



EUROMIL aisbl

*(European Organisation of
Military Associations)*

Rue John Waterloo Wilson 78
B-1000 Brussels

Tel: +32.2.626.06.80

E-mail: euromil@euromil.org

N° Ent.: 0538.809.759

Statement of EUROMIL in Support of the Demonstration organised by Spanish Military Associations on 12 May 2018

The European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL) fully supports the demonstration jointly organised by 5 Spanish military associations, namely AUME, ATME, AMTM, UMT and *45 Sin Despidos*, to claim their rights in front of the Ministry of Defence on 12 May 2018.

EUROMIL is an umbrella organisation composed of 34 military associations and trade unions from 23 countries. It is the main Europe-wide forum for cooperation among professional military associations on issues of common concern. EUROMIL strives to secure and advance the human rights, fundamental freedoms and socio-professional interests of military personnel of all ranks in Europe and promotes the concept of "Citizen in Uniform". As such, a soldier is entitled to the same rights and obligations as any other citizen. EUROMIL particularly calls for recognition of the right of servicemen and -women to form and join trade unions and independent associations and for their inclusion in a regular social dialogue by the authorities.

Amongst its members, EUROMIL proudly counts two Spanish associations, namely ATME and AUME. The organisation welcomes their joint efforts to work together with other military associations to support Spanish military personnel and their families.

Over the years, Spanish military associations have been vocal in denouncing unfair remuneration, a temporary military career and restricted rights for military personnel. However, despite their numerous actions, complaints and proposals to the Minister of Defence, the associations deplore the lack of attention of the Ministry of Defence to their concerns and the costs of its inaction.

Despite some positive developments in the recognition of servicemen and -women rights in Spain, such as the adoption, in 2011, of the Law on Rights and Duties for the Members of the Armed Forces, establishing the right of association for military personnel, restrictions of their fundamental rights remain high.

EUROMIL regrets that Spain continues to impose undue restrictions on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of military personnel and underlines that the right to freedom of association and associated rights such as the right to freedom of expression are intrinsic to democratic societies and expressly recognized in all major international and regional human rights instruments.



EUROMIL aisbl

*(European Organisation of
Military Associations)*

Rue John Waterloo Wilson 78
B-1000 Brussels

Tel: +32.2.626.06.80

E-mail: euromil@euromil.org

N° Ent.: 0538.809.759

EUROMIL believes that there is always room for improvement in the relationship between independent professional military associations and the political and military authorities and condemns any repressive measure taken against representatives of military associations. The organisation trusts that a well-organised social dialogue is essential for the functioning of the armed forces. Indeed, working together in a spirit of mutual trust and respect is not only beneficial to military personnel but to the armed forces as such.

EUROMIL would also like to recall that military personnel are highly-skilled workers who deserve the best working and living conditions. EUROMIL strongly believes that governments and society owe a duty of care towards their military personnel. Soldiers are called upon to make sacrifices, risking health and life in the service of the nation and the international community. Servicemen and -women deserve in return fair treatment, respect and to be valued as fellow citizens. Further attention should thus be devoted to their working and living conditions.

Finally, EUROMIL insists that although armed forces need young operational personnel, both short-term and lifetime careers must remain attractive for the staff as military personnel are the key of success in the armed forces. Currently, Spanish soldiers and seamen serve until the age of 45 years and must leave the armed forces when they reach this age. EUROMIL strongly believes that 45 is too high age to be forced to leave the armed forces. Should a system of short-term contract be maintained, armed forces should ensure that military personnel are properly reintegrated into the labour market with the necessary training and preparation for another occupation in the public or private sector at the end of their contract. Nevertheless, armed forces will always need to keep a portion of military personnel for their entire career as they need both young and operational personnel as well as people with experience in the military for managerial positions. EUROMIL therefore deplors the fact that despite the existing legislation foreseeing the reintegration of soldiers into the civilian life, Spanish authorities did not implement what has been decided by lawmakers and calls on them to ensure that armed forces personnel with temporary contracts are properly supported in their reintegration process.

Emmanuel Jacob
President