



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Justice
Ms. A.E. Richardson
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/327/2020-2021

Philipsburg, September 7, 2021

Re: Questions from MP G.S. Heyliger-Marten regarding letter from inmates at Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention

Hon. Minister Richardson,

Herewith I submit to you questions from Member of Parliament, MP Mrs. G.S. Heyliger-Marten, according to article 62 of the Constitution and Article 69 of the Rules of Order of the Parliament of Sint Maarten.

The letter is self-explanatory.

Yours truly,

R. Brison
President of Parliament



Grisha S. Heyliger-Marten

Member of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

The Hon. Chairman of the Parliament of St. Maarten
Mr. Rolando Brison
Government Administration Building
Souliga Road #1
Pond Island, Philipsburg
Sint Maarten

STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN	
Ingek.	01 SEP 2021
Volgnr.	15/969/20-21
Par.	AB CR

Philipsburg, September 1st, 2021

Ref: letter for Hon. Minister of Justice regarding letter from inmates at Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention

Honorable Chairman,

Please find attached a letter addressed to the Hon. Minister of Justice for your urgent attention.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Grisha S. Heyliger-Marten
Faction Leader UP faction, and Second Vice Chair of Parliament

Cc.: Mr. Garrick Richardson –Secretary-General of Parliament



Grisha S. Heyliger-Marten

Member of the Parliament of Sint Maarten

The Hon. Minister of Justice
Ms. Anna E. Richardson
Government Administration Building
Soualiga Road #1
Pond Island, Philipsburg
Sint Maarten

Philipsburg, September 1st, 2021

Ref: letter from inmates at Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention

Honorable Minister,

I took note of a Letter to the Editor from the inmates of the Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention which was published in The Daily Herald of August 22nd, 2021.

With regards to the concerns expressed in said letter, I am hereby requesting you to urgently provide Parliament with answers to the following questions:

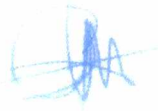
1. Are you aware of this letter and its contents? If so, what is your overall appreciation thereof?
2. Based on the concerns expressed in the letter, I believe that the Government cannot wait until the execution of the UNOPS project proposal to replace the current Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention is completed. The Government needs to provide short-term solutions now, because time is running out fast! What is your opinion on the specific individual concerns expressed in the letter? Which of them can and should be addressed urgently, and in which time-frame can this be done?
3. What is your opinion on the route via the UNOPS and/or other UN agencies to address deficiencies in the level of facilities and development of Sint Maarten?
4. Which specific concerns will be addressed in that project proposal, and what is its current status?

Wilhelminastraat # 1, Philipsburg, Sint Maarten
Tel: + (1-721) 542-0812 / 542-0635 | Fax: + (1-721) 542-0306
Email: info@sxmparliament.org | www.sxmparliament.org

5. What have your experiences with this trajectory been thus far, particularly where it concerns the wishes and needs of the Government, and the local cultural and other specific circumstances of Sint Maarten being sufficiently being taken into account?
6. To what extent is the Government in compliance with its international obligations towards the inmates at the Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention, including their human rights under international law?
7. If the Government is not in full compliance with these international obligations, what according to you is the role of the Kingdom Government/Dutch Government in addressing this matter?
8. Do you agree with the suggestion of former Dutch MP Chris van Dam that the justice/prison system of Sint Maarten should be temporarily taken over by the Dutch Government, and would this, in your opinion, be in accordance with the international obligations of the Netherlands?
9. During previous closed door meetings with your person, you have explained to Parliament the situation at the Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention, and the challenges and limitations your Ministry faces in properly addressing these challenges. Have you also communicated this information to the staff and inmates of the Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention?
10. Is it true that inmates cannot receive so-called PP-cards, if so, why not?
11. Have the inmates been offered the choice to be vaccinated, and if not, why not?
12. Are pest control services regularly carried out at the Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention?
13. On a previous occasion, I have personally requested you to look into the issue of an inmate who regularly suffers from seizures. Have you done so, and what were your findings?
14. Are proper rehabilitation/educational programs being offered to inmates, for instance supervised distance learning via NIPA or USM from the conference room in the Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention.
15. Have you considered approaching local (Government) companies to provide band-width, laptops etc. for the inmates to use for rehabilitation/educational purposes?
16. How many inmates were transferred to the Netherlands after hurricane Irma, how many are still there, and how much does the Government pay per month/year for this?
17. What is the policy, and what are the procedures for early release of inmates?
18. What, if anything, can Parliament do to assist you with urgently addressing the concerns expressed in the letter from the inmates, should you decide to do so?

I look forward to Parliament receiving the answers to these questions, and thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Grisha S. Heyliger-Marten', written in a cursive style.

Grisha S. Heyliger-Marten
Faction Leader UP faction and Second Vice-Chair of Parliament