

The Caribbean “ghost” resort scam

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Who would not want a **suite in a luxury hotel**, maybe in the middle of a Caribbean atoll? This dream of many became the nightmare of a few unlucky investors who, after being attracted by **the false promises of DGH SAGL in Lugano**, run by Domenico Giannini, had invested money in order to receive shares in a luxury **resort in Belize**.

But, unfortunately, on that atoll, called **Blue Hole**, it is not possible to build anything because of strict constraints. And yet, the website went into the smallest of details, with names, plans, the faces of architects, investors and VIPs. But there was nothing behind it. **Puerto Azul International Holding**, with headquarters in the Bahamas, was not the owner of the atolls. The collection of funds for the company served only to enrich those who **were involved in this scam**. The photos and drawings were all false.

Also the capital **of the company Puerto Azul** had not been deposited, so the **€1 million guaranteeing the investment** did not exist.

THE OPERATION BY VARESE'S REVENUE GUARD CORPS

This deception was discovered during the **Operation: “Puerto Azul”**: scams and laundering that led to 7 arrests ordered by the Public Prosecutor's Office in Busto Arsizio (the initial report came from Gallarate); the people arrested were part of an international gang of criminals that had been scamming clients with the promise of magnificent villas in Caribbean paradises. In the end, **goods worth over €18**

million were seized.

STARS USED WITHOUT THEIR KNOWLEDGE

This story has an unusual aspect. On the website, Giannini published pictures taken during a party that took place in Cannes, in 2014; through a series of contacts, he was able to get **both John Travolta and Andrea Bocelli** involved. The photos of that dinner were then used on the company's website (**which you can see here**) and on other promotional occasions, in order to get the trust of investors.

di Roberto Rotondo Translated by Mattia Levato (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)