



-For 10 years now, there have been 4 of us-

Formentera, March 1, 2017

Bon dia a tothom. Thank you for being here today. We've got plenty of activities in store and your participation will make the day wonderful and festive. Thanks go to **Espa**
i dones de Formentera

,
Grup esportiu Espalmador
and

Asociación española contra el cáncer
for working with us to organise today's fabulous walk/run and paella.

Today is a holiday not just on Formentera but on each one of the Balearic Islands. Though here on Formentera we've got even more reasons to celebrate. I hope everyone enjoys the day and the activities scheduled. I'm here to explain why I say that here on Formentera there are more reasons to celebrate.

Because for 10 years now there have been 4 of us.

For 10 years now the Balearic Islands have had 4 island councils.

For 10 years now Formentera has felt like one of the four pieces of the Balearic Islands Autonomous Community.

Though technically speaking our region has always been composed of four islands (not counting the smaller, unpopulated ones), that wasn't the political reality until 2007. Previously, and politically speaking, there were only three of us. Mallorca, Menorca and —sharing one single island council— Eivissa and Formentera.

Yesterday on Palma, I watched Isidor Torres as he received the Ramon Llull award, a well-deserved honour. He was the last person to serve as mayor of the Ajuntament de Formentera, our island's local municipal authority. He said —I remember it well—: “We want to be the fourth supporting wall of the autonomous community”.

Formentera was the only island in the country without its own council. Whilst the other islands debated whether or not we were large enough to justify our own council, we knew, for it was our day-to-day reality, that our island had outgrown its little ajuntament.

We seized the opportunity provided by the overhaul of the Balearic Islands' Statute of Autonomy. The unity of all our political forces, plus the combined efforts of Isidor Torres and Pep Mayans, bore fruit.

On March 1, 2007, Organic Law 1/2007, adopted February 28 and included in the Statute of Autonomy of the Balearic Islands, was published in Spain's official state bulletin. It entered into force the following day.

A great change for Formentera.

Article 18.2, in the third section of the 1983 Statute, read: “The island councils shall be charged with the governance and administration of Mallorca, Menorca and Eivissa/Formentera and of their neighbouring islands”.

Article 61, in the fourth section of the 2007 Statute, reads: “Each island shall have its own governing body, an island council. These shall be charged with the governance, administration and representation of Mallorca, Menorca, Eivissa and Formentera”.

The 2007 overhaul of the Statute of Autonomy did away with the barriers set forth by the 1983 Statute that had made Formentera the only island in Spain without its own council.

On July 10, 2007, freed from the legal barriers which had historically stood in the way and driven by the desire to find political solutions in tune with our reality, a president assumed leadership of a council that was uniquely Formentera's.

In that sense, the Statute allows us to tackle our island's problems right here where they occur.

It's been an exhilarating few years. We were faced with the task of turning our local municipal authority into a municipality and council. Nowhere in Spain was there any precedent to serve as a roadmap, but we stuck it out and today we've got greater ability to self-govern.

We've got increased resources. Just look at our funding. In its final year, the Ajuntament de Formentera had 10.6 million euros. Today our Council has got 23.8 million.

Every day, more people wake up and head to work at the island's governing body. In 2007 there were 144 on the payroll. Today there are 278.

Overall, new institutions like this one and the hospital, which this year also celebrates its tenth year, mean improved well-being and growth. We've gone from 9,380 inhabitants (January 2007) to 12,945 (January 2017).

This gathering is a celebration of 10 years of the Formentera Council's existence. There will be more. During this special year, we hope we'll have the time to thank both the councillors that comprise our governing team and those of all our political parties, as well as Formentera Council staff and individuals from other participating institutions, all of whom have built an administration that is worthy of the great people it represents.

Before finishing, I'd like to thank the Govern de les Illes Balears for the hand it has played in organising today's activities, here and on the other islands. And to thank you, for listening. *Molts anys i bons a tothom!*