

To the Lieutenant Governor of the Island Territory of Bonaire, Mr. G. Thode,
Plaza Wilhelmina
Kralendijk, Bonaire.

Date: February 28, 2011

Re: Election of the members of the Island Legislative Council on Wednesday 2 March 2011

Dear Sir,

As a follow up to my earlier letters dated October 7th, regarding “new state structure of Bonaire as of October 10, 2010”, the other dated December 16, 2010 regarding “Referendum - December 17, 2010 and new state structure of Bonaire as of October 10, 2010” in which I wrote and clearly expressed my opinion and position on the current situation to you and have not yet received an official response, I bring the following to your attention:

On March 2, an election will be held in which the people of Bonaire will be summoned by “The public body of Bonaire” to elect the members of the Island Council. In itself, this act seems to be a completely democratically aligned legitimate process. The people get their chance or rather make use of their democratic right, to choose their representatives from five parties, including potential candidates for the island council of the public body of Bonaire.

The political parties are again making efforts for a traditional cultural election campaign period in which the emotionally dependent people again failed shortly after the shock of the 10-10-10 surrender and takeover of Bonaire. After the failed Referendum of December 17 and shortly thereafter, the introduction of all kinds of new laws, rules, procedures, processes, etc. it would seem that they know what they are going to choose for or what use this election has for their future or otherwise. It is difficult to describe this situation in which we as Bonaire have ended up with few words for an independent sober person to be able to understand our story and how all this can be done in this modern age or world. In fact, it is very simple as I still see it or if it is not I would like a different explanation or clarification from your cabinet on this situation as a fellow citizen with “human rights” as recognized by the UN.

I, my children and no other Bonerian have chosen to integrate in the Netherlands (sorry: direct link is not integration) and this is violating our human rights and contrary to all modern de-colonization principles and treaties

The referendum of December 17 was an official referendum or was it not? Why is there no official acknowledgment of the result of the referendum by those involved, the Netherlands, in which the Bonerian people who used their voting rights were almost 100% against this forced status on us?

Is it true then, that there is still democracy, where those who used their right to vote in the referendum have to be satisfied that their vote has no value because those who voluntarily showed no interest nor had no desire to vote determine it anyway? Doesn't this run counter to the principles of democracy? Where are the human rights treaties and resolutions in this case? Is the no-show action the new democracy?

Are all these clear voices unheard or were these voices on paper not loud enough to be taken seriously? What, how and when will this rejecting group be clearly heard? Even the no-show / boycott group disagreed.

Was it not clear enough for those involved? What will it take and have to be done, for the real understanding of this?

If the referendum result as it is now established “no” is respected, will the same change process be enforced through out on the Bonerian community?

Are all these voices silenced with an “I don't hear” or understand and do not respect you attitude?

Questions continue to arise, so far that it is the only passive way to try to understand, but if these questions are not actually answered in an acceptable and clear way, then the people themselves will go on looking for the answers and then interpret them in their own way.

Questions that remain unanswered and immediately afterwards, we, as citizens, are again faced with a different choice of “Island Council members’ election”.

The point is that I must now again observe and report that it is unacceptable and unlawful that, in my opinion, the administrators organize an election with no feeling or compassion for us, the people, in which the people must choose representatives who have no say nor have voting rights or decision-making power on issues that involve Bonaire. Democracy? This situation is even worse than it seems because we as Bonaire have been misled out of a state structure situation (NA) where we did have a say and voting rights and could decide on matters that were important or not for us. In my opinion this is not progress, but the opposite and my main problem with this is that our leaders - will I say softly, did they not know better? How can the Netherlands, which enjoys worldwide respect as an active UN member and which is much more developed in these areas than us allows, or rather supports this? How can they systematically subdue Bonaire, a simple humble people who are in an arduous process of emancipation, where our identity is at stake firstly and the rest is automatically nil after this. Instead of helping us, supporting us through this natural self-emancipation process that is our historical acquired right.

Perhaps a comparison will help to clarify how I personally felt and what I experienced on this difficult issue:

As a Bonairean, I was on the path of the emancipation process and was free to help work towards this ultimate goal with great urge and aspiration for each individual and for the people as a whole. Now after this un-democratic and still unauthorized illegal forced status, I feel like I am in a kind of prison (just give it a name) where I still have useless voting rights. It feels as if there is still democracy between the cellmates and being allowed to choose a board that may determine who is first or in what order we may perform limited activities and work within the prison walls. Our job becomes forced labor, because we are not allowed to determine our future plans as this has already been determined or will be determined for you. When you look outside between the (invisible) bars, dreaming and gasping for fresh (freedom) air and remembering how it used to be when we were free, without luxuries, air conditioning, TV nor food on time and in moderation. Every day we had to sweat for our own living yet still enjoyed it in complete freedom and tranquility on this uniquely beautiful island of Bonaire.

Again for clarity, I do not blame government officials or politicians from Bonaire, ex-Antilles nor the Netherlands for this / my / our problem. For even worse, I even find it very unfortunate and unacceptable that we, Bonaire, with this current new breed of young capable, correct and extremely socially oriented politicians have not had a real chance to do anything for our people and I will never accept that. I will passively and consciously relinquish myself to the best of my knowledge with this unacceptable situation in which we as Bonaire have been driven into.

I ask you politely but urgently to make every effort to find a solution together. That only acceptable solution to initiate the decolonization process for us where our past generations who fought with sweat and blood respectfully for me and my children, can rest in peace knowing that we have been liberated. It is our right and we as Bonaireians are respected as individuals and as a people and to the same extent that we show respect for every other individual and people who have achieved the same right and status of self-government and self-emancipation and are enjoying this moving together towards inter-dependence. With this respect for each other, we can remain and work together, develop and grow for the benefit of a better world for our future generations.

With kind regards,

James Finies
Kaya Mamore 3
Bonaire

Cc: Cabinet of the Queen of the Dutch State
International Court of Justice
Island Council of the island territory of Bonaire