

Dear Chairman and members of the Kingdom Relations Committee,

For their part, understand that a VAO-BES is planned for Tuesday (2 July 2019). Looking at the agenda, I see several people who are each allocated a speaking time of 2 minutes. It is true that it gives me no time to interfere with how you fill in your speaking time (moreover there is besides Statia also Bonaire and Saba), but at the same time I would like to give you some suggestions (in addition to my previous letters that you have accepted for notification).

For example, following the recent press report that the **CN Express** is giving the government a noose of about two tons, there is some commotion. On the other hand - with reference to my letter of 8 March last and the report "Connectivity of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom" quoted in it - I would like to point out that, if RCN (Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland) is fully committed to the use of this CN Express, an effective and efficient air connection can actually be established.

Moreover, if work is done to convert ZVK contracts with Colombia into contracts with the leeward care providers (on Curacao, Aruba and/or Bonaire), it is my expectation that the connection between the windward and leeward islands will almost automatically become a profitable object.

It also helps, of course, when the delineation set by the Expert Group on Connectivity between Caribbean parts of the Kingdom is interpreted more broadly and the connections between windward and leeward islands are also included in what is important for a well-functioning public transport between the three related public bodies (to be set up according to the model of the PSO [Public Service Obligation]).

Then there is the determination of the **social minimum**. I try to see this in connection with the (legal) equalization as intended with the decision to take the three islands of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba together as the Caribbean Netherlands. The country of the Netherlands (European *and* Caribbean) has different legislation; one would expect that this legislation is aimed at eliminating differences between the European and Caribbean Netherlands as soon as possible.

Instead, it was decided to adopt the Antillean Civil Code dating from 1869 (*six years after the abolition of slavery!*), to include issues of principle such as same-sex marriage, euthanasia and abortion, and then to define it as the Civil Code of the Caribbean Netherlands. *In this way, of course, a respectful equalization between the two Netherlands will never come about.*

Instead of the choice made, take up the current Civil Code in the European Netherlands and define it as the common Civil Code. Next, accept that justifiable differences in implementation will exist and work that, as soon as discovered, away in consultation with all interested parties, if necessary by making special agreements for and with the Dutch Caribbean.

In my opinion, this will do justice to the position of the Dutch Caribbean as "part of the Netherlands". All this seems topical to me in the light of the Volkskrant-article "Democracy needs maintenance" of 26 June last.

Let me conclude, but of course not without wishing you much wisdom in the upcoming consultations (and the many consultations that will undoubtedly take place in this respect).

With kind regards,

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