

PROXY OBSERVER

SEÑALAMOS A LOS CULPABLES DE LA VIOLENCIA

Spot Report on the Second of the Events Known as the “*Marchas de la Dignidad*”

Prepared for:

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INTRODUCTION

This is a brief “Spot Report” on the second of the events known as the “*Marchas de la Dignidad*” which were also celebrated earlier in the year (March 22nd) and which the OSCE is currently investigating, because of extreme police violence against participants towards the end of the event.

Unlike the March 22nd event which ended in chaos and public disorder provoked by police over-reaction and a complete breakdown in communication between “Puma” police units, this second event was much more orderly, due mainly to the efforts and good planning of event organisers.

It is worth noting that unlike the March 22nd event, on this occasion the police chief in charge of the Madrid UIP (riot police) has not had to resign from his post.

THE ORGANISERS:

The state-wide, week long event was organised by various social groups throughout Spain with @Marchas22M organising the main event in Madrid, as well as other smaller peaceful protest in the run-up to the main march on November 29.

The government had been informed about the gathering, as well as the route the march would take. The march was composed of several columns which merged together in a plaza in the centre of Madrid known as the *Puerta del Sol*.

THE EVENT:

The objective of the *Marchas de la Dignidad* was to draw attention to social injustice caused by government cuts, destruction of public services, forced evictions, government corruption, cuts to social benefits and restrictions to basic freedoms and Human Rights.

POLICE PRESENCE:

Generally speaking police presence was low key throughout the event, with few if any, police vans present along the route towards the centre of Madrid. However, tensions rose when a group of antidisturbios (riot police) pushed their way into the crowd and walked alongside participants for a fair distance.

This alarming intrusion came to an end, when a cordon of “March Stewards” stepped in and helped clear the way for marchers, by asking police officers to calmly move away from the centre of the road towards the curb.

It is thanks to these “Stewards” that tensions were eased and the whole event was orderly and under the full control of the organisers. The setting up march Stewards to control crowds and provide security along the route, is a feature which needs to be highlighted and praised.



Moment in which UIP riot police send protestors rushing for the safety of the pavement, as they break the march in two for no apparent reason.

INJURIES and ARRESTS

No injuries or arrests were reported. No searches or mass ID checks were carried out.

THE AUTHORITIES

The delegation in Madrid appears to have made an effort to avoid a repeat of the violence we saw in the first of these events in March. But it is mainly due to the organisers of the *Marchas de la Dignidad* that this event was a success in terms of public safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We suggest the OSCE reminds police authorities in Madrid of their duty under Spain's Constitution, to protect and guarantee public safety, while citizens exercise their civil rights.

All incidents which could lead to public disorder or public alarm should be avoided, in particular when those causing the altercation are the police themselves.

Report dated: 8/December/2014

Relevant Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzHIpJ9boFc>

For more information, photographs and videos on this event visit our website:
<http://proxyobserver.weebly.com>

