



PRESS RELEASE

Congress "Fifteen years after 10/10/10"

Dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles

InterExpo Caribbean NV organizes the 36th congress "Fifteen years after 10/10/10" on 9, 10 and 11 December 2025 in the press- and debate centre Nieuwspoort in The Hague.

10 October 2010 is a memorable day. On this day, in accordance with the policy of the fourth Balkenende cabinet, the Netherlands Antilles were dissolved and the countries of Curaçao and Sint Maarten were established. The islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba became part of the Netherlands as public entities on that day.

The 36th congress aims to be a retrospective of fifteen years since the constitutional reform of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Political officials, parliamentarians, representatives from the business community, and academia will gather for a wide-ranging debate on the development of the autonomous islands and public entities in the Caribbean within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. InterExpo welcomes three Caribbean heads of government to this congress: **Gilmar Pisas**, Prime Minister of Curaçao; **Mike Eman**, Prime Minister of Aruba; and **Dr. Luc Mercelina**, Prime Minister of St. Maarten. They will debate alongside **Prof. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende**, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, under the chairmanship of **Prof. Dr. Ernst Hirsch Ballin**.

The conference will be officially opened by State Secretary **Eddie van Marum** of Kingdom Relations. Keynote speakers include the National Ombudsman, **Mr. Reinier van Zutphen**; **Mr. Edwin Bleichrodt**, Attorney General at the Supreme Court of the Netherlands; **Sarah Wescot-Williams**, President of the Parliament of Sint Maarten; **Kathleen Ferrier**, President of UNESCO; and many others.

The congress is unique because political officials, scientists, and entrepreneurs from the six Caribbean islands within the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Netherlands gather in one location for three days of debate on issues considered relevant within the Kingdom.

During the conference, a joint presentation will be given by Geoffrey Wever, Minister of Finance of Aruba, and Lidewijde Ongerling chair of the Financial Supervision Board (CFT). The

core of the presentation will be how the CFT anticipates the current financial situation and what the future holds.

The conference offers space for speakers who are critical of the structure of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the roles played and still played by the Netherlands and its Caribbean constituents. It also features speakers who champion the shared values within the Kingdom and the opportunities it offers.

Over the past year, elections have been held in various countries within the Kingdom, and new parliaments have been installed. It is unique that all the countries within the Kingdom are meeting in The Hague, in the Tweede Kamer building, with new members of parliament so soon after a new parliament was installed in the Netherlands. This provides an opportunity for parliamentarians from the various countries within the Kingdom to get acquainted and exchange ideas.

The conference also provides a platform for scholars to reflect on relevant aspects of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom from their own perspectives.

Several panel discussions will be chaired by Prof. Dr. Ernst Hirsch Ballin, former Minister of Justice and Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations of the Netherlands, and Suzy Camelia Römer, former Prime Minister of Curaçao, politician, and currently a research associate at the University of Curaçao. The conference chair will be Prof. Dr. Peter Diekman RA, founding partner of FourValue B.V.

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Further information for the press:

InterExpo Caribbean NV

Peter Oerlemans

Phone +5999 6961510

WhatsApp +5999 6961455

Email peter@interexpo.biz

Website www.interexpo.biz

Press information:

Prof. Dr. Peter Diekman RA

Congress chair

Phone: +31 651 527383

Email: peter.diekman@fcbconsult.com / peter.diekman@fourvalue.nl

Website: www.fourvalue.nl