

Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute (CNSI)

Attn J. Stapel PhD, (johan.stapel@cnsi.nl, johan.stapel@nioz.nl)

St. Eustatius, 6 November 2021.

Dear Mr Stapel, dear Johan,

Because the local, Statian government as well as SECAR are very uncommunicative, we are now turning directly to you. What is the case?

Excavation work has been carried out by SECAR, on behalf of the Statian Government. It involves an investigation of an enslaved persons cemetery near the current airport which, by all appearances, is one of the largest in the Caribbean. The investigation was started without the knowledge and out of sight of the Statian population and the same population was only informed when rumors were circulating on the island. Meanwhile, the research has been halted and a group of experts, appointed by the Government Commissioner and united in the Statia Heritage Research Commission (SHRC) appointed for this purpose, is doing the work.

Now there are Stadians who feel connected to their enslaved ancestors who were employed as slaves on Statia at the time. This strong connection leads to the request to be allowed or able to visit and honor the remains of their enslaved ancestors.

The silence of the government and other parties directly involved makes us want to 'convert' a much heard 'rumor' into certainty. The rumor is that the human remains are stored at CNSI.

We would like to know if this is the case, in which case we would like to know how a visitation plan can be made to meet the request of the population of Statia.

We look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

together with and on behalf of a group of concerned Stadians,

J.H.T. (Jan) Meijer,

Bellevue Road 4, Upper Round Hill,

St. Eustatius, Dutch Caribbean.

*Cc: Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ) (secretary@nioz.nl)*