

Dear Chairman and Members of the Kingdom Relations Committee,

At a recent procedural meeting it was decided to have a two-hour committee debate on St. Eustatius. I believe it was Mrs. Kuiken who insisted on the presence of the Island Council of St. Eustatius at this debate. A sympathetic thought, I think. And yes, in the agenda of the Lower House such a debate is scheduled for June 2. The most practical solution, of course, is for the Island Council of St. Eustatius to be present at the debate, in the form of a 'live' video link. The time has already been programmed in such a way that St. Eustatius too - with a six hour time difference - can attend this debate relatively effortlessly. Here, things start at seven o'clock in the morning.

Now of course I am not a member of the Island Council but the island is small so I do have easy contact with some members of this council and I was wondering "how does something like this work?". Will all members of the Island Council soon be sitting together in one room looking at a computer or video screen or will they all be in their own offices with their own lap- or desktop (or even a phone or tablet). So how does that input work? We all have the viewing function, as long as we have an internet connection, but when it comes to actually participating in the consultation you will still need to log in somehow or make contact in some other way.

I once asked a member of the Island Council about this, but he knew nothing about it (yes, he informally understood that on June 2 something would be on the agenda, but nothing else). I was amazed. The House of Representatives has probably gained the necessary experience with video conferencing during this period and will also probably consult with external parties. In short, the 'know-how' will surely be there. And now there are still more than two weeks to go before the time is right, but if the members of the Island Council have not yet received an invitation, then I may well have misunderstood. *But I did hear it mentioned in the procedural meeting.*

May I bring this point to your attention? For the record, I am not waiting for a response, but if I have understood correctly, it seems to me that the Registrar (or someone else: I am not that well versed in the procedures of the House of Representatives) should somehow make contact with the members of the Island Council. With regard to their accessibility, the data is simply public: it is on <https://www.statiagovernment.com/island-council>.

Should I have misunderstood then an email could help me in this (im)clarity. If I have understood correctly, I will soon hear from my contacts on the island.

Many thanks in advance.

Kind regards,

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