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## Foreword

In recent months, we have taken important steps as a follow-up to the apology. We have determined the distribution of resources among the European Netherlands, the Caribbean region of the Kingdom and Suriname. In addition, the schemes for the European Netherlands and the Caribbean region of the Kingdom have been submitted for Internet consultation. Today, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, we updated the House of Representatives on these developments by means of a progress letter. This newsletter contains further information about the follow-up and the progress letter.

We will also shed light on subjects such as the creation of a broad public dialogue. This dialogue is designed to bring about a wider understanding of our slavery past in society, which is an important basis for all policy reinforcements and social initiatives.

Finally, we will tell you about the campaign *Geschiedenis van ons allemaal* ('History, of every one of us') and the variant of this campaign that is being rolled out in the Caribbean region of the Kingdom, with the aim to increase knowledge and awareness of the slavery past.

## Progress letter to House of Representatives of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2024

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the eight cabinet members involved sent a progress letter to the House of Representatives. In this letter, they report on the progress of the process that was launched in response to the apology for the slavery past, as promised in the progress letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2023. The complete letter can be found [here](#).

An important part of the letter is the allocation of the €200 million available for measures that address the slavery past. In the letter, the cabinet members explain what particular points were considered in the allocation of the funds. A key consideration was a representative distribution of the €200 million earmarked for the slavery past among the European Netherlands, the Caribbean region of the Kingdom and Suriname.

## Broad public dialogue

Since the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2023, which marked the start of the Memorial Year, the slavery past as a topic has had a more prominent place in our society. The King's apology and plea for forgiveness received wide attention. During the Memorial Year, the authorities have invested in putting and keeping the slavery past centre stage. This should ensure that not only those directly involved, but also and especially those who often have no clear idea of the impact of the slavery past, will experience that this is a subject that affects us all. Later in this newsletter we will tell you about the online campaign 'History, of every one of us'.

Alongside this campaign, the creation of broad social involvement in the slavery

past is essential. This applies especially to people who do not feel a connection with the slavery past but may be dealing with its consequences in everyday life. It will provide insight into a communal picture of our past: what are we commemorating, and why is it important that the authorities invest in social initiatives and policy adjustments.

In order to start this dialogue, we will in the coming months engage with people at festivals, in city centres, at sports clubs or at other venues where people are gathering anyway. This will spark a range of discussions among a range of people, because such situations will make it easier to engage in dialogue.

The preparations for conducting these discussions are currently in full swing. We expect to hold the first conversations in June. We are organising this broad public dialogue in close cooperation with the agency *Public Cinema* and *Stichting de Balie*, as well as with other persons who help us raise this sensitive topic in an appropriate and respectful manner. The dialogue will be structured through the use of a 'conversation starter'. This conversation starter is a variant of the game show *Wie ben ik* ('Who am I'). This format helps bring people together and ensures that they find it easier to talk to each other about the shared slavery past. We will set up this conversation starter at 25 locations all over the country during the months of June to September. In a later newsletter, we will update you on the actual form and details of this project.



### Online campaign 'History, of every one of us'

Encouraging discussions between people and raising awareness of our shared past. With this aim, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science launched the online campaign 'History, of every one of us' in December 2023. In a series of videos, storytellers dive into their own history, exploring both the past and the present. Four conversations have been released by now: those between singer Shirma Rouse and film maker Safi Graauw, teacher Lucelle Comvalius and illustrator George Adegite, fashion designer Lukas Eleuwarin and author Jill Mathon, and between director Hesdy Lonswijk and author Carmen Felix (photo).

Further conversations to be released in the months ahead will feature Professor Soortkill (author, among other things), Lex Bohlmeijer (presenter), Stefanie Albertzoon (actress and performer) and Charissa Chotoe (presenter and poet). These stories will also be shared on [OCW-verhalen.nl](https://ocw-verhalen.nl) and the social media channels of the Ministry and of Minister Dijkgraaf. Do keep an eye on their socials!



### the Caribbean

'Young people speak out' (*Jongeren spreken*) is the translation of the campaign 'History, of every one of us' into a Caribbean context. In this documentary, young people aged 16 to 18 from the Caribbean region of the Kingdom share their thoughts on our shared slavery past. From Curaçao to St. Maarten, they talk frankly about the impact of this past on their daily lives. Through conversations about hierarchy, family dynamics, economic consequences and their hopeful vision of the future, they highlight the complexity of the subject. These young voices not only provide insight into the past, but also call for change and progress for future generations. This communication will start in the coming months.

### Collegetour

On June 24th, the third edition of the college tour will take place at the Alfa College in Groningen. Minister Dijkgraaf, along with State Secretaries Van Ooijen and Van Huffelen, will engage in discussions with students and interested individuals about the repercussions of the slavery past. The government officials are curious about the insights of the students and how this theme influences their lives, as well as what changes they would like to see. The gathered information will be incorporated into an advisory report on the "post-comma" process. An engaging and essential step in the process of recognition and action!



### Special Envoy of Ministry of Foreign Affairs

In recent months, the Special Envoy for the Slavery Past, appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, continued her work in Suriname in collaboration with the Dutch embassy. To date, the Special Envoy has made six trips to Suriname, where she has held discussions with the Coordinator for the Slavery Past appointed by the Surinamese government, former minister Silvano Tjong-Ahin. She has also spoken with a large number of descendants and other stakeholders, including representatives of the native communities and Marron communities in Suriname. Based on the outcomes of this broad dialogue, Suriname intends to set up a platform on which a number of representatives of the groups most involved will have a seat. This platform will be installed by the President of Suriname. The platform will enable Suriname and the Netherlands to conduct a targeted dialogue about the allocation of the available resources (the €33.3 million for social initiatives and the €33.3 million for policy reinforcements).

### Conclusion

If there is any particular subject which you would like to see addressed in this newsletter or which you would like to discuss with us, please let us know. You can contact us via: [PostbusProgrammaSlavernijverleden@minbzk.nl](mailto:PostbusProgrammaSlavernijverleden@minbzk.nl)