



Interview ▶ Rico talks about her appointment, the coalition with DA and Grifols

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«[Regarding the Grifols issue] we have always been in favor of a popular consultation»

CRISTINA RICO President of Liberals of Andorra



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«The Government should have more transparency in this management. Explain clearly what the interests of Grifols are in the country»

sep Àngel Mortés stated, then there was some support for this decision which was not ours, but from the majority.

– Do you think, however, that the Grifols project should be stopped?

–I think that like any foreign investment, from the Executive there should be more transparency in this management. In other words, it should be clearly explained what the interests of Grifols are in coming to Andorra. In the end, they are a company that, obviously, even if they do research work at some point this must be monetized, because what a company has is the purpose of economic profit. However, it would be very good if they told us what the interest of Grifols is and, above all, and I think this is the fear of many of us who live in Ordino, that they do not come here to do things that the legislation in other European countries does not allow them. So the Government should be transparent and say why Grifols is coming, what its interest is and treat it like any other foreign investment. In other words, I don't know why the board of directors of Grifols in Andorra must have representatives or positions of political trust or public positions. There is like a collaboration and a participation, and surely a somewhat discriminatory treatment of favoring Grifols to come, and if it has to be the case, let it be very clearly stated why. And until now, and I speak also as a citizen of Ordino, we have not had this information.

–In any case, until now, Liberals had always been in favor of this.

–The liberals who participated in the Government had the responsibility of providing stability and support. I wasn't there, but I don't think this was part of some kind of blackmail by DA. ≡

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The president of Liberals d'Andorra, Cristina Rico, talks about her recent appointment, the coalition with Democrats for Andorra and Grifols.

–A few months ago you were appointed president of Liberals d'Andorra. Why did you decide to head the party?

–As everyone knows, we were coming off some very bad results and we considered that it was necessary to start a new stage and make a change, also in strategy, but to go step by step from what the national elections had meant. The truth is that I really like party work and there were several colleagues who suggested it to me, it seemed like a very interesting challenge and that's why I accepted.

–Was it an easy decision?

–It was easy as I am a liberal and, as I mentioned, I like party work, so in that sense there was no problem. On the other hand, it was a difficult decision, because you can carry out such a project if you have support and people to help you, and it is true that at that time the party was at a minimum because there were

many people who were discouraged, even some that folded. Then, when I got the help of the people I thought should go with me, everything was much easier, but the tricky part was talking to people and getting them to lend me a hand. Luckily, most I asked said yes, and so far it's been a very challenging yet rewarding experience.

–Until now you governed together with Democrats for Andorra. Did you have discrepancies in certain aspects?

–The Government that had a coalition of Liberals and Democrats I think had a good harmony. I think it was a government that dealt with the pandemic and that had many successes, I was not in the Executive, but as far as I know there were no discrepancies. In the same way, both in the Municipality of Ordino and in Andorra la Vella, where it was also being governed, perhaps with a smaller participation but together with Liberals, I am not aware of any disagreements.

–I understand that you are not in favor of installing Grifols in the country.

–I don't know about this issue in the sense that I am not an expert in the action of Grifols. Of course,

as a matter of principle, and as a liberal, I believe that in these decisions that can have a significant impact on the parish, the public must be taken into account.

–Is it the opinion of the whole party to hold this popular consultation?

–That's right, mainly for two reasons. First, because it can be a very relevant topic for the parish. This installation will be on public land, and therefore perhaps the public has the right to say what they want and what they don't want there. But then there is another issue that concerns me more. If Grifols can re-

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ally pose a risk to people's health, I think that this inquiry should be approached in a different way and asked of everyone: whether or not you have the right to vote is not a reason, because if it can really be dangerous for your health, it will affect nationals and non-nationals. That is why I think it should be much more democratized, taking into account the opinion of all the people who live in Ordino and that this consultation should be held for everyone, regardless of whether they want Grifols or not. In Andorra it is good that there are companies that are economic engines, that help the population and that generate business fabric and wealth, but not at any price. And this case has a lot of shadow.

–In fact, on several occasions the opposition to the Municipality of Ordino has asked for it to be done, but this has been refused. What opinion does it deserve?

–I think that in a way this is the toll you pay when you form a coalition government. I think that the role of the Liberals or of this coalition government is to provide stability and support, and obviously if there was a majority that considered that the consultation should not be held, as the Consul Major Jo-

SOCIETY

Astrié expresses the need for a multifunctional space in the capital

The 44th edition of the Andorra la Vella Fair begins with almost 190 exhibitors

The head of government announces that it remains a «necessary and priority» infrastructure

ANNA MENCOS VIÑALS
ANDORRA LA VELLA
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Beginning of the 44th edition of the Andorra la Vella Fair served to highlight the need for the Principality to have a multifunctional space to host large-scale events such as the fair. The Head of Government, Xavier Espot, stated that «it is a necessary and priority infrastructure», as long as the necessary economic and financial capacity is available to carry it forward. This year's edition has increased the number of exhibitors by more than a fortnight, reaching 187 stands spread over 10,000 square meters, which are distributed between the fairgrounds installed in the parking lot of the Central Park and the outdoor spaces, on the banks of the river. Once again, EL PERIÒDIC will be at the Fair all weekend at stand number eight, distributing the Special Fair to attendees for free.

The Consul Major of Andorra la Vella, David Astrié, stated that the fair becomes a meeting point and social cohesion, and that at the same time it is a great showcase for the entities that are part of it. For this reason, the consul pointed out that «more guarantees of durability are needed», since the event is currently being held on a plot that the municipality rents to a private property, and that this means that «we have to anticipate finding a location where the fair can be held with more guarantees». The consul emphasized that a joint reflection must be made and look towards the future, and from there work to see what is the most viable option both in the short term and in the urban planning field.

For his part, the head of government detailed that it will be necessary to see how the housing situation evolves, since «if it continues to be what it is, the majority of our public resources in terms of investment must be allocated to the «housing». Of course, Espot explained that everything will depend on whether the Executive is able to find synergies with the private sector that will cover the public cost of this infrastructure.



► Inauguration of the 44th edition of the Andorra la Vella Fair.

WATER NETWORK// The weather situation this autumn has meant that the municipalities have put on the table measures that were planned to guarantee the supply of water to the citizens and that, in some cases, had been postponed due to other issues. This is the case of the connection of the networks between Andorra la Vella and Escaldes-Engordany, to avoid episodes of incidents and to be able to supply water on both sides. In this sense, Astrié commented that there is a predisposition on the part of the two municipalities and that it is a situation that is on the table: «We will have to look at places to do it, since they are solutions that must adopt now to avoid future problems», detailed the consul major.



XAVIER ESPOT
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

«If the situation continues like this, the majority of public investment resources will have to go to housing»

DAVID ASTRIÉ
CONSUL MAJOR OF ANDORRA LA VELLA

«We have to anticipate and find a location where the fair can be held with a greater guarantee of durability»

WINTER SEASON// Grandvalira Resorts does not foresee an impact on the arrival of Israeli tourists for the ski season following the war conflict with Palestine. As confirmed by the general director of the domain, Juan Ramón Moreno, at this time the Israeli market «thinks to operate normally», although he assured that given the situation in this territory, «we have to be very careful because things can change very quickly.» On the other hand, Moreno advanced that the new six-seater ski lift will be enabled in Arinsal, which will enjoy a higher capacity, and then a new area in Canillo with a four-seater ski lift and three new tracks that «will give us they will give five additional skiable kilometers». ≡

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