ministry of Industry have meant an investment of nearly 5,000 additional million Euros, which would be practically the same as doubling the investment capacity of the Armed Forces.

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These years' Spanish increasing expenditure in defence contrasts with the European environment where military expenditure is experiencing a downward trend. According to the data used by NATO to calculate the expenditure in defence of its members, while the Spanish Government increased its military expenditure by 7.7% in 2007, United Kingdom cut it by 4.7%, Italy by 3.5%, Germany by 0.6% and France froze it at the value of the previous year. The expenditure in defence per Spanish inhabitant with Zapatero has grown from 187 dollars in 2004, to 200 in 2007. Be that as it may, with 1.2% of its GDP dedicated to Defence, Spain is still on of the Allied Countries, along with Luxembourg and Belgium, carrying out least efforts in NATO. A situation that will see itself aggravated by the cuts envisaged for 2009.

Zapatero's Wars

Zapatero's incommensurable yearning for peace has led him to deploy Spanish soldiers around the whole world, even in some of the most dangerous scenarios of our planet. What's more, several times over the last four years the number of troops deployed outside our country exceeded the limit of 3,000, which the Socialist Government had set itself as a maximum. Before this evidence, the pacifist Defence Minister is now announcing the abolishment of limits.

Strong evidence of the increasing Spanish military presence in the World is the soaring of open-end credits financing peace operations. In 2004, expenses resulting from these operations amounted to 380.6 millions of Euros, in 2007 that amount reached 642.5 millions, which entails a growth of 69% in four years. Afghanistan is the most expensive mission, where more

than 1,000 million Euros have already been spent, followed by the Lebanon operation, with an annual budget exceeding 200 million.

The hasty withdrawal of our troops from Iraq in May 2004 involved, nearly at the same time, a strong increase of troops in Afghanistan. Thus, in July of that same year, 500 paratroopers were deployed to Mazari Sharif to support the presidential elections. In February 2005, Spain headed the forward support base in Herat and a provincial reconstruction team in the city of Qaleh-Now. In July 2005, 500 extra soldiers are deployed for the parliamentary elections. In May 2006, as the situation gets worse, a reinforcement of 150 soldiers is authorised. At the end of 2007 two Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) are created in Herat with 52 additional soldiers to develop the Afghan National Army. As a whole, nearly 6,000 Spanish soldiers have been deployed to Afghanistan over the last four years, out of which 23 have lost their lives. Spain is, with 742 soldiers in that country, the tenth country contributing to the deployment of NATO in Afghanistan.

“Behold Zapatero’s pacifism: Spain had never exported as many weapons, nor spent as much money in its defence, nor deployed as many troops outside Spain”

Operations in the Lebanon started in September 2006 with the deployment of a battalion of the Spanish Navy Marines to control the border of this country with Israel. Since then, more than 4,000 soldiers and Civil Guards have been taken to the Lebanon. On June 24, six soldiers belonging to the Spanish contingent died as a consequence of an attack with an exploding artefact. The total cost of this operation already exceeds 500 million Euros.

Spain has also taken part in high-risk operations, as the one which took place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo between July and November 2006. 130 soldiers were involved in this operation confronting combat situations. Currently, there are members of the Air Force in Chad supporting the EU mission carried out in Darfur. Recently, 90 more soldiers and a maritime patrol aircraft have been sent to Somalia to prevent piracy in the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, the Minister has announced her intention of ending the military mission led by Spain in Bosnia, a proposal that was rejected on the spot by her European colleagues; and of revising the deployment in Afghanistan. The doubt here is whether the minister is contemplating the idea of reducing our foreign deployment due to her unswerving pacifist nature or to her growing financial difficulties, but we rather think that it responds more to budgetary pacifism than true conviction.

Conclusion

The pacifism exhibited by the PSOE bears the political stamp of Rodríguez Zapatero: lots of demagogy and words which contradict facts. The reality is that Spain had never exported as many weapons —particularly to countries so democratically weak—, nor spent as much money in its defence, nor deployed as many troops outside Spain, as with the current Government. In any case, the neopacifist discourse of the Socialist Government has a clear cost in terms of international credibility and portrays the weakness of our will of defence; likewise, it limits the capacity of our Armed Forces to carry out its missions more effectively and to guarantee better its own security outside Spain. A reduction of our capacity of defence must be added to this political weakness as a consequence of the economic crisis to which we have been led by Zapatero.

“A reduction of our capacity of defence must be added to Zapatero’s political weakness as a consequence of the economic crisis”

Zapatero’s distinction between war operations and peace operations, or between pacific weapons and non-pacific weapons is, in many cases, a fallacy. The Offshore Patrol Vessels sold to Hugo Chávez can be used by the revolutionary regime to patrol its waters as well as to invade the territorial waters of a neighbour. In Afghanistan, our troops have to face attacks perpetrated by terrorist groups every day. Casualties happen during these clashes. It is obvious that the aim of our forces is to establish peace and stability in Afghanistan, but to accomplish this they must fight, and sadly, sometimes kill. But this reality does not fit within Zapatero’s pacifist discourse and is deliberately hidden from public opinion.