

International Organization for Animal Protection



Organisation Internationale pour la Protection des Animaux
Internationale Organisation für Tierschutz
Organizzazione Internazionale per la Protezione degli Animali - Onlus



NGO associated with the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC)
the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and accredited at UN Environment Assembly (UNEA)
Registration in the Register of Representatives of Interest of the European Commission
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To the kind Attention of
Mrs. Evelynna Wever-Croes
Prime Minister of Aruba
evelyna.croes@gobierno.aw

Milan, 15th July 2021

Dear Prime Minister Evelynna Wever-Croes,

OIPA - International Organization for Animal Protection – is a non-governmental Organization that operates worldwide in defence of animal rights and for protecting animals against any form of cruelty and abuse. Our organization embraces more than 200 animal rights associations across the world. We are member accredited at the United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) and the UN Environment Program (UNEP) as well as recognized as non-profit tax-exempt 501(c) (3) charity.

We are highly sensitive to the issue of how **stray dogs and cats** are treated around the world and how their population is controlled in different countries. Our aim is to promote a **stray's control programme**, which is ethical and humane and can provide a long-term result without hurting animals, and improving community awareness and responsible pet ownership.

We have recently launched a campaign entitled **“Holiday for you. Hell for us. #Ethicaltravel”** for promoting tourism in countries that are compassionate with stray animals. As you may know, the number of animal lovers has increased significantly and more individuals are concerned about the topic. Through our campaign, we have invited people, before choosing their holiday destination, to collect information about the condition of strays in that specific place and then decide accordingly an ethical vacation.

As Mahatma Gandhi acutely observed "the greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated". Stray dogs and cats should be consider a plus and not "something to feel ashamed of".

You have the power, as Prime Minister of Aruba, to make the difference for your Country, your citizens and your animals. You can make Aruba a positive example of ethical tourism for many other countries, a perfect place for humans and animals, because a country that treats animals with respect and compassion is a country that many people would be happy to visit and promote.

We are then suggesting, based on our long experience in **dog population control programmes**, an effective plan to follow for solving the problem of the overpopulation of stray dogs and managing better street animals:

- Implementing a permanent **TNVR programme (Trap-Neuter/Spay-Vaccination-Release)** aimed at creating a sterile population of dogs in the long term and preventing the outbreak of possible diseases without the need of hurting and killing animals;
- Monitoring **the presence of strays** on the territory with the introduction of **ear tags** for street dogs **already sterilized and vaccinated** as well as a **canine municipal registry** both for owned and stray dogs;
- Improving **community awareness** and **responsible pet ownership** creating a campaign for **preventing abandonment** and encourage vaccination and sterilization activities which are one of the main reason for the increase of stray dog population;

- Microchip or tag for **owned dogs** for easily finding the owners in case of abandonment;
- Implementing **national law and local regulations** on animal rights and animal protection for punishing who is guilty of mistreatment and animal abuse and guarantee transparency of funds and activities carried out by governmental employees in charge of stray animals control;
- Establishing **a close cooperation with your local animal rescue and animal rights associations, international organizations as we are and volunteers** that can provide knowledge and share expertise on the matter.

With the right combination of all these factors, a positive change will be possible.

This introduction because we have received many reports of citizens and local associations worried about the treatment reserved to **street animals** in Aruba and the methods used for monitoring local stray dogs' population since the opening of the *Center for Dog Control* and the inauguration of the *Dog Control Unit* last April. There is **evidence** that governmental staff of the Dog Control Unit, following the instructions of cleaning up the streets of Aruba, **brutally catch** any stray dogs they found roaming around (old, adult, puppy, pregnant, owned, sterilized, etc.) and then transfer the animals to the Center for Dog Control, which is a place for them with no return. Dogs are there **euthanized with no specific reasons** and the way the killing is carried out is simply terrible. Dogs are **not sedated** and then euthanised, but the syringe is taped to a long stick with which dogs are injected randomly on their body and not in the vein. This results in a slow and very painful death for them.

We sincerely ask you to consider our proposal of implementing ethical alternatives, which exist and are much more effective for solving the problem of the overpopulation of stray dogs rather than an approach that can be cruel and heartless and you have the right to investigate further and does not represent a permanent solution.

If you decide to make Aruba a **compassionate country for animals**, many of your citizens will thank you and trust you more. They will be proud of living in a place that **cares about the less fortunate** and that would be a virtuous example for many other countries.

We trust that you will give this matter your urgent attention and we remain available to discuss with your team further.

Sincerely,

Massimo Pradella
OIPA – Chairman

Massimo Pradella



Valentina Bagnato
OIPA – Head International Relations Office

Valentina Bagnato