




(U) The March 11 Train Bombings in Madrid -- Two Years Later


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(U) Suspects in the terrorist attacks will be tried; their activities were inspired by -- but not directed by -- al-Qa'ida.

(U) According to press, on 11 April 2006, Spain indicted 29 people in connection with the 2004 Madrid train bombings. Detailed evidence presented at the trial included a report, which concluded that al Qa'ida inspired the attack that killed 191 people, but the AQ terrorist group did not direct it. Other evidence included financial transactions and telephone transcripts.

(U) Judge Juan del Olmo's report asserted that the cell that carried out the attacks was made up mostly of Moroccan radicals, several with ties to al Qa'ida and the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM). The perpetrators' inspiration came from an Internet essay published by Global Islamic Media, which called for attacks on Spain to influence the voters to convince the country to pull out of the US-led war in Iraq.


(U) Spanish judge Juan del Olmo, who is investigating the Madrid bombing attacks, talks on his cell phone outside the High Court in Madrid. (Reuters)


(U) Victims of Madrid's train bombing are helped immediately following a bomb blast at Madrid's Atocha station, March 11, 2004. The bomb was one of three that exploded simultaneously in packed rush hour trains, killing 191 people. (Reuters)

(U) Due to the complexity of the case and the number of people involved, the case may not make it to court for another year and will take yet another year to complete. The specific charge for five primary defendants is 191 counts of terrorist killings with 1,755 attempted murders. Twenty-three others are charged with collaboration offenses, such as falsification of documents and membership in a terrorist organization. The 29th defendant, a Moroccan merchant who provided the plastic explosives, has been charged with 192 murders - those killed on the trains and an additional death of a police officer killed during a raid on the suspects' apartment a few weeks after the March 11 attack.

(U) While the bombs caused more than 22 million Euros (\$26,829,268) in damage, the attacks cost very little to orchestrate - 54,271 Euros (\$65,740). Another 105,000 Euros (\$127,200) and up to 1.5 million Euros (\$1,829,268) worth of drugs and cash were held in reserve for further spending if needed. Finally, while the suspects will probably face long jail terms in the thousands of years if convicted, they will probably be held for only 40 years. Spain has no death penalty or life imprisonment. The extensive jail terms are usually symbolic.

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