

St. Eustatius, November 14, 2021.

Dear Ms Francis and Ms Toet,

With regard to the communication about the excavations, we would like to note the following. There is of course your letter of September 9 in which 'suddenly' five letters from us are confirmed as regards their receipt. In terms of content, there is no response at all. We cling a bit to the remark that the formed Statia Heritage Research Commission (SHRC) takes into account in its activities a social participation and in which space seems to be provided for dialogue. But after this letter we have not seen any developments in this area.

Yes, perhaps they are. We have heard in the corridors that the SHRC is preparing interviews with 'designated individuals'. We believe that this must be a misconception. After all, any scientist with any sense of statistics will recognize that research within a population based on a sample should naturally be designed so that the sample should be representative of the population and should be composed so that every member of that population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. The idea of "designated individuals" is, of course, at odds with this.

On September 13 we receive another bill from you reporting that any continued communication will be stifled. Since we cannot expect any news from the local government, we ask SECAR (Sint Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research) if there are any developments or expectations on that side. They appear to be awaiting the SHRC's advice and the subsequent decision of the Statian government.

We then contacted CNSI (Caribbean Netherlands Science Insititute) because this is where the storage of the human remains was suspected (SECAR and CNSI are, after all, the only places on the island where scientific work is being done). The government would do well to provide clarity in the short term about the plan of approach that would have been drawn up by the parties involved, according to what we hear from CNSI. This plan would address the respectful reburial at the site where they were found as well as the establishment of an appropriate memorial object at that site. It is also a thorn in CNSI's side that disclosure is being pushed back so much. The director of the CSNI considers it extremely disrespectful to the deceased and their families.

And that brings us to today. The purpose of this letter is to share with you our understanding of the far-reaching and disrespectful neglect in which you are "leaving" us - residents. With November 16 - Statiaday - looming, we look forward to hearing your speech with binding effect for all Statians.

Kind regards,
together with and on behalf of a group of concerned Statians,

Ir. J.H.T. (Jan) Meijer MBA,
Bellevue Road 4, Upper Round Hill,
St. Eustatius, Caribbean Netherlands.

*Cc: Chairman and members of the Kingdom Relations Committee,
National Ombudsman*