



**BELEN  
MARIA**  
**30**  
ANIVERSARIO

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**GENERAL REPORT**  
**July 19th to 25th, 2010**

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**I.- INTRODUCTION**

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Thirty years ago, the port of Las Palmas Port was the site of a labour protest which had had serious consequences: the death of a stevedore's daughter. Her name was Belen Maria and she was 16 years old. That tragic event marked a turning point in the fight for workers' rights. Its social significance affected both the Canary Islands and the rest of Spain.

Since then, every year on July 25<sup>th</sup>, we pay tribute to Belen Maria's memory as a symbol of the stevedores' fight to improve their labour conditions and life. This year is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and the Las Palmas Stevedore Organization wants to commemorate the occasion organizing a week of professional, social, cultural and sports meetings.

The events will take place from July 19<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of July, with the participation of several representatives from ports all over the world.

The stevedores from Las Palmas Port also want to make use of the opportunity to open the doors of our organization to the society in general. Since the beginning of the year, we have been working on several initiatives aimed at recovering Belen Maria's history and the three decades we have been fighting to improve working conditions both in the port and in other economic sectors.

For all these reasons, we invite you to share this week of fraternization with us and we are at your disposal with whatever you need to make the commemoration of the anniversary of Belen Maria's death a complete success.



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**II.- CONMEMORATIVE EVENTS**

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Belen Maria's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary will turn Gran Canaria into a meeting point focused on port activities.

As the main event on the agenda, the "First International Port Congress" will congregate specialists from different countries to analyse the evolution of ports, including the impact of the current crisis on their development and port legislative systems.

The "First International Port Congress" is the most important event to be held on a professional level, although another two important events have been officially announced: the mass meeting and the state coordinator.

Beyond the professional field, we have conceived this event as an opportunity to teach society more about our organization by showing the port's singularities. In this respect, we have established several social-cultural initiatives ranging from the digitisation of Belen Maria's dossier to conferences, competitions and the publication of brochures and different leaflets.

We have also updated our website to adapt it to this special occasion (English and French translation, addition of a specific space about Belen Maria's death, background and consequences).

Furthermore, we also wanted to include the organization of several leisure and sports activities. This enables us to show the islands to the speakers, organizers, public and families who participate from different countries. On the other hand, it helps to bring us closer together by means of different sporting competitions.



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The 30th anniversary of Belen Maria will be closed on July 25<sup>th</sup> in the square that was named after her where, as every year, there will be a mass in her honour. This is a tradition for all stevedores and their families.

***II.a) PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS.***

The most important professional meeting to be held will be the aforementioned "International Port Congress" which will take place on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, with the collaboration of the International Dockworkers Council (IDC) and the Port Study Foundation. In different sessions, specialists from different continents will explain the evolution of different container terminal operative models, and the evolution and future of ro-ro traffic, Short Sea Shipping (SSS) and sea motorways.

We will also be holding other national as international meetings, making use of the massive presence of the stevedore sector in Gran Canaria.

***II.b) SOCIAL-CULTURAL EVENTS***

**SOCIAL EVENTS.** The main social event will be the mass for Belen Maria, that takes place every year on July 25<sup>th</sup>. In this occasion, it will take place in the square that was named after her. It will be prepared to welcome a large number of participants and the Canary Island authorities.

People who wish to attend the mass can travel on Global and the local bus system.

**CULTURAL EVENTS.** On this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we want to focus on connecting with society. The following initiatives are based on this idea:

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- Digitisation of original documents. The trade union keeps the original documents of that tragic event (Belen Maria's writings, posters and leaflets, solidarity letters, media coverage, photos and videos). All this material has been ordered and digitised.
- Availability to historians and the media. The best way to bring the world of stevedores closer to society is to open the trade union's doors to all who are interested, such as investigators who may be interested in studying an event that has not before been analysed.
- Possibility of a "Belen Maria award" for the best school essay or journalistic information. A Belen Maria award will be organised for schools and among the media.
- Conferences and debates. A series of conferences and debates will be organised, with some of the main figures and witnesses of that event.
- Publications and printed material. We will attempt to describe the scope of the stevedores' fight that ended in Belen Maria's death, what happened later and its relationship with other groups, in the past and in the present.

**LEISURE.** The members of the stevedore community have always taken their relationships above and beyond the workplace. Workers and families who come to the Canary Islands will enjoy of the hospitality of this land by participating in different activities which will be organized in this week, such as tourist visits, trips, a banquet...

***II.c) SOCIAL-CULTURAL EVENTS***

Sailing, swimming, seven-a-side football, basketball, athletics and wrestling will be some of the several disciplines available for

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participants. This event will take place from 19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July in the port area. We will be visited by some important sport celebrities and the awards ceremony will take place on Saturday afternoon.

- See “First Belen Maria Sport Meet” annex.

#### **IV. COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS**

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The organization of this ambitious programme of activities is only possible with the collaboration and coordination of a large team, comprising the following public agencies and private organisations:

- INTERNATIONAL DOCKWORKERS COUNCIL (IDC)
- COORDINADORA OF DOCKWORKERS
- FUNESPOR
- LAS PALMAS PORT FOUNDATION
  
- PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS
  1. Port Authority
  2. Canary Island Government
  3. Gran Canaria island council
  4. Fuerteventura island council
  5. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria city council
  
- PRIVATE COMPANIES
  - Global
  - Municipal buses
  - Ron Arehucas
  - Melia Hotel
  - Armas shipping company
  - Entrelíneas S.L.



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- FORUM COMUNICACIÓN Y GESTIÓN
- Equal
- Guillermo Orozco Diseño
- Historican

**IV.- LA COORDINADORA DE LAS PALMAS:**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.estibadorescanarios.com](http://www.estibadorescanarios.com)**

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The first step we took in relation to Belen Maria's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary was to use a modern tool capable of meeting the demands of the event. We renewed our website, adding a special section dedicated to Belen Maria

This section will help us make the most of all our initiatives (professional, institutional, social-cultural, sport and leisure). The digitised Belen Maria dossier has been uploaded to the website. It can be used freely by investigators and you can use the website to register for participation in both the professional meetings and the sports. We provide information about services, and we will give timely information about the different events and other contents.

Those who are interested in the event or the stevedore community will find (English and French) information about both our origins and future objectives.



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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Morning</b>	Opening and Press Conference Presentation of the week's events of Belén María remembrance Hotel Meliá Las Palmas	2nd session	General IDC Meeting	General Assembly of State Coordinadora of Dockworkers	Trip to Fuerteventura for delegates and retired members.		Mass 'Belén María Square'
<b>Lunch</b>		Lunch Hotel Meliá Las Palmas	Lunch Hotel Meliá Las Palmas				
<b>Afternoon</b>	Opening of the 1st Internacional Port Congress	3rd session Conclusions and closure	General Assembly of State Coordinadora of Dockworkers				Sport Event Finals
<b>Evening</b>				Farewell cocktail Sotavento		Paella	