

SPAIN: Two imams arrested in Spain over 'Islamic State support'

They were spreading hate speech through the social networks and were teaching children in the mosque

HRWF (27.10.2016) – Two Moroccan imams were arrested on 25th October in the tourist town of Sant Antoni de Portmany (Ibiza) on suspicion of backing the Islamic State group and inciting jihad.

“They publicly and repeatedly expressed on social networks their support for the terrorist group Daesh, its methods and its Salafist-jihadist ideology,” the Civil Guard said in a statement.

The Civil Guard gave the ages of the pair as 31 and 35, but did not name them. They are only known by their initials: A.E.M. and J.R. AFP reported both were imams, but according to local newspaper Diario de Ibiza, the older of the two was a construction worker assisting the imam. (See <http://bit.ly/2fic0BN>). Both are Moroccan nationals. Six years ago, they were arrested for maltreating and beating pupils with a stick in the Koran school at the same mosque (Masjid al Fath).

They were “imams in a mosque, a privileged position from which to exert influence over members of the Muslim community on the island,” the Civil Guard said.

A spokesman for Spain’s Interior Ministry said: “One of the things that most anxious investigators was the influence that both individuals exerted on the members of the Islamic

community in Ibiza, highlighting as especially serious the problem of children who went to classes they taught themselves at the mosque”.

The Spanish authorities have arrested 156 people since 2015 on suspicion of being jihadists.