



***Democratic Party
St. Eustatius***

Party Program 2015-2019



On the Road to a self-sustainable Statia

04-02-15

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Foreword

2015 is the fifth year Statia is experiencing the status of Public Entity within the Netherlands. It will be a very exciting year and at the same time a difficult one. The coming governing period will be very crucial for the further development of our island and the direction it will take. 2015 is the year of the evaluation.

An evaluation that should reveal what all went well and what all did not go as well. There are many concerns and our people are very critical about certain aspects of the status we are in. They have all rights to be critical and concerned.

The referendum of December 17th is still fresh in our memory. Although the majority of Statians have not expressed interest in changing the public entity status, the message is clear. This is that we need to maintain and cherish what is working to our satisfaction and our benefit. At the same time much emphasis needs to be placed on the hard work that needs to be done in order to bring as much as possible to perfection the status we have. Also we must make our island more self-sufficient and sustainable. This can only be achieved with a better equipped and a more self-reliant government. The ultimate goal needs to be the improvement of the general wellbeing of Statia's citizens.

The government that will govern our island in the coming four years needs to be one that can create stability and trust. A government the Statia people can depend on and a government that has the will and ability to stand for the interest of all Statians. The government needs to earn trust not only from our own people, but also from the national government in The Hague. It is therefore important that government has a clear, well defined and substantiated plan of action.

The Democratic Party stands for integrity in government. We will work towards the improvement of our political climate, improvement of our social circumstances with emphasis on weaker groups, such as our youth, our seniors and the less fortunate among us. We need to strengthen our economy and improve our labor market and at the same time safeguarding our own Statian identity and culture.

A Democratic Party government will focus on its core tasks and will leave NGOs and private sector sufficient room and opportunity to take the responsibilities and tasks belonging to them. Transparency will be of great importance. The DP government will have a continuous flow of information to the public through press briefings and other ways of communication about the state of affairs and future plans. At the same time we will pay keen attention to what is on the mind of the population.

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What are our priorities?

Besides the need of sufficient finances to carry out a governing program there are many areas that need to be dealt with urgently in the coming four-year governing period. All of these areas will be dealt with in this party program. However it is important to list the most important priorities.

Priority No. 1: Poverty alleviation and improvement of spending power;

This priority is closely related to the outcomes of the evaluation as much depends on the collaboration with the national government. A DP government however will not sit back and wait for solutions presented by The Hague. Instead we will assertively work out and implement scenarios and plans that will lead to the improvement of the living circumstances and level of services for all Statians, in particular the low income groups. ***A fair tax burden and affordable prices will be special areas of focus.*** (see under points for evaluation)

Priority No. 2: Economic development;

Tourism has been identified in the Strategic Development Plan of 2011 as the spearhead for our economic development. Plans for the development of hotel accommodations at Lower Town, Zeelandia and White Wall will be taken very seriously and the DP government will do all in its power to accommodate the execution of these plans. Hereby preservation of the environment and our history will be taken into consideration. With the assistance of agencies, such as CBI, the small and medium enterprise sector will be strengthened. All efforts geared towards economic development will have the goal to make the island more self-sustainable and to create jobs.

Priority No. 3: Improvement of the infrastructure;

A comprehensive plan will be worked out and implemented, based on the already existing development plans. Most important hereby is the resurfacing and maintenance of our present road infrastructure as well as the paving of the many dirt roads. Also included in this plan will be the general beautification of our island and placement of the electricity network and other utilities underground. With the latter close collaboration will be maintained with companies like STUCO and EUTEL.

Mission statement

We all know that our island has faced many challenging changes over a short period of time. The Democratic Party has therefore more than ever before been working towards improving our ability to better serve our people and to assist them to deal with the challenges.

In the last four years government has changed leadership 3 times. This has resulted in a largely dysfunctional and often rudderless government. It has brought instability and created a general lack of trust in our leaders amongst the population.

Now more than ever the DP is dedicated to bring about political, social, economic, and cultural improvement and stability to our island. Particularly in these times of change we are more than ever aware of this need for stability and the people's need to have a level of trust in government and in their leaders. Our election slogan therefore is:

“For a stable and dependable Government”.

Our constitutional future

The past four years most of us at some time or the other have taken part in hefty debates and discussions concerning our constitutional status and what the future can and may have in store for Statia. The Democratic Party is of the opinion that the present tailor made status as a public entity, with all its proven deficiencies, still is the best basis from where we can strengthen the island and make it more self sustainable. We have to make full use of all opportunities. This we shouldn't do by just demanding more help and benefits from The Netherlands, but rather by professional planning and showing and executing our own initiatives. Statia has her own responsibilities and her own role to play.

A constitutional status or a change thereof should not be a goal, but rather a tool with which we can improve the lives of all Statia citizens. More or less autonomy by itself will not contribute to this. It is something that we can only achieve by dealing adequately with our responsibilities. A particular constitutional status is subordinate to this. More importantly, autonomy should not only benefit governments or those who are in power. For the majority of us more autonomy only makes sense when it is beneficial, not just for those in government but to every individual citizen, business or organization on the island.

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Evaluation

The evaluation, which will be carried out from October 2014 until October 2015 has everything to do with our constitutional status as well as with many other tasks and responsibilities of our government and the future of our island. The main topics a DP government will address in the evaluation are:

1. Tax laws, burden and original agreements made, impact on economic development and investment;
2. Poverty and spending power, social benefits (AOV/Onderstand/minimum wage, introduction of rent subsidy, unemployment benefits, etc. and the for Dutch standards acceptable level of services, inflation and cost of living;
3. Government finances, free allowance and “referentiekader”;
4. Economic development since 10-10-10;
5. Backlog in infrastructure;
6. Cost and reliability of utilities (electricity/water/telecom);
7. Transportation cost (freight and passengers), WINAIR as public transportation;
8. Immigration, work and residency permits and impact on labor market and economic development;
9. State of affairs in healthcare and healthcare insurance. With regard to the latter in particular the execution of the insurance, referrals, etc.;



10. State of affairs in education;
11. WOLBES, among other the number of island council members and commissioners;
12. Election law, among other 75% “kiesdeler guarantees a seat, dualism, representation First Chamber;
13. Future role of CFT;
14. Census, free movement of persons, GBA and PIVA, difference in European Netherlands and Caribbean Netherlands;

Government finances

Without sufficient finances any governing program is doomed to fail. Getting government finances back in order is therefore first priority. Through poor financial management the finances of our government are at an all time low. The accountant in the 2013 annual financial report mentioned that funds have simply evaporated.

In 2013 and 2014 income projections had to be scaled down on a number of occasions while at the same time expenditures skyrocketed, mostly as a result of uncontrolled hiring,. This has led to a very dysfunctional government that was mainly occupied by keeping the organization afloat while there was no room for new activities and policies. Especially in the last quarter of 2014 most activities of government came to a standstill in order to prevent a budget deficit, which as we know, by law is not allowed.

The challenge for the next governing period will be to restore government's financial household. Inventive ways need to be used to increase government's revenue while at the same time a critical look at the expenses is necessary.

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Income

Government's income comes from the following sources: Free allowance (vrije uitkering), special allowances (bijzondere uitkeringen) and local taxes, retributions and other fees.

Free allowance

The height of the free allowance has been a point of discussion since its introduction. The so-called "referentiekaderonderzoek" has identified an upper and a lower limit. The decision was made by The Hague to stick to the lower limit. With this decision it was not only decided to choose the minimum but the survey also clearly indicated that with the calculation of the needs for the island the funds required to get rid of the existing backlog, in particular where it comes to infrastructure, was not taken into consideration. This has had as a consequence that necessary maintenance on roads etc. did not take place or funds were used which should have been used for other purposes. This mismanaging of funds is partly responsible for the poor state government's finances are in.

Action: *Negotiate with the ministry of interior affairs an increase in free-allowances with the upper limit of the "referentiekaderonderzoek" as point of departure. (Note: the free allowance is also part of the evaluation, of which the outcome may support our quest)*

Special allowances

These are incidental funds made available by the different ministries. These funds are for specific projects and are budget neutral.

Action: *Government needs to make better use of all available funds and submit any project that qualifies for funding and is beneficial to the development of Statia and its people. Prime condition is that in the government apparatus there is sufficient expertise available to identify opportunities and to prepare financing requests.*

Local taxes and retributions and other fees

By law local government is allowed to raise the following taxes:

Name	Implemented
1. Land tax	No
2. Surcharge on property tax	No
3. Tourist tax	Yes
4. Car rental tax	Yes
5. Road tax	Yes
6. Parking tax	No
7. Garbage collection tax	No
8. Sewage tax	No
9. Dog tax	No
10. Advertising tax	No
11. Precario tax	No
12. Harbor/airport tax	Yes

According to the 2015 budget (Total USD 12.3 million) the income from local taxes is estimated at USD 380,000. This does not include harbor tax as these fees are up and until 2014 collected as retribution. From the list above it becomes clear that from the twelve different taxes at the disposal of the public entity, eight are not utilized.

A careful assessment needs to be made of the level of taxes presently implemented and the compliance by the tax payer. Also a survey needs to be carried out with regard to taxes which are at this time not utilized while implementation of some of these taxes (like a garbage collection tax and precario tax among others) may be considered. Serious consideration in this process needs to be given to the burden this may cause on our local population.

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With regard to retributions the cost for the client may not exceed the actual cost involved for government. A study carried out early 2013 has however revealed that the average fees charged for government services covers about 50% of the cost incurred.

Action: *Cost for government services needs to gradually increase whereby the goal should be that in the next 5 – 10 years services should be provided at cost price.*

The new harbor tax ordinance was to be implemented on Jan 1st 2015. It is yet unclear what the expected revenues are.

Action: *In order to have the harbor tax properly reflected in the budget an urgent estimate needs to be made of the expected tax revenues.*

For the past few years government has ceased to give out any land in long lease. The reason for this is the lack of a proper policy and administration and outdated tariffs. This not only results in insufficient income for government but at the same time it prevents our local citizens from obtaining lease land and build their own home.

Action: *To get a policy in place together with an up to date long lease fee structure and re-introduce to our citizens the possibility to obtain government land in long lease.*

In 2012 an attempt has been made to re-organize the rent policy for The Mall. The rent for these units have not been adjusted for umpteen years, yet tenants have years in rent backlogs and units sometimes are sub-let to third parties making multifold profits.

Action: *make an inventory of the present situation, collect backlog in rent payments, restructure the rent policy and adjust the rent per property to an amount that is more in line with present times*

Expenditures

According to the budget for 2015 more than 40% of it is for personnel expenses. This percentage is without salary cost for persons on government payroll who actually are working for foundations. The government payroll and the necessity and benefits of certain vacancies should be looked at. This means that an attempt needs to be made to reduce the cost of personnel and at the same time make funding available to attract high quality civil servants in crucial positions.

Primarily the road fund needs to be dissolved because it is costing money the government simply does not have and also because it concerns a threat to the zero percent interest position government is required to maintain by law. Furthermore, leaving the job of road construction and repair to the private sector is in itself an extra stimulus for private sector jobs and economic development.

In general all government expenditures need to be scrutinized. Unnecessary expenses need to be cut and funds that will become available through this need to be allocated for purposes that are more useful and of greater benefit for government and the island of Statia.

Great savings of up to 75% in energy cost for government can be reached by the replacement of all street lights and light bulbs in all government departments with LED light bulbs.

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Personnel affairs

It is the intention of a DP government to place emphasis on the level of quality of the human resources rather than on the expansion and growth of government. The goal hereby should be a better and more professional functioning government apparatus, better service towards the public and an increased level of job satisfaction by civil servants.

Annual job evaluation discussions with all civil servants will be introduced. These evaluations will be used to establish the level of productivity of the employee but also for possible increase in salary scale and promotion.

The advisory role of directors and unit managers is very much recognized by a DP government. Their professional and independent advice is seen as very crucial for government's decision making and the carrying out of the governing program and annual budgets.

Vacant key positions, which are hampering a good functioning government, will be filled in as soon as possible. Temporary technical assistance may be a requirement. This includes management positions and policy workers at the directorate Public affairs & Support (personnel affairs, census office, finance department), the directorate Economy and Infrastructure (agricultural department, planning) and the directorate Social Affairs & Welfare.

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DROB

The tasks of DROB fall under the directory of Economy and Infrastructure. This department needs to function more as management and control agency for spatial planning rather than carrying out infrastructural work itself. Their other responsibility should be the maintenance of government properties. By taking this approach the department will become more effective.

Economic Development

A major part of the governing program for the coming four years needs to be aimed at economic development. It is time to put our money where our mouth is and do all that is in our power to get Statia's economy moving. A strong economy is essential for the creation of jobs as well as the improvement of the income and spending power of our people.

Recent figures released by CBS show that our annual imports amount to USD 42 million. Our export however is very marginal income through tourism and some export of lobsters. In order to improve the health of our economy and make the island more self-sustainable a better balance needs to be achieved between import and export.

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NuStar Terminals



The oil terminal is by far the largest economic activity on the island. Indirectly almost all businesses on Statia profit one way or the other from the activities of the terminal, being it the hotel sector, restaurants, car rentals, taxi drivers, supermarkets, retailers, hardware and construction companies etc. The development of districts such as Concordia, Princess and lately White Hook can be

directly contributed to the activities at Tumble Down Dick. It is therefore that the DP government will maintain friendly but professional relations with NuStar Terminals. Hereby a balance needs to be established between the interests of and benefits to the island and the interests of the oil terminal. Possible expansion of activities within the present periphery will also be supported as long as the interests of both parties are served.

“The DP government will maintain friendly but professional relations with NuStar Terminals. Hereby a balance needs to be established between the interests of and benefits to the island and the interests of the oil terminal.”



Tourism

Over the years we've heard that tourism is or should be the engine of our economy. In reality this however still is not the case. As a people we are lacking a real tourism spirit. Our tourism infrastructure like hotels and other attractions are far from sufficient to even have Statia qualified as a tourism destination. The accessibility of the island by air as well as by sea is inadequate and not tourism friendly. The government is not really stimulating investment in the tourism sector.

The DP is intending to turn this around and come with a pro-active program with the aim to expand the tourism product, as the second economic pillar next to the oil terminal on the island. Tourism will be utilized as a catalyst for other industries, particularly construction, transportation, handicrafts, retail, agriculture and fisheries.

The inter-sector linkages are of prime importance to the development of the island and the parallel development of these industries.

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Tourism is therefore of vital concern to government. Areas that require special attention will be mentioned on the next page.

1. Hotel capacity

The construction of Orange Bay hotel in Lower Town should commence in 2015. Upgrading plans by existing hoteliers will be stimulated. A strong campaign will be started to attract prospective hotel investors. In particular the development of the Lower Town area and the former Maison sur la Plage will be high on the agenda. The spatial plan will be amended allowing the development of the Joremi project in the White Wall area. The aim will be the construction or start of construction of a minimum of 100 additional hotel rooms during the coming four year governing period. Also other touristic development will be stimulated and facilitated

2. Other tourism activities

Development and/or expansion of other businesses and activities catering to tourists such as restaurants, diving, hiking, car and scooter rentals, souvenir shops etc. will be stimulated.

3. Development Upper Town

The improvement of existing business and development of additional shops and small business in the upper town area will be stimulated, thus making the town more lively and attractive for tourists.

4. Sealift

The DP government will carry out an in-depth study into the possibilities of ferry services for the routes Statia - St. Maarten and Statia – St. Kitts for the short as well as medium term. Based on the outcome of this study a decision will be taken on any future steps.

5. Airlift



Airlift out of St. Maarten needs to be improved drastically to accommodate tourism to the island and at the same time to accommodate local travel. Also present airlift offered by Trans Anguilla Air to St. Kitts needs to be supported. The service of our local carrier Winair needs to be improved.

The DP will do all in its power to have the route Statia – St. Maarten be recognized by

the national government as public transportation. This will allow the possibility for subsidy, making travel to and from St. Maarten more affordable.

6. Tourism awareness programs

The DP government will stimulate tourism awareness programs at schools to create a better tourism mindset by the youth.

7. Role of the Tourist Office

The St. Eustatius Tourism Development Foundation will be able to independently carry out tourism promotion and marketing for the island with an annual fixed budget. The DP government will support collective efforts with stakeholders such as Chamber of Commerce, STENAPA and STEBA. Where possible the DP government will assist with attracting additional funding and stimulate partnerships with the private sector.

The aim will be the construction or start of construction of a minimum of 100 additional hotel rooms during the coming four year governing period.

Agriculture & fisheries

Ways and means will be sought to stimulate private initiative in the areas of intensive horticulture, fisheries and husbandry. The DP government is supporting initiatives by the Chamber of Commerce to stimulate viable developments in the sector. Funding for these plans will be made available from additional funding through the free allowance specifically earmarked for this purpose.

The department of LVV is working on a permanent solution with regard to the roaming animals. A new DP government fully supports this and expects that this issue in this governing period will be a thing of the past.

Other economic activities

The DP government will also be open to other types of economic development as long as these fit into our economic mix and form a positive contribution to our economy.

Any initiative for the establishment on Statia of a Medical School, or any other institution of higher education, will be proactively dealt with. Clear and timely communication between the island government, the Ministry of Education and the prospective operator are thereby of the essence.

The DP government will also be open to other types of economic development as long as these fit into our economic mix and form a positive contribution to our economy.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises stimulation

The Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) sector in Statia is underdeveloped. Although there are many small businesses, the profit margins are very limited if at all. The bottlenecks are the small scale of our economy, lack of the right education, training and managerial and administrative skills, an often unskilled workforce, limited credit possibilities etc. On top of that many small businesses have fallen victim to a poor tax regime under the former

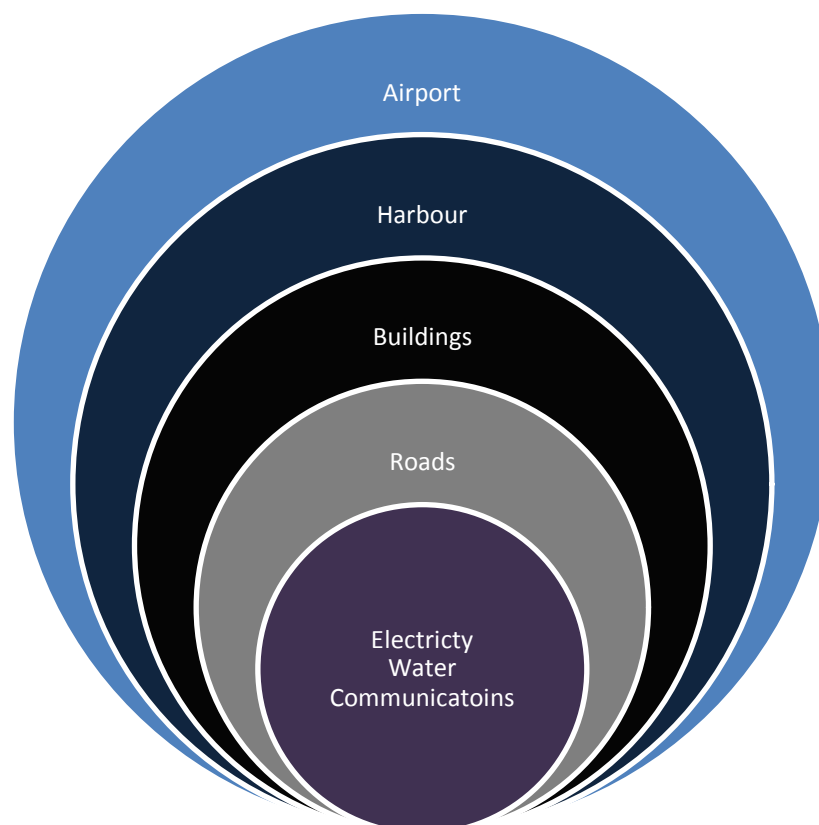
A DP government will negotiate with the national government, together with stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce and STEBA, tax relief for SMEs.

Netherlands Antilles, resulting in low tax compliance. The recent drastic improvement of tax collection has resulted for many businesses in relatively high tax debts. A DP government will negotiate with the national government, together with stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce and STEBA, tax relief for SMEs. Also other initiatives of stakeholders aimed at strengthening the SME sector will be supported, while opportunities for micro-financing will be introduced.

Infrastructure

Our infrastructure leaves much to be desired. Infrastructure however is a key requirement and forms a necessary basis for all economic development. Proper infrastructure also contributes to the health and wellbeing of our citizens. Improvement therefore will be high on the agenda for the coming four year governing period.

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Roads

Some road repairs have been carried out in the last four years but many more roads are in dire need of repair, at the same time there are still many unpaved roads in the outskirts while substantial construction of homes is taking place in these areas. The DP Government will embark on an extensive road improvement project in line with the existing development plan. Inventive ways of financing will be used in order to realize this project. Possibilities need to be explored for the increase of the free allowance, special allowances or subsidies, interest free loans, improved local income etc.

*“The **DP Government** will embark on an extensive road improvement project in line with the existing development plan. Inventive ways of financing will be used in order to realize this project.”*



Cleaning crews

The street cleaning crews are doing good work cleaning our roads and the immediate areas alongside the roads. However many roads outside of town are not been taken care of and many new roads have been added to the responsibility of the crews. The program requires a critical look and a budget increase will be required in order to improve the image of the entire island.

Government Administration Building

The DP led government started the process in 2012 of planning and constructing a new government administration building. In the meantime not much has been heard of it other than that the Ministry of Internal Affairs appeared to have taken over the process and will become the owner of the building. A DP government wants to study and reevaluate this agreement in order to establish if this is indeed in the best interest of our local government. It is also unclear how the process stands with regard to the swap of a parcel of land next to the STUCO office for the construction of the government office. Our government will speed up the process and place high priority on the completion thereof. For a proper functioning and cost effective government centralizing of government services and to have all departments under one roof is essential.

Public Housing

The cooperation between Statia government, St. Eustatius Housing Foundation and Woonlinie has been disrupted last year. As a result thereof the planned construction of much needed social housing in the Lodi district has been delayed for an indefinite period of time. The same counts for the renovation of some 70 Golden Rock homes. A DP government will do all in its power to get parties back on the table in order to execute the above mentioned projects as well as the reorganization and strengthening of our housing foundation.

“A DP government will do all in its power to execute the planned construction of much needed social housing in the lodi district and the renovation of the houses in the Golden Rock district.”



Harbor



The harbor is government's main source of local income. In the last two years the income of the harbor has been dramatically decreased while expenses have increased. The income from the Waterman has been adjusted downward to zero. A thorough investigation into the reasons of this decline needs to be carried out and measures taken to curb this trend. At the same time the harbor ordinance needs to be introduced together with a new harbor fee structure.

In this case it is imperative that proper

negotiations with NuStar, as the main contributing factor to our harbor income, are required. More importantly the expiration of the tax agreement with NuStar since the end of 2014 gives the opportunity to improve the income of our harbor. An important supporting role of the National Government, as the other recipient of tax income from the oil terminal, in this respect is a must.

At present piloting as well as towage, both government responsibilities, are carried out by NuStar. In light of increased harbor revenue government will look into these services as well. The assistance of "Loodswezen Nederland" and Zeeland Seaports or other prominent Dutch harbors will be sought or maintained for this matter. In order to increase traffic and as a result increased harbor revenue possible cooperation with St. Maarten Ports Authorities will be investigated.

Furthermore careful studies will be undertaken into possible scenarios to change the present structure of the harbor as a government department. The main objectives thereby should be improved functioning and productivity of the harbor, the harbor working as a catalyst for economic development and ultimately improved government revenue.

The possibility, as mentioned in the development plan, to move the commercial harbor to the area of Schotsenhoek, needs to be further explored and financing sought. The latter can be done through assistance of "Rijkswaterstaat" or the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (I&M), public private partnerships, cooperation with St. Maarten Ports Authorities or other inventive ways of financing. Moving the commercial harbor will have as an extra benefit the reduction of heavy transport in the Lower Town area. The latter will allow this part of the island to better develop as a touristic area.

Airport

The airport renovation will be carried out in the first half of 2015. This concerns the resurfacing of the runway and tarmac, a new tower, the construction of a complete new airport fence and the replacement of airport lights and other technical equipment. In the coming governing period funding needs to be sought and allocated for the construction of a new airport terminal. For this project to become a reality it is important that all users of the terminal facilities, such as the Ministries of Finance (Customs), Infrastructure & Environment, Defense (Royal Marechaussee) and Security & Justice (Fire department), be involved and contributes.

Environment

As we all know the environment is a global concern. It is our duty to preserve a good and healthy environment for those who come after us. There will be a number of basic issues that will have the special attention of the DP government. Although great strides have already been made, the island still needs to become cleaner.

From the part of the government steps are already undertaken to introduce recycling programs and garbage separation. A waste incinerator is being constructed.

From the part of the community still more awareness needs to be created for the necessity to keep the island clean. In this respect we do not only mean roads and other public areas. Also awareness programs have to be designed to encourage Statia's residents to upkeep their homes and gardens and keep them free of garbage and debris.

STENAPA, as well as other environmental organizations need continuous support in their efforts to preserve nature. As in the case of preserving our history also here counts that as much as possible the effort should coincide with and have an added value to our living environment and the economy of our island.

"A DP government will continue on the way of separation and recycling of garbage whereby the amount of actual waste will be significantly reduced."

Waste management

A DP government will continue on the way of separation and recycling of garbage whereby the amount of actual waste will be significantly reduced. We also support the construction of the incineration plant. Seeing the location of the plant it is important that the surroundings are sufficiently beautified and kept clean and free of garbage in order not to effect negatively on the Zeelandia area designated for tourism development. To cover the cost of garbage collection, incineration and other activities a garbage collection fee will be introduced.

"It is our duty to preserve a good and healthy environment for those who come after us."

Social Affairs & Labor

The responsibilities of this department are shared between the National and local government. The shared responsibility of the issuing of work permits is an example of the collaboration. The DP will actively participate in the annual discussions held to see whether this responsibility can go back to the island government. In order to ensure the smooth process of handling work and residency requests the developments around the process need to be monitored closely and improved when necessary. There is still a great demand for foreign labor for our business sector and therefore the DP is opposing a system that will isolate Statia from the rest of the world as a result of the overprotection of our labor market. The present procedures and high cost for work and residency permits are hampering economic development and need to be evaluated.

It is the intention of a DP government to stimulate investment that will result in jobs for our local people. It is our responsibility to make sure that our young people, who are willing to return to the island after finishing their education abroad, have an opportunity to find a job that matches their qualifications and skills.

A DP government will seek flexibility of movement of persons carrying a Dutch passport, notwithstanding which part of the Kingdom they are originating from. Stimulating investments that will result in improvements in the labor market will be a priority for the DP. As an island we should also begin reaping the rewards of our investments in our young people that left to further their education and would like to return home and make a valuable contribution.

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There has always been a group of less fortunate in our society in need for extra support. Since 2011 a number of temporary support mechanisms are available. Until solutions of a more permanent nature can be provided the DP will continue to support relief efforts such as:

- **Budget management assistance**
- **Food bank**
- **Subsidized Daycare**
- **Job programs**
- **Purchase of school supplies**

Health, Welfare & Sport

Although healthcare is since 10-10-10 the responsibility of the national government, we as a local government will continue to do our part to help ensure that our citizens receive proper healthcare by deliberating with the Ministry of Health Welfare and Sport (VWS), the Health Insurance Office (ZVK) and the Sint Eustatius HealthCare Foundation (SEHCF) on health issues and when relevant, being critical as it pertains to their policies and decision-making.

“We as a local government will continue to do our part to help ensure that our citizens receive proper healthcare.”

The arrival of a bigger and better equipped emergency helicopter is seen as a great asset and we support the request of the helicopter company to construct a hangar on the airport premises in order to protect the machine against erosion and deterioration by weather conditions. A DP government continues to support plans for the construction of a new hospital and will make necessary land available for this purpose.

“A DP government continues to support plans for the construction of a new hospital and will make necessary land available for this purpose.”

The DP Government encourages a merger between both healthcare institutions (SEHCF and The Auxiliary Home) as this will help defray costs, lead to improved efficiency and also lead to improvements in the fields of Quality of care and Patient Safety. The DP Government will respect the positions of both institutions as independent organizations and their need for sufficient securities, safeguarding the interests of the organizations after a merger.

Public Health

High priority will be given to the prevention of dengue, Chikungunya and other viral infections. Also other programs which receive the assistance from GGD Haaglanden, like youth and health programs such as against diabetics, obesity and HIV/AIDS, are fully supported by a DP government and we acknowledge the importance of sufficient funding for these projects.



Youth & Family



The decline in morals and values of some of our youth and their parents is cause for great concern as amongst them are our future leaders. Also the preparedness and willingness to achieve higher education is decreasing which is a very worrisome development.

Therefore all continued positive efforts made towards engaging our youth will be stimulated and supported by our government such as:

- **Youth employment programs**
- **Career guidance**
- **Teenage pregnancy prevention**
- **Safe sex and HIV/AIDS prevention**
- **Programs against drugs and alcohol abuse**
- **Before and after school activities through the implementation of a “Brede School” (part of the meerjaren ontwikkelplan).**

Ways and means will be explored to make sensitive issues such as the sexual health of our youth and the existence of pedophilia better discussable.

Women & gender Affairs

The continued financial support of the national government through projects and grants has enabled our government to hire our own social worker with an affinity with our people and our culture. This addition means our people have an improved care system consisting of professionals to consult with in difficult times. The rise in domestic violence and decay of values in our society warrants the attention of the DP government as well as our community at large.

Sports

The finalization of the privatization process of the Sports department will be supported by the DP. The drafting of the contracts formalizing a cooperation agreement between government and SFF is underway. Existing efforts such as **JOGG** and the “**Buurtsportcoach**” will have our fullest support.

Education & Science

Education, like healthcare, also is the responsibility of the national government. The DP just like the rest of our community acknowledges the steady decline of the quality of education in recent years but also has great respect for the improvements that are presently being made. We expect that, since funding was a major cause of this decline, our educational system will further improve.

We are very skeptical about the introduction of English as language of instruction and the use of the CXC system. Therefore we will keenly follow the developments in this respect. Although no longer our local government responsibility, the DP intends to exert whatever influence possible to ensure that our education system caters to the best interest of our children. A DP government will research the possibilities of the establishment of a Dutch school on the island allowing our children a choice to have instruction in the Dutch language next to English.

Our community on the whole is in need of education. This is why foundations such as New Challenge Foundation (NCF), carrying out the SKJ program and also with focus on adult education, will have our full support. Computer literacy, language, and skill enhancement classes are much needed. The DP strongly believes that anyone desirous of upgrading themselves through education should be granted the opportunity to do so.

The DP is of the belief that the presence of an institution like the medical school will enhance the status and image of the island while being an asset and welcome addition to our educational system and boost our economy

A DP government will research the possibilities of the establishment of a Dutch school on the island allowing our children a choice to have instruction in the Dutch language next to English.

Our main daycare is also, through support of the National government, being upgraded to meet the Dutch standards of early childhood development and education. Our efforts to attract forms of higher education to the island will also continue. The DP is of the belief that the presence of an institution like the medical school will enhance the status and image of the island while being an asset and welcome addition to our educational system and boost our economy.

Culture & History

St. Eustatius has a rich culture and history that is reflected in the numerous historic buildings and sites on the island. The historical museum is one of the best in the Caribbean. The DP government will work towards preservation of our historic treasures as much as possible in a manner that they will become an integral part of St. Eustatius of today. Preservation of historic buildings and sites should however not be a goal on its own but these objects should also have an added value to our modern lives and the economy of the island.

The discussion with the national government about the ownership issues of buildings like the Government Guesthouse and Fort Oranje need to be concluded as soon as possible and a maintenance plan agreed upon and carried out to deal with the massive backlog in maintenance of these buildings as they are an eyesore and are becoming a safety and health hazard. We recognize the importance of cultural events, such as **Carnival** and **Statia Day** celebrations and will therefore continue to support these events. Any other private initiatives promoting our island's culture and Statia as a tourist destination have our fullest support.

Our department of culture will be enabled to educating our young people on their cultural heritage and bring back activities like:

- **Steel band and string band**
- **Dress making**
- **Outdoor cooking and baking**
- **Song writing**
- **Back yard gardening**

The DP government will work towards preservation of our historic treasures as much as possible in a manner that they will become an integral part of St. Eustatius of today.

Public Safety & Justice



“The DP government will enter into a dialogue with the government in The Hague in order to reduce crime and implement programs aimed at crime prevention.”

Crime rates

In recent years the island has experienced an increase in crime. In 2014 there was an increase in the number of burglaries. Most burglaries take place through climbing, use a fake key and forcing windows and doors. The DP government will enter into a dialogue with the government in The Hague in order to reduce crime and implement programs aimed at crime prevention.

“A DP government will make an attempt to restart the discussions about the construction of a prison on our island.”

Correctional Facility

The construction of a prison on the island has been cancelled for financial reasons. It is widely agreed that this is not a good development for those within our community, in particular young delinquents, who need to be incarcerated now in Bonaire, far away from their family and familiar environment. A DP government therefore will make an attempt to restart the discussions about the construction of a prison on our island.



Where do we want to go with Statia?

The Democratic Party works with the future of Statia and our people in mind. All plans and ideas mentioned in our party program are aimed at just that. Statia needs a stable and dependable government, which is able to gain the trust of the people and can improve the working relations with the national government. A DP government is able to deliver just that. The coming four years need to be used to improve government's finances, improve our infrastructure, strengthen our economy, make our island more self sustainable and raise the level of welfare of all Statians.

***Vote DP:
"For a stable and dependable Government".***

