



**CARICOM
REPARATIONS
COMMISSION**



PRESS RELEASE

The CARICOM Reparations Commission has granted the Foundation National Monument Dutch Slavery Past (LPS) the special Status of Associated Member.

“With the appropriate enthusiasm the LPS has accepted this honor based on the extraordinary invitation by the Chairman of the CARICOM Reparations Commission (CRC), Professor Sir Hillary Beckles. After having consulted with various key- persons within the community about the mission of the CRC and having received their approval, we have accepted this honorable invitation,” Dr. Barryl Biekman, chairperson of the Foundation National Monument Dutch Slavery Past (LPS) confirming the acceptance.

Special recognition

In his letter of invitation on behalf of his CARICOM Reparations Commission, Chairman Professor Beckles recognizes the special and important contributions by the LPS as advocacy for Reparatory Justice for the sake of descendants of the enslaved related to the crimes against African humanity.

The invitation is accompanied by Terms of Reference, wherein the tasks, responsibilities and powers conferred on associated membership are described. That is the reason for consultation with the various third parties such as jurists because mission, tasks and instructions are similar to those of the National Reparations Commissions in the 12 countries that are members of the CARICOM as Dr. Biekman continues explaining. Just like The Republic of Surinam has been granted the same responsibilities and powers as the LPS, this with the only difference that the LPS does not have the rights of sovereignty as CARICOM- member states.

History

The CARICOM Reparations Commission (CRC) was established following a decision of the Thirty- Fourth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government, held in July 2013 in Trinidad and Tobago. The CRC has been tasked with providing advice, coordinating the overall strategy, and implementing national and regional activities to pursue reparations. This is being implemented through research, public education including awareness building, preparing legal cases and costing regarding the damage, diplomacy, partnerships with civil society, youth engagement and advocacy.

The CRC believes that stronger collaboration with civil society organizations will serve to build the regional reparations movement, through solidarity, cooperation on joint activities and by consolidating our networks. The CRC is constituted by the Chairpersons of national reparations committees in 12 CARICOM Member States and meets quarterly.



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The Commission holds the viewpoint that strengthening the cooperation with societal organizations and the civil society as a whole will have an important effect for the strengthening of the Reparations movements and that solidarity and cooperation with joint activities will increase along with expansion of Network building. Besides, The CARICOM Ten Point Plan should provide space for new input by the civil society grassroots. This is exactly why we also said yes to the invitation of the Caricom Reparation Commission Chair.

Mandate

Dr. Biekman indicates that although the mandate has been granted to the LPS, the process of executing the special CARICOM-assignment already is set in full motion in the Netherlands and is directly related to the apologies expressed by Prime-Minister Mark Rutte on December 19, 2022. The statement by the Prime-Minister during the Debate in the Dutch Parliament following after the Apology that there can be no such thing as 'reparations' has formed the important trigger to call again for the reunification and integration of all relevant stakeholders such as the civil society peoples-mass-movements, in order to break through the system of 'divide and conquer' and to conduct the relevant conversations with the relevant partners and stakeholder based on the principle of equivalence.

200 million

The 'no-reparations-statement' by the Prime-Minister is juxtaposed to the 'comma' the Prime-Minister mentioned in his speech on December 19, 2022 to his 'audience' with the intention to start dialogues about the process to be followed. The 200 million euro that has been reserved in order to deal with / pay off the slavery dossier, has caused raised eyebrows and frowns. When the LPS asked on what basis this amount was calculated, no answer was given. LPS is still waiting.

When talking about and dealing with the slavery dossier, one can assume that this takes place on the basis of equality... one can assume that participation processes, strategies and processes should be determined together.

Concerted efforts and approach

The LPS considers The Associated Caricom Reparations Membership to be a very valuable instrument to institutionalize coordinated, structured coherent integral approaches on local, regional, national and international levels and specifically within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The aim of the LPS is to establish the National Reparations Commission Netherlands with a Forum in which all relevant aiming groups are duly represented, can participate, think, talk and determine the Way Forward. This on basis of the 'Leave no Community Behind-Model and on the UBUNTU Philosophy. In this regards there will be also space for other Community Groups to learn from Ourstory as a matter to reach a broad base and understanding for the Reparatory Justice Case.

For inquiries about the content of this press release contact via: info@platformslavernijmonument.nl