

To The Board of the VIE
Dutch Centre for Popular Culture and Immaterial Cultural Heritage
Via
Director Mrs. Drs. Ineke Strouken
F.C. Dondersstraat 1
3572 JA Utrecht
ncv@volkscultuur.nl

Date: 21 January 2013

Regarding: The Presentation of the Dutch Cultural Historical Tradition "Santa Claus & Black Pete"

Dear Mrs Strouken,

I ask your attention for the following. This, on behalf of:

- African people and in Diaspora. These includes: African and African descendants Networks, Experts on arts & culture, historians, scholars, businesspeople, Women, Youth & Young professional Networks;
- People of Good Will in the Netherlands;
- African Networks in Europe, Canada, US, The Caribbean. Republic Suriname, Curacao.

On your website, www.volkscultuur.nl, the following message has written, about the presentation of the "Santa Claus Black Pete" Dutch Cultural Historical Tradition, recently December 5th in Paris.

Sint in Parijs

In december presenteerde Nederland zich tijdens de vergadering van het Intergouvernementeel Comité van UNESCO in Parijs. De belangrijkste functie van het Comité is het beoordelen van de voordrachten voor de internationale UNESCO lijsten van immaterieel cultureel erfgoed. Op 5 december 2012 presenteerde Nederland zich als nieuwe partner in het UNESCO Verdrag met natuurlijk Sinterklaas en heel veel chocoladeletters en pepernoten. Het was een heel groot succes.

In the message on the website the VIE pretended that the presentation at the UNESCO Paris, of the traditions was *a huge success*. While you have forgotten to mention about the position of the UNESCO, who consider the tradition as Racist, because of the Caricature: Black Pete and the connected Attributes that referred to the crime against African people for centuries. In this regards: The Trans Atlantic Slave trade and the enslavement of African people.

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Stichting Nationaal Monument Nederlands Slavernijverleden

Landelijk Platform Slavernijverleden

May I remember you that this Year 2013, July 1st, we commemorate: 150 Years abolition of the Dutch Worldwide enslavement of African people, although at least for ten years after the formal abolition, African people had to continue, to deliver production, as if they were still in enslavement!

While you know too, that the UNESCO will never adopt events like the Santa Claus Tradition which concepts are build on Racist Ideologies. And that is exactly what the whole 'Pakjesavond' concept is.

There is enough evidence that this tradition is racist.

According to the letters that we have received from the two Dutch Branches of Anti Discrimination Bureaus, subsided/financed by the Dutch National and the local Governments: The Concept Santa Claus, with the "Black Pete Figure and the using Attributes" are racist.

May I remind you that the UNESCO will never adopt or declare the Santa Claus - or "Pakjesavond" that's how you have mentioned it now, to put people on a wrong leg - as Immaterial Cultural Heritage on the UNESCO's list. We consider the UNESCO as an Organ, that will never support Afrofobia, since one of their Core businesses is "combating all multiple forms of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance".

As far I know, that is what has became to our attention,: the UNESCO was not amused with the Black Pete figure during the presentation of the Santa Claus Tradition. This, because of the Racist elements: Black Pete, The Aspects & the using Attributes that refer to slave trade, slavery and colonialism. That is what we have experienced as the KEY results of the presentation. And not what you have mentioned on the website as a *Huge Succes*.

Therefore our advice to you:

To add the whole story on your Website including the UNESCO's primary respond on the presentation. For not doing so, can give a bad reputation of the UNESCO' position on this matter. As if the UNESCO is in agreement with the whole SANTA CLAUS Package/Concept.

May I remember you that: The United Nations Human Rights Council has declared Anti Black Racism as Afrofobia. Since the Concept of the Santa Claus Tradition has its heritage in Racist Ideology, one can consider it, as Anti Black Racism: Afrofobia.

We are looking forward to the addition of the TRUTH language on your website. This includes the whole story regarding the Position of the UNESCO about Dutch Santa Claus Tradition in the sense of what has been said about the "Black Pete Caricature".

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In waiting for your response

Kindly Regards

Mrs. Drs. Barryl A. Biekman

African European Women's Movement "Sophiedela";

National Platform of Dutch Slaverypast & the African World Studies Institute)

This letter has sent for their information to:

- The Board of the Dutch Mayors (VNG): Mrs. A. Joritsma
- The Deputy Minister of Cultural Affairs: Mr. Drs. X. Dekker
- The Board of the Two Dutch Branches of the Anti Discrimination Bureaus
- High Commissioner of Human Rights Commission: Madam Dr. Navanethem Pily
- Mrs. Dr. Gene Connors, The Head of Special Procedures Division
- Chief Communication and Information Unit Intangible Cultural Heritage Section Division for Cultural Expressions and Heritage, Culture Sector: Mr. E. Moukala
- Head Officer in Charge of the Directory of History & Culture UNESCO PARIS: Dr. Ali Moussa IYE
- UN Working Group of Expert of people of African Descents: Professor Dr. Verene Sheppard
- CERD (UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination): Dr. Pastor Murillo
- The African Group Permanent Mission in Geneva: Dr. Anaduo
- The (Global) Pan African Diaspora Union: Professor Dr. David Horn
- Pan African Strategic and Policy Group (Panafstrag): General Ishola Williams
- Tiye International: President Mrs. Rita Naloop

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- The National Commission for the Year of People of African Descent republic Suriname: Mrs Drs. E. Sandi
- Board Federation of African Diaspora Movements in republic Suriname: Un Bondru Republic Suriname: Drs. Armand Zunder
- Board Tula Museo, Curaçao: Mrs. Drs. Jeanne Henriquez

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