

United Nations  Nations Unies

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Excellency,

As you will recall the United Nations deployed an expert monitoring mission (the mission) at the invitation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Sint Eustatius for the Island's referendum on 17 December 2014.

The mission assessed the general referendum preparations in Sint Eustatius, reviewing the various aspects of the referendum process, and monitored voting at the polling location.

The mission found the referendum to be technically sound; voting and counting procedures broadly meeting international best practice with few ballots declared invalid. A 60% threshold instituted by the Island Council to establish a valid process was not met (turnout was 45.4% of registered voters). Nonetheless, the mission assessed voter intention was clear and not challenged.

The mission received a number of complaints from civil society and voters. These included concerns that the public information campaign preceding the referendum was too short and messaging at times confusing or contradictory. Voter reregistration issues related to the need to have a Kingdom issued voter card to vote were also raised in addition to allegations that the voters list itself was inadequate for the purpose (duplications, deceased voters, etcetera). While the mission is of the opinion that some concerns were legitimate, they probably did not meaningfully affect the outcome of this referendum.

As the mission was not an observer mission, the United Nations will not be making any public statement/judgment on the conduct or outcome of the referendum.

I am most grateful for the assistance of the Island Governor, the Island Council as well as the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in facilitating the mission and access to polling.

His Excellency  
Mr. Karel Jan Gustaaf van Oosterom  
Permanent Representative of  
the Kingdom of the Netherlands  
to the United Nations  
New York

I will be grateful if you could inform your Government as well as the Governor of Sint Eustatius.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Jeffrey Feltman  
Under-Secretary-General  
for Political Affairs and  
Focal Point for Electoral Assistance