

# News Items and Public Crime Summary for Week Ending January 30, 2010

## Antilles – Election Results: Coalition Maintains its Majority

The current Netherlands Antilles coalition led by the PAR party of PM Emily de Jongh-Elhage has reportedly won the January 22, parliamentary elections, capturing 7 of 14 Curacao parliament seats and 14 of 22 Antilles wide.

Curacao: The opposition Sovereign Party (PS) led by Helmin Wiels is considered the victor of the elections, entering parliament with 2 seats. The other opposition party List for Change (LdK) disappointed, based on the pre-elections polls, and preserved its 5 parliamentary seats. Coalition partner Workers' Front Party (FOL) will not return in parliament, and the support for the PNP was cut in half from 2 to 1 seat.

The PAR party jumped from 5 to 6 seats in parliament and will remain in charge.

St. Maarten: Coalition partner National Alliance (NA) of William Marlin swept all three of St. Maarten's parliamentary seats. The Democratic Party (DP) will not return.

BES (Bonaire, Statia, Saba): The Bonaire Patriotic Party (UPB) led by Ramonsito Booi won the elections in Bonaire, capturing two of the island's three seats in Parliament. The Democratic Alliance (ADB) led by Jopie Abraham won the other seat. The current Bonaire ADB led coalition is planning a referendum questioning whether the public entity format is still desired. The election result is, in all likelihood, a victory for the UPB-led integration process of Bonaire in the Netherlands as a special overseas entity together with Statia and Saba.

The Windward Islands People's Movement (WIPM) kept its seat in Saba, and the Democratic Party (DP) of Statia retained its parliamentary seat.

PM De Jongh-Elhage reacted elated and announced that she will prepare the Antilles for dissolution and steer the formation process of the new Kingdom entities, which are currently scheduled to emerge in October 2010. The next elections for all the islands of the Netherlands Antilles are scheduled this summer as a prerequisite for the emerging new Kingdom entities. The Dutch government congratulated the current coalition with its victory and is looking forward to continue working on the dissolution trail. (Various media)

### *Curacao*

PAR 6 seats List for Change (LdK) 5 seats Sovereign Party (PS) 2 seats PNP 1 seat

### *St. Maarten*

National Alliance 3 seats

### *Bonaire*

Patriotic Party (UPB) 2 seats

Democratic Alliance (ADB) 1 seat

### *Saba*

Windward Islands People's Movement (WIPM) 1 seat

### *Statia*

Democratic Party (DP) 1 seat

## **Kingdom – Dutch Commodore Denies Venezuelan Accusations**

Two weeks ago, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said a US military aircraft had entered Venezuelan airspace, insisting that the governments of the U.S. and the Netherlands were behind what he described as a "provocative action." The U.S. has denied the charge immediately and now Dutch Commodore in the Caribbean Peter Lenselink denied the allegations, stating that there was no P-3 Orion anti-submarine/surveillance aircraft stationed on Curacao on the day that Chavez claimed the event took place. Dutch PM Jan-Peter Balkenende urged Chavez to stop making false accusations and encouraged the Venezuelan leader to start a dialogue and not use an outdated 2002, P-3 Orion picture from Wikipedia. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

## **Curacao - Dutch Navy to Deliver Navy Divers, Aid to Haiti**

Dutch Navy ship HNLMS Pelikaan (A 804) arrived at Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) Naval Station Jan. 22 to on load relief supplies and Navy divers from Mobile Dive and Salvage Unit 2 (MDSU 2) to assist with humanitarian assistance operations in Haiti. Pelikaan, a logistics support vessel homeported in Curacao, departed GTMO immediately after embarking the divers and was expected to arrive in Haiti Jan. 23. MDSU 2 divers are being called upon to provide critical underwater clearance operations in and around Port-Au-Prince to allow port access for the seaborne delivery of relief supplies.

The utilization of the Dutch Navy logistics ship is the latest example of multi-national cooperation being coordinated through Task Force 48 at GTMO. The Task Force, under the command of Rear Adm. Patricia Wolfe, is operating a joint logistics hub in support of the joint sea base to lift life-saving humanitarian aid to Haiti.

"We are very pleased to work with the task force here to bring these divers and aid to Haiti," said Lt. Cmdr. Maarten Veenstra, Pelikaan commanding officer. "We were just in Haiti before coming here, and the situation was bad. They need this help."

In all, 27 MDSU 2 expeditionary combat salvage divers and support personnel were loaded onto Pelikaan, along with 32 pallets of food rations, water and water jugs. (Various media)

## **Kingdom – Delegation to Attend CEDAW Examination Meeting**

Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science Sharon Dijksma will lead the Kingdom delegation to a Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) examination meeting in Geneva. Netherlands Antilles Minister of Public Health and Social Development Omayra Leeflang and Aruba Minister of Economic, Social and Cultural Affairs Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar will lead their respective delegations. The CEDAW is an international convention adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. Described as an international bill of rights for women, it came into force on 3 September 1981. (Various media)

## **Aruba - Aruba Hopes For Approval of Refinery Tax Deal**

Aruba's government hopes the settlement of a tax dispute with San Antonio based Valero Energy Corp over its idled Aruba refinery will win approval from parliament "as soon as possible," an Aruba government spokesman said on Friday.

The long-running dispute has been seen as a roadblock to Valero's sale of the refinery, inoperative since July, which had provided a third Aruba's gross domestic product. The government of PM Mike Eman has not yet requested parliamentary Valero agreement approval, said government spokesman Lisander Besselink in a telephone interview.

Valero revealed on Thursday a deal with Eman's government to settle the dispute. Besselink said it will probably in February before the parliament can consider the deal. "As soon as the parliament approves the agreement, we get the amount Valero has agreed to pay," he said.

Valero said on Thursday it will pay about US \$130 million once parliament grants approval. The company has also agreed to keep workers on the refinery's payroll until June 1. That part of the agreement will provide time for Valero to arrange a sale of the 235,000 barrel per day (bpd) refinery, Besselink said.

Chinese Government owned Oil Company PetroChina, which recently took over a lease for 5 million barrels of crude oil terminal space in Statia, has been said to be the leading contender for the refinery. The Chinese energy giant has said the company would not consider buying the refinery before the tax dispute was resolved.

Besselink declined to discuss how soon an agreement might be reached with any potential buyer. He referred questions about talks with potential suitors to Valero.

Valero has refused to identify any would-be buyers and has only said discussions for a sale are underway. Additionally, as part of the deal, Valero will pay at least US \$10 million per year in the following years to the Aruban government. (Caribbean Net News)

### **Curacao – Psychiatrist Support for International School of Curacao**

Philip J. Lazarus, Ph.D., an Associate Professor and Director of the School Psychology Training Program at Florida International University was invited by the International School of Curacao (ISC) to counsel students, teachers, and parents in the Stephen Wayne Sudduth child pornography case, back in September of last year. Dr. Lazarus has served as the Director of the Program for 30 years and his primary responsibility is to train school psychologists to work in the schools.

He returned to Curacao to present a "What do I say now? How to help protect your child from sexual abuse" information night at the ISC for parents and caregivers of young children, this Thursday night. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

### **Antilles – Coalition Formation Process Has Started**

Netherlands Antilles Governor Goedgedrag has had meetings with all political party leaders over the past few days. Now it is up to him to decide who he will appoint „informateur“ or „formateur“.

The main objective of the „(in)formateur“ is to form a transition coalition which focuses on dismantling the Netherlands Antilles by October 2010. The „(in)formateur“ meets with party leaders of all political parties, representatives of the social partners, and other key persons and organizations. A „formateur“ can immediately try to reach a government agreement, finalize the appointing process of candidate Ministers and State Secretaries and initiate the screening of these candidates.

The Governor might ask the „(in)formateur“ to investigate opportunities to form a cabinet of non-political party affiliated specialists for the transition period which is very uncommon. Other options mentioned are shifting governmental power by appointing

fewer Ministers and State Secretaries on the federal level and increasing Commissioners on the island levels.

The new Antillean Cabinet will take office on March 26. (Various media)

### **Bonaire – ADB Party Plans Constitutional Referendum on March 26**

The Bonaire Democratic Alliance ADB party led coalition announced that they are planning a constitutional referendum on March 26, 2010, despite losing the Bonaire elections for a new Netherlands Antilles government. The referendum question is whether the direct ties with the Netherlands, as opted for by the Bonaire people in 2004, should be molded into a free association or public entity format.

The opposition Bonaire Patriotic Party (UPB) that won the Bonaire elections wants to continue the dissolution process as agreed upon by the Kingdom partners and does not see the added value of a referendum. Dutch State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten repeatedly said that a free association within the Kingdom as suggested by ABD is not an option. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

### **Statia – U.S. Coast Guard Appreciates Statia-America Day**

The St. Eustatius Festival Committee received a Statia-America Day appreciation plaque from the US Coast Guard. In a letter to the Government Information Service (GIS), the crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Key Largo extended their appreciation for the invitation to participate in the 2009 Statia-America Day celebrations.

Commanding Officer Lt. Brian R. Betz said his crew had enjoyed the opportunity to share in the rich history of the island and enjoyed its natural beauty during their two-day stay on Statia. Betz wrote that he was looking forward to future collaboration between St. Eustatius and the US Coast Guard of San Juan, Puerto Rico. "The Statia Day celebration is a fine naval tradition that we hope to continue to share with residents of St. Eustatius for many years."

On behalf of the Festival Committee, Mrs. Duinker expressed her gratitude to members of the U.S. Coast Guard for the recognition and thanked them for their willingness to cooperate with the simulation of the First Salute every year. "The community always looks forward to the highlight of the re-enactment," she said. (Daily Herald)

### **Bonaire – Constitutional Referendum Scheduled for March 26**

The Bonaire constitutional referendum is scheduled for March 26th, according to a „draft-island regulation referendum Bonaire 2010“. March 26, is also the new Netherlands Antilles parliament inauguration day.

The revised proposed question is: "I want Bonaire to have a direct relationship with the Netherlands in the form of A: Association (Bonaire will acquire a separate status within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, or B: Integration (Bonaire will become a part of the Netherlands)". A previous suggested question was recently adjusted after recommendations by a United Nations representative who visited last month to conduct a two-week referendum assessment study. (Various media)

## **Aruba – FATF Mutual Evaluation Report Follow-up**

Aruba Central Bank President Jeanette R. Semeleer recently held an information session regarding the findings in the FATF Mutual Evaluation Report about Aruba dated October 16, 2009.

The main goals of the information session were establishing an action plan to address the numerous shortcomings identified in this report, and addressing the issues in the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) risk strategy report.

The 2008 evaluation of Aruba's compliance with the 49-FATF recommendations was subpar. Aruba has been found to be non-compliant or partially compliant with 13 of the 16 key and core recommendations. Furthermore, Aruba's AML/CFT framework is qualified in the Mutual Evaluation Report as incomplete, incoherent, and ineffective. The report identified serious weaknesses in the AML/CFT legislation, compliance with UN resolutions in the area of AML/CFT, company registration, law enforcement, supervision, and international cooperation. Based on that criticism, Aruba will be referred to the International Co-operation Review Group, the so-called ICRG, of the FATF for a prima facie review, possibly already during the upcoming plenary meeting that will take place in mid-February of this year. (Various media)

## **Curacao – New Stringent Passport Policy for Venezuelan Fishermen**

Venezuelan fishermen entering the Willemstad downtown area daily in their fruit and vegetables vessels will be required, by March 1, to be in possession of a valid passport, Justice Minister Jacoba said. Jacoba believes that the new stringent policy will positively impact law enforcement and immigration operations. The Venezuelan fruit vessels have been involved in illegal activities throughout the years and the new policy should minimize those undesired actions. (Extra)

## **Curacao – Two Venezuelan Men Face Three-Year Prison Sentence**

The public prosecutor demanded a three-year prison sentence for two Venezuelan men accused of smuggling 18 kilos of cocaine into Curacao with their fruit vessel "Expomar", last October. A judge will rule in this case on February 10. (Extra)

## **Curacao – Five Men Face 60 Months in Jail for Smuggling Cocaine**

The public prosecutor demanded 60 months each for five Venezuelan and Colombian men accused of smuggling 321 kilos of cocaine aboard the small vessel "Yola", last October. The crew tried to sink the boat and its illicit cargo, but failed. A judge will rule in this case on February 3. (Extra)

## **Antilles\Aruba – Islands Looking For Cruise Tourism Cooperation**

Aruba Tourism, Labor and Transport Minister Otmar Oduber and the Curacao Tourism Commissioner David Dick are joining forces to persuade U.S.-owned Carnival Cruises to visit the two islands more frequently. Carnival has recently decided to deploy all of their 22 ships in the Caribbean area. The eight-day voyage of the luxurious cruise ship

Carnival Miracle starts and ends at Fort Lauderdale and sails to Grand Turk, Dominican Republic (La Romana), Aruba and Curaçao. (Amigoe)

### **Curacao – Political Leaders Discuss Post-Election Future**

The Curacao coalition political leaders De Jongh-Elhage (PAR), Davelaar (PNP), and Godett (FOL) discussed the political future of the coalition. They declared the intent to continue on the agreed to path toward dissolution of the Antilles despite the PNP and FOL defeat in the January 22, Netherlands Antilles elections. Keeping together the Curacao island government coalition is crucial in the Netherlands Antilles coalition formation process. (Various media)

### **Kingdom – Dutch Navy Ends Haiti Operations**

After 11 days of providing assistance in Haiti, the Dutch naval emergency assistance detachment of the Hr.Ms. Pelikaan, homeported in Curacao, terminated its mission Jan 28. The Hr.Ms. Pelikaan transported U.S. and Dutch rescue workers to the disaster area, delivered more than 250 pallets of supplies, 1,000 shelter boxes, 15,000 kilos of goods, 45,000 kilos of diving material, and 25,000 liters of potable water to the people of Haiti. (Various media)

### **Kingdom – Minister Leeflang Addresses TIP and Domestic Violence**

Netherlands Antilles Public Health and Social Development Minister Omayra Leeflang addressed several topics of interest at a Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) meeting in Geneva. CEDAW is an international convention adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. Described as an international bill of rights for women, it came into force on 3 September 1981.

Netherlands Antilles Parliament will soon review the law protecting children against pornography (including virtual images), prostitution and sexual abuse, as part of a revision of the Criminal Code, Minister Leeflang stated.

The Minister said that Combating Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is very important; therefore the Netherlands Antilles Government has separated TIP out of the Criminal Code revision in order to accelerate its approval. The Government Advisory Council will reportedly discuss TIP in early February.

After TIP legislation has passed Parliament, the Netherlands Antilles will be able to ratify various other treaties, such as the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

A special public prosecutor has been appointed to address domestic violence cases.

Together with other stakeholders the group is improving domestic violence policies; mandating special therapy for perpetrators, providing after care for victims; resettlement supervision for offenders as well as supporting women empowerment. They also support non-governmental organizations dealing with domestic violence.

In September 2009 the Maternity Protection Commission presented a draft Ordinance on Maternity Protection. This legislation, when passed, will allow the Netherlands Antilles to ratify the International Labor Convention no. 183. (Various media)

## **CURAÇAO**

### ***Crime January 22 – 28***

On January 22, two men were shot and killed in Montagne Abou. The motive for the shooting was unclear (Amigoe, Extra, Antilliaans Dagblad).

## **ARUBA**

### ***Crime January 22 – 28***

On January 26 three teenagers attempted to rob a female pedestrian in Pos Abou. When the victim resisted and called for help, the suspects fled. The same afternoon, unknown persons fired several shots at a house in Rooi Prikichi. No injuries were reported (Diario Aruba, Bon Dia Aruba).

## **ST. MAARTEN**

### ***Crime January 22 – 28***

On January 23 a man was shot and injured during an altercation with another man in Oyster Pond. On January 25, a man was found dead in his home in St. Peters by a relative. Police later confirmed the case will be treated as a homicide (Daily Herald).

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*"The Weekly Press Summary is a compilation of stories running in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruban press that is intended to alert readers about items of interest to them. There is no interpretation or verification of the facts contained therein."*