

Dear Chairman and members of the Education, Culture and Science Committee,

Early yesterday morning - I had specially set the alarm for it - I followed your procedure consultation via internet. In the European Netherlands that consultation started at 10:00 am and at that time it was here - St. Eustatius, Caribbean Netherlands - six hours earlier, so 04:00 in the morning. I was happy to talk about it!

Of course I understand your struggle to give the many points of view of your domain a place in a consultation. And in all fairness, I must say that I was occasionally dizzy when it came to the many types of consultations in which things can be put on an agenda. Fortunately, I also saw you (in general, not someone in particular) struggling with that fact. Moreover, so much became clear to me, there was in any case the desire to deal efficiently with the available meeting time: after all, not everything has the same priority.

And in that context - prioritization - I also understand very well that St. Eustatius, the Dutch Caribbean, the CXC education, the CXC Decision, etc. is actually just a small dot in a World Full Of Important Things.

In short, I understand that the question of the CXC Decision (a logical and coherent consequence of a decision taken six years (!) ago (October 2014) to let the instruction at the schools of St. Eustatius be in English) was not obvious and easily high on your list of priorities. Also, the number of students flowing from St. Eustatius to the European Netherlands is only small. *As everything on this special but Dutch island is small.*

And now the point has been moved on to the OCW budget discussion in which speakers on behalf of parties can, if desired, include the subject in their valuable and always too little speaking time. And then the CXC Decision has to compete (once again) with All Other And Previously Mentioned Important Things. The fact that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) has been largely nonchalant in postponing this point of attention for about six years and still not publishing it is apparently too unimportant for the time being. As the little chick Calimero said some fifty to sixty years ago, *"that's not fair because they are big and I am small..."*.

From a word-technical point of view, I find it 'amusing' that in February 2018, under the attention of the entire Parliament - of both the Senate and the House of Representatives - an intervention was launched to tackle the 'neglect of tasks' on St. Eustatius, while the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is actually doing more or less the same now: neglecting the educational domain on St. Eustatius (as far as the introduction of the CXC is concerned). Introducing the CXC in October 2014 but then not embedding it in an orderly manner in the Dutch educational system. Well, I say it sometimes so "small things you always keep", but if good education really is the basis of a (better) future, then that not only applies in the European Netherlands but also in the small Caribbean Netherlands. *The youth here also deserve an equal chance in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.*

I hope that this argument will help to get a member of parliament/spokesperson to include the CXC Decision in his or her argument when dealing with the OCW budget. So that also the youth on the island can really feel equal and Dutch (provided that that argument is then heard).

With kind regards,

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*cc: chairman and members of the Commission on Kingdom Relations*