

**House of Representatives**

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**Reference**  
2017-0000571123

**Date** 10 November 2017  
**Subject** Reconstruction of the country of St Maarten and of the public bodies Saba and St Eustatius.

During the budget debate on 8 and 9 November 2017, I promised to inform the House of Representatives of progress made with a Dutch fund for the reconstruction of the country of St Maarten and of the public bodies Saba and St Eustatius.

Today, the cabinet decided to add €550 million for the reconstruction of St Maarten to chapter 86, the supplementary item in the central government budget. This decision will be included in the Autumn Memorandum to be submitted to the House by 1 December 2017. If St Maarten agrees to the conditions that the Netherlands has set – the establishment of an Integrity Chamber and of proper border controls – the Netherlands is prepared to continue contributing to the reconstruction of St Maarten through the end of 2020.

The aid will be distributed in tranches, which will allow for interim evaluations so as to ensure its efficient and lawful expenditure and to allow the authorities to reconsider the amounts supplied, where necessary. A major part of the Dutch contribution will be channelled through international organisations. The aid, which may take the form of loans, gifts or in-kind aid, is in addition to the contribution of St Maarten's own government and to payments on insurance policies.

The cabinet also decided to provide €67 million in financial aid to the public bodies Saba and St Eustatius for these islands' reconstruction, in addition to the €550 million for St Maarten.

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Especially in crises and periods of reconstruction, there are integrity risks associated with project implementation and border controls. The Netherlands is moving forward with preparations so as to start reconstruction efforts as soon as St Maarten accepts the conditions. To make this possible, I trust that St Maarten will rapidly, officially and unequivocally accept the conditions set by the Netherlands.

State Secretary for the Interior and Kingdom Relations,

drs. R.W. Knops