

Spanish footballer Marcos Llorente believes in the chemtrail theory



He was supposed to talk about football. He ended up talking about the sky. Called up by head coach Luis de la Fuente for the resumption of 2026 World Cup qualifying, Atlético Madrid midfielder [Marcos Llorente](#) was returning to the Roja after more than a year's absence. But it was neither his physical form nor his place in Spain's midfield that dominated discussion around his call-up. It was another outing on one of the most controversial subjects in the contemporary conspiracy world: chemtrails, those white trails left behind by aircraft, which some still insist are the vector for a deliberate chemical spraying operation concealed by the authorities.

Questioned by the Spanish sports outlet El Desmarque, Llorente did not dodge the subject. "I say it very naturally," he stated, before adding: "When I used to look at the sky, I didn't see these things." A calm, almost matter-of-fact tone, for a conviction that has accompanied him for several years now and that, far from fading, seems to strengthen with every new public statement.

"It's not normal": the case built by a player turned figure of doubt

According to remarks reported by several Spanish outlets, Llorente claims that the trails now observed in Iberian skies did not exist, or at least not in this form, when he was a child. "It's not normal," he reportedly insisted, adding that he was not "the only one saying it." He goes so far as to claim that "thousands of people" thank him, in his telling, for having brought the subject into public discussion. "A lot of people say it, and more and more people are saying it," he insists, building his case not on scientific evidence but on the notion of a growing popular consensus.

This type of argument, grounded in the supposed multiplication of testimonies rather than in any verifiable demonstration, is a constant feature of conspiracy theories linked to aviation and geoengineering. It rests on a cognitive bias well documented by social scientists: the conviction that the perceived frequency of a shared opinion guarantees its validity, regardless of the objective data available.

The origins of a myth: where do chemtrails come from?

The chemtrail theory, a contraction of "chemical trails," has its roots in the 1990s United States. It crystallized in particular around a US Air Force document titled "Weather as a Force Multiplier: Owning the Weather in 2025,"

published in 1996 as part of a university-level forward-looking exercise on the future military uses of meteorology. That text, routinely stripped of its academic context by proponents of the theory, has become one of the favorite pieces of evidence for a movement claiming that the long condensation trails left by airliners at high altitude are not a simple physical phenomenon, but the result of intentional spraying of chemical or biological substances, for purposes ranging from climate control to population manipulation.

The scientific community has been unanimous on this theory for more than two decades. The trails observed, scientifically known as "contrails" (condensation trails), result from a thoroughly documented physical process: the condensation, then crystallization, of water vapor contained in jet engine exhaust upon contact with the cold air of high altitudes. An international study coordinated in 2016, bringing together 77 atmospheric specialists from nineteen countries and published in the journal *Environmental Research Letters*, had already concluded that 76 atmospheric dust samples analyzed showed no evidence of a clandestine spraying program, while also finding that the persistence of certain trails in humid high-altitude air fully explains the grid-like patterns often cited as proof by theory proponents.

An athlete, a sounding board

What sets the Llorente case apart from a simple opinion shared on social media is the sounding board that elite sport represents. At 31, the Spanish international, who came through Real Madrid's academy before joining Atlético in 2019, enjoys considerable public standing in a country where football occupies a central place in public life. His words, whether spoken on the pitch or off it, reach a broad and varied audience, well beyond the circles usually receptive to conspiracy theories.

This is, moreover, not the first time the player has ventured into a lifestyle marked by distrust of conventional scientific and medical institutions. Llorente has also spoken publicly about his daily habit of adding butter to his coffee, which he presents as beneficial for the body, as well as his dedicated practice of red-light therapy, to the point of launching his own business selling infrared lamps. The player says he structures his days around sun exposure and, once night falls, the exclusive use of red and infrared lighting throughout his home, in order to reproduce, in his words, lighting conditions as close as possible to natural twilight.

Quote

"A lot of people say it, and more and more people are saying it. It's not normal."

— Marcos Llorente, interview with *El Desmarque*, July 2026

Sport and disinformation: shifting ground

Llorente's case is not isolated in the international sporting landscape. Figures from disciplines as varied as tennis, American basketball, and rugby have, in recent years, lent their fame to claims rooted in scientific disinformation, whether concerning the shape of the Earth, vaccines, or, precisely, chemtrails. Sports federations, including Spain's Royal Football Federation, regularly find themselves at a loss in the face of this kind of individual stance, which falls outside any standard disciplinary framework but repeatedly raises the question of elite athletes' public responsibility.

Head coach Luis de la Fuente, focused on preparing the squad for the upcoming World Cup qualifying fixtures, has so far made no public comment on his player's remarks. The Roja, meanwhile, continues its preparations, while the Spanish media landscape once again grapples with the growing porousness between sporting fame and the spread of unverified theories.

A belief that persists despite the denials

Several opinion surveys conducted in Europe and the United States over the past decade have highlighted the

persistence of a significant minority of the population convinced, to varying degrees, of the reality of a clandestine atmospheric spraying program. This persistence puzzles researchers in the sociology of belief, who see it less as an information gap than as a broader distrust of scientific, governmental, and media institutions. In this context, the voice of a well-liked and respected public figure — such as a Spanish international playing for one of the country's biggest clubs — acts as a powerful vector of legitimization, regardless of the theory's complete lack of empirical grounding.

Marcos Llorente, for his part, shows no sign of backing down. Fully standing by his views, including within the official setting of a national team gathering, he illustrates in his own way a broader trend: athletes who, buoyed by their popularity, choose to use their media platform to voice personal convictions far removed from scientific consensus, blurring the line between sporting performance and activist speech.

Sources

- www.sofoot.com

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