

Chairman and members of the Kingdom Relations Commission,

In addition to my letter of yesterday, Saturday, April 4, 2020, I would like to respond to the development aimed at restoring local democracy on St. Eustatius, partly in response to the contribution of Mr. Koos Sneek in Statianews today, Sunday, April 5, 2020.

Of course I recognize the different findings and arguments of Mr. Koos Sneek. He also regularly mentions - and rightly so - points where the European Netherlands has failed and is still failing.

It takes me a bit far to talk about individual directors, but I mainly agree with Mr Sneek that 'The Hague' does not have a happy hand in appointing committed, experienced and focused directors. There has never been any involvement in drawing up a job profile on this side of the ocean, at least not that the population has been able to have any influence on it.

The fact that the European Dutch government does not succeed in approaching the Statian on the basis of equality and mutual respect is also a thorn in my side. The current government commissioner, Mr Marnix van Rij, also speaks about the importance of communication when he took office and mentions the consultation hours he wants to keep as a primary channel for that purpose. I immediately opted for an appointment but the regime for a weekly consultation hour has not yet got off the ground.

Of course, I would like to point out that the corona threat has also had a major impact on his agenda, so I don't want to attack him too hard, but the fact remains that communication based on an open agenda and equal input from everyone has not yet taken off.

When I subsequently take note of the Bill ('Voorstel van Wet') and the Council of State's advice ('Advies van de Raad van State'), I also get the feeling that the minister mainly wants to achieve a lot of results and progress, but does not care too much about how the process should actually go.

If I take a somewhat clinical (remote, not too involved or emotional) view of this matter, I see a more or less concrete set of twelve criteria that have to be filled in in order to reach the state of "sufficiently ready for local democracy". Why, then, do I not see any progress on these twelve "projects" or, if you like, "sub-projects" in the local developments from day to day? Come up with a detailed planning of all the activities that need to be completed in order to close a certain (sub)project with a "green light" and you have an almost permanent view on the progress. Communicate this clearly and try to get support from the population.

In my opinion they are rather simple 'statements' but they are totally unrecognizable in the policy pursued over the past two years.

I would like to keep this supplement brief (you will probably have more reading material by working in this period in which 'working' has been given a different face in almost every respect). If you have a concrete question about which you would like to consult me: my mailbox is always open and is accessed very regularly.

With kind regards,

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Note: Don't forget to make your contribution to sending the Karel Doorman to the small windward islands? Thank you very much!