

St. Eustatius, July 7, 2022.

Dear chairman and members of the committees KR of the Lower House and of the Upper House,

Yesterday morning I once again watched the Kingdom Relations Procedural Consultation of the House of Representatives. Is it because it is almost summer vacation, or is there indeed a waning interest in this committee from the parties? A relatively large amount of time was lost on whether or not to report something in advance, with D66 following an advice from the chair (officially above the parties but still from VVD) and then the VVD representative digging in his heels. I don't know how others see this, but it doesn't really inspire confidence among individual citizens (e.g. myself) in politics in this way.

It's not my job to analyze or comment on the differences between the parties, what I see above all is delay (which one party may experience as positive and the other not). Delay in order to avoid entering into a discussion on content, for example about the social minimum for the Dutch Caribbean. The expectation is that this discussion - once it is once again about content - will simply continue as before. *No one will take the initiative to fundamentally challenge the discussion, because the Caribbean Netherlands is also the Netherlands! And in the Netherlands it seems to me that the social context in terms of laws and regulations is not further broken down by region, but defined in a nationally applicable framework.* I wonder in what direction the Council of State would advise in this. I observe a collective unwillingness - of both House and Cabinet - to really make the Caribbean Netherlands into something beautiful.. And I am not talking about the projects that just go on polluting the sea and perfecting the resort in the southeast corner of the island because, in the final analysis, these developments only serve one wallet, and that is not one from which the Statian benefits at all. I don't know exactly but by now all the necessary permits with the necessary fraud (antedating!) will be in place. Don't ask about review periods and whether they have actually taken place, because of course there has been no mention of that. I don't know who the director is, but looking at the political leanings of all the key officials involved in recent years, the CDA is surely the party where all this comes together. An investigative journalist should be willing to look into this...

If such a person is busy, perhaps he or she could also look into the improvement program - if there is one - in the medical field. On LinkedIn I see the Deputy Secretary-General of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport photographed with the Commissioner of the Government of our island, with the accompanying text saying something about a ten-point plan. It will be like this. On the island all this is unknown (black box or black hole); we take note of nice introduction movies to introduce a new doctor but as far as the care function on the island is concerned, nothing at all changes. I have already mentioned the two deaths (since April, not that long ago), and I can assure you: nothing has changed. Referrals are still not being made where one would expect them to be. People still go to the hospital

on St. Maarten at their own risk and expense and more than once a serious failure is found, after which the old discussion repeats itself: "no referral, no refund". Still the Statian population is reluctant to file complaints. The fact that the response to parliamentary questions by the State Secretary of MinBZK paints you with a rosier picture will be the result of an effective PR apparatus at MinVWS, not that substantive improvements are being realized.

This is not just a failure of individual bodies but the failure of the care function of St. Eustatius! And whoever is working on it, the only visible activities are focused on the "packaging": how to get the government commissioner, the hospital, the doctors, etc. in the best possible picture. It's like one big marketing and parlor game where the risk is on the public, and that's exactly what no one cares about. Oh yes, it seems that the hospital management is putting a lot of effort into employing the gynecologist on the island. A noble endeavor but in terms of prioritization this action comes in at place so much; there are so many higher priorities to go around. My layman's insight says: organize - to begin with - the care function as in the European Netherlands (including the corresponding standards for personal and material suitability, administration, training requirements, retention conditions, etc.) and only where this really comes up against impossibilities create "tailor-made" solutions. Look, then we are talking about something! But from a change manager appointed for a short period of time, who is not medically oriented, you can also expect only small optical and therefore not substantial "improvements". I can't help but explain that as "unwillingness" of the administrators, both those of our island and those of the Netherlands. Yes, just come up with a politically correct equivalent for that....

I have no illusions that I am reporting here exhaustively on the abuses that the Government Commissioner would rather not make public, but for this letter it seems to me to be enough for now.

Once again, I wish you - the serious, interested and truly involved reader (parliamentarian) - much wisdom. Not only wisdom but also decisiveness. Something with a straight back and the sincere will to clean up the 'mess'.

Thank you in advance!

Kind regards,

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Cc: National Ombudsman, members of the Island Council of St. Eustatius