

CEUTA CRISIS

'It was an invasion'. European Parliament distances itself from Sánchez

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Despite Ursula von der Leyen's ambiguous stance on the invasion of Ceuta and her silence on the responsibilities of the Spanish government and the Kingdom of Morocco, the European Parliament has recently dealt two heavy defeats to Prime Minister Pedro

Sánchez and the entire European left. The left had portrayed the Socialist government as a victim and exploited the barbaric invasion by irregular migrants as an unexpected emergency. However, the European Parliament formally defined the events at the end of July as an 'invasion' forming part of a 'hybrid war'. As we wrote in no uncertain terms: Sánchez's **lies** would not last long, and now the European Parliament has confirmed this too, despite the Commission's timidity.

In a resolution, the European Parliament describes the events in Ceuta as an 'invasion' of the Spanish city and an act of 'hybrid warfare' against a member state. The text was adopted in Strasbourg on 17 September, with 339 votes in favour, 225 against, and 16 abstentions. Drafted by the European People's Party (EPP), it received support from Renew Europe and the three right-wing groups: the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), Patriots for Europe (PfE), and Europe of Sovereign Nations (ESN). The Socialists and Democrats (S&D), the Greens, and the Left voted against it.

While the resolution is not binding, it represents an undeniable political statement and a rebuke of the lies told by Sánchez and the European left regarding the entire Ceuta affair, which is by no means over. The text urges Morocco, described as a 'key partner' of the Union, to honour its commitments regarding border surveillance, readmission and cooperation on migration. Claims made by Moroccan ministers regarding the sovereignty of Ceuta and Melilla have been described as 'unacceptable and incompatible' with this partnership. The resolution paves the way for European funding to be made conditional upon Morocco's compliance with the agreements, although unfortunately it does not impose the suspension of payments to Rabat.

Regarding returns, the report calls for the swift and effective removal of anyone not entitled to remain in the EU, including unaccompanied minors. The wide-ranging regularisation programme promoted by Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez is criticised for sending the wrong signal to potential migrants and criminal smuggling networks, and is described as a 'pull factor'. 'Illegal entry', it adds, 'must never become a shortcut to obtaining legal residence'.

The previous day, 16 September, the plenary adopted a '**Report on hybrid threats**' by 435 votes to 209, with 13 abstentions. An amendment tabled by the rapporteur, Lithuanian EPP MEP Rasa Juknevičienė, condemned the attack on the Union's southern border on 30 and 31 July, as well as the subsequent invasion of the city. The amendment also called for an independent and thorough investigation into those who planned and carried out the operation.

While not formally challenging the Kingdom of Morocco's responsibility, this request is

more political than judicial in nature.

This represents a clear parliamentary defeat for Sánchez's Socialist

government and the Group of Socialists and Democrats (S&D). The group's leader, Iratxe García, who is backed by the incumbent prime minister, had made criticism of Madrid a 'red line' during negotiations to reconstitute the 'Ursula' majority. The S&D, the Greens, and The Left opposed the final resolution, while the EPP was joined by the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), Patriots for Europe (PfE), and Europe of Sovereign Nations (ESN), as well as part of the liberal Renew Europe group. The outcome of both votes was to strengthen the centre-right coalition, which is becoming increasingly stable and united in the European Parliament on immigration issues. In June, cooperation between the same groups had contributed to the adoption of the '[EU Return Regulation](#)' by 418 votes to 218. This introduced stricter expulsion rules, longer detention periods, and the possibility of return centres outside the EU. We commented extensively on this measure in the *Daily Compass*.

Meanwhile, the situation in Ceuta is becoming more serious and complex by the day. New instances of the Sánchez government's failure to act and timidity are constantly coming to light. Yesterday, according to various sources, there were several [clashes](#) between migrants and police and military forces. The impression is very clear that there are currently at least [18,000–20,000](#) undocumented migrants in Ceuta. This is certainly not 'a few thousand', as claimed by the Sánchez government.