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EXCLUSIVE!

Interview with Mohamed Jamil Derbah

Businessman and political advisor Mohamed Jamil Derbah is considered one of Tenerife's most charismatic and controversial characters.

Mohamed is the former right-hand man to timeshare mogul John Palmer, has survived three assassination attempts, and built a business network that bridges the Islands with Africa.

He recently allowed Canarian journalist Félix Rojas to write a book about his time in Tenerife, and invited *Island Connections* to interview him and discuss what readers can expect from it, and what the future holds. To discover more about the man who was so often in the headlines, see the full interview on pages eight and nine.



HOLIDAY RENTS

Let up in the law

In a move that will be welcomed by many, the Canary Islands Supreme Court has decreed several of the regional rules on holiday lets to be invalid.

The changes include the much disputed prohibition on private rentals within tourist areas and those of mixed residential use, a ban that was introduced two years ago by former Canarian president Paulino Rivero, causing outrage from many in the sector. Amongst others, the Spanish Federation of Tourism Rental Associations (Fevitur) and the National Commission for Market and Competition (CNMP) have fought bitterly against Decree 113/2015 which established the restrictions. Thankfully, their efforts are starting to pay off, as the Supreme Court has announced it is "absurd" that visitors can only take advantage of private lets outside of tourist areas, and that a prohibition of this kind is contrary to free competition.

Another light at the end of the tunnel is within the administrative

Photo: Cabildo CC



Playa del Inglés is one of the tourist regions affected by the law

field, as the court stated that the number of documents which had to be submitted before starting renting was "inappropriate". One of the greatest indictments was made about it being illegal to rent out individual rooms; that an apartment has to be let in its entirety. The court's ruling declared that the only motive for this type

of interference in the free provision of services could be to favour hotel groups. "There is no reason why a guest who wants to book only one room should be made to pay for the whole apartment", said the judge, "even if this means that rooms are being offered at a cheaper price than those available in hotels". The costs of the dis-

pute must be borne by the Canary Islands' Government as it has been seen to contravene the laws of free competition. However, the battle will not be over until said government has finished redrafting the holiday let decree, a process that is already underway.

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