



# Parliament of Sint Maarten

## Staten van Sint Maarten

**Parliamentary Year 2020-2021-148**

**National Ordinance stipulating the Budget of  
Country Sint Maarten for the service year 2021  
(National Ordinance Budget 2021)**

**Report  
No. 6**

The Parliament, in its meeting of the Central Committee, had an exchange of views with the Government on the Draft National Ordinance stipulating the Budget of Country Sint Maarten for the service year 2021.

The Parliament considers the draft to be sufficiently prepared if the questions asked below are answered in time for the public meeting so that the draft can be discussed in a public meeting.

**The National Alliance faction** has taken note of the draft with interest and has the following questions and remarks.

### Ministry of Finance

The faction mentions that there is redundancy in sending out tax assessment forms. When it comes to finances, every little bit adds up. Can the Minister give an indication as to how much is spent on Postal Fees to sending out the yearly notices to file taxes? Can we look for an alternative way to make the announcements that won't require printing these letters and the postal fees? Can persons opt to receive the announcements digitally rather than physically?

The faction suggests that the Tax office carry out a simple proper survey to see which businesses have closed due to Irma and the pandemic to address the redundancy of paper and its cost as there are approximately 8000 to 10 000 business registered. We can save a lot of money there as well by finding out the accurate numbers. Can the Minister explain why there is a policy in place at the Tax office whereby persons who come to file or pay their taxes are only allowed to stamp five pages of Tax Papers at a time, then sent back into line to do so for the remaining of their tax forms? Why is this made more complicated by sending

persons back and forth? Doesn't Government want to make money, hence collect taxes?

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

The faction indicates that based on the presentation, it states that VROM's primary source of income is the collection of long lease cannon. A risk analysis and mitigation proposal was mentioned. Three measures need to improve the collection of the long lease cannon, which will bring more money into the Government's coffers, adequate Staffing, adequate Technology Investments, and the establishment of a Policy about outstanding long lease cannon payments. Are these improvements taken up in the Budget? If yes, can the Minister indicate where in the Budget this can be found? Can the Minister further elucidate for Parliament what this investment means for Government's coffers? Will we be able to yield a projected Y amount in additional revenue?

Are there any updates or prospects for securing land for the National Center to develop the Arts? It is time we develop this or deliver it for the youth.

The Minister mentioned that for garbage collection, the trucks collecting the garbage should not be older than ten years. Can the Minister explain the reasoning behind that?

With regards to the relocation of people living around the dump area. Can the Minister give an elucidation as to what is happening? How will that relocation be done? Is it the intention of the Government to build homes for these people, pay them out for whatever they have built there and, regardless of their status, ensure that they get quality, affordable living somewhere else?

The faction would like to know if we are rewarding those that squatted there with a home. At the same time, people who legitimately approach Government and Government did not finalize properly now being told to evacuate?

The Minister also made mention of link 2 phase 6. Can the Minister explain where and what the works for link 2 phase 6 would entail? One million is allocated in the Budget for link 6. The construction of link 6 is much more than one million. What exactly are the intentions with the one million for a portion of link 6? What exactly is being done there?

The faction mentions that at least two contractors who submitted a tender for the garbage collection filed objections at the Ombudsman against how things went. They are contesting that they were not treated fairly. Can the Minister give us an update on where all of this is? Is it still ongoing? Is the case closed, or is the case still pending? It is being whispered that three garbage trucks from the cleaning company in Aruba are on the island. Is this part of the cooperation agreement or intention between the Aruba Government and the Sint Maarten Government? Or did the contractors in question bought these trucks from the company in Aruba? If the Government involved in the acquisition of these trucks, are they on loan to the Sint Maarten Government? The faction would like clarity on this.

The faction mentions that the capacity to draft and implement all of the necessary policies will be important. Is the increase in the post-Rechts en Deskundig Advies under the staffbureau an indication that there has been a strengthening of the staffbureau where it concerns legal advisors? Is there a connection to the environmental nature policy plan?

The faction further mentions that the Nature Foundation does a lot. What are potential levies or fees that can be earmarked to the Nature Foundation or anything pertaining to environmental protection? What nature focus priorities can we see realized this year?

#### Ministry of Justice

The faction would like the Minister to elucidate on the Budget for the Ms. Lalie Center in particular. How much will be allocated for the educational needs of these youngsters at the center? Please explain why the budget post 43499 Number 5004 for Police Support stands at NAfl. 2.400.000 while the budget number 5003 for improving our local Police Force stood at NAfl. 76.148 in the 2020 Budget but 2021, it currently stands at zero guilders? Can the Minister explain what is meant by Police Support? Can the Minister also give an update on the establishment of the Function Book for the Justice Workers? What will the financial implications for the 2021 Budget, if any, be? Where is this reflected in the Budget?

#### Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

The faction would like to know the key vacancies that need to be filled within the Ministry and are these reflected in your Budget?

Regarding the Department of Education, what financial implications does the impending implementation of the Special Needs policy have, and where is this reflected in the 2021 budget of MECYS? What are the expected activities that we can expect to happen under the Education reform budget post allocated to the Department of Education? What activities can we expect this year as it relates to recruitment and retraining initiatives of the Ministry? Please give a good insight into the Department of Education plans for this budget post Teacher Recruitment and Retraining Initiatives.

Can the Minister please elucidate on the calculations for the subsidy for the University of St. Martin? The faction observes that our only tertiary education institution on the island receives substantially less than the other school boards. What is the current relationship between the USM and the Government, in particular the Ministry of ECYS? Are any projects or initiatives currently happening between the Ministry and USM to strengthen the institution?

The faction has the following question regarding the Department of Culture. What policies are currently being developed by the Department of Culture, and where is this reflected in the Budget? What is the current status of the *Talentenbeurs* policy, and are any changes being made to this policy? If yes, what are those changes? How is the *Talentenbeurs* post calculated? Based on what data and which assumptions? For example, is it based on the average yearly applications? The faction believes that we have so many talented students here, and they should be afforded proper opportunities and support from the Government to pursue these opportunities. For clarity's sake and transparency, can the Minister indicate why John Larmonie Center receives a subsidy from Culture's Budget and Sports' Budget?

The faction has the following questions as it relates to the Department of Youth. What is the status of the BOPP program for 2021? Many youngsters look forward to this program to earn money for their studies, school supplies, etc. Can the Minister please elucidate on how this program will be executed this year? Can the Minister give a short breakdown of how many community schools currently exist, which students have access to these schools and how does one get enrolled in the community school program? Can the Minister also give more insight into implementing the Integrated Youth Policy and what these projects/activities entail? What strides are being made as it relates to the abuse of our youth? Our community was rocked again by incidents of abuse of minors.

What is the Ministry, particularly the Department of Youth, regarding this issue, and where is this reflected in the Budget? What school programs or initiatives is the Department of Youth currently executing or supporting in our schools? In the past, we had programs like "I am King" for our young boys' positive behavior and development. Are any of these programs like this planned for 2021? What activities are planned under the Early Childhood Care and Development budget post?

The faction would like to know the current status of our sports facilities regarding the repairs that were needed after Hurricane Irma? Are they 80% repaired and operational, for example? Please indicate for each facility what has been done and what is still required if the Budget sufficiently contributes to what these facilities need to operate and properly serve our community. Can the Minister elucidate on the School Sports Programs?

As it pertains to the Division for Educational Innovation, can the Minister outline what projects and activities the Division for Educational Innovation is undertaking in 2021?

The Division for Educational Innovation was instrumental in the implementation of Foundation Based Education. What is the status of the evaluation of the FBE curriculum? Where is this activity reflected in the Budget? What is the current status of the iSTEP, and what are the plans for 2021?

The faction mentions that one of the cries for a very long time is the bureaucratic process that schools have to get even the simplest necessities. What changes have been made to internal policies and procedures to ease the burden of the schools to get simple things such as paper, ink, and other necessities?

Another issue that public schools have faced is the lack of operational printers or printing supplies such as ink. Where are the needed funds for this reflected in the Budget? Is it the budget post for maintenance for office machines that has a budget of NAF 12,500? If yes, how many working printers are there in the public schools, and how many are out of order?

The faction notes that an increase was noticed in insecurity. Can the Minister explain this increase? Can the Minister clarify what expenses fall under *Overige goederen en diensten*? Can the Minister clarify what expenses fall under the Budget post-*School Materialen*? Can the Minister explain the activities that fall under *Voeding*? Are these amounts allocated for a Breakfast program? Are there any public-private partnerships for the breakfast program?

Is there a policy that dictates how Foundations, private citizens are willing and can provide public schools with the much-needed food assistance for students in dire need?

A school like St. Maarten Vocational Training School is a practical school, NAfl. 50,000 for school materials is a drop in the bucket. NAfl. 30,000 for Prins Willem Alexander School, our only special education public school on the island. We can do better than this. We must do better than this Minister.

The faction would like the Minister to indicate for each public school what the school materials budget will cover in their schools. What are the plans for these amounts? What is on their wish list and listed by most urgent to least urgent?

How much of the money allocated in the Teacher Recruitment and Retraining Initiatives goes to the public schools? The faction would like to know how much of that Budget will help our public school teachers get the necessary training they need?

Regarding bussing, the faction mentions that the yield doesn't match the cost and would like to know what the Minister's plans for bussing are? Plans to change the current system? What will the Minister's plan be for bussing in the new school year?

What is the status of the pieces of legislation that were to be drafted by a consultant on inspection and higher education? Is a consultant still in service to the Ministry to write, draft or amend legislation? Some departments are in dire need of new staff positions. Does the Minister have any plans to review the structure of the Ministry itself or in particular departments that may need to change to create new positions?

The faction mentions that GEBE and the Minister of VROMI were presented at Parliament last week, and Parliament asked about social tariffs and providing special rates to, for example, schools. It was stated that the company looks at the bottom line. The Government has asked them multiple times to create a plan to review because it doesn't make sense that subsidies go to schools and schools then pay so much in utility cost when that money can go to education and elsewhere. The Martin Luther King Schools spends NAfl. Thirty thousand guilders on water and NAfl. 15,000 guilders on electricity. What could that school do with that money if that cost were slashed, even in half? The faction would like to know the Minister's thoughts on that.

The faction indicates that there is an increase in the budget post for the retraining of teachers. When will this initiative begin? Is this initiative in the beginning phase? Are any initiatives being done in 2021? Can the Minister provide specifics? When will this decision to increase the subsidy for USM be finalized? When can they expect this increase? Will that be in 2022 or 2023? Can the Minister please elucidate?

What has been done this year 2021 as it relates corporation of the Ministry and USM? Can the Minister provide details on these initiatives and projects being executed for this year? Teacher recruitment at the USM can produce homegrown teachers. Please elucidate on the recent efforts between the Ministry and USM for this.

As it pertains to the *talentenbeurs*. Are the degree programs for the arts now outlined in the priority list of studies? Do our creative students stand a fair chance? How many requests were received in 2019? How many were approved? How many were denied? How many of these were denied based on the budget constraints? What does the average amount of applicants look like? How much was spent in 2019 on the *talentenbeurs*?

The faction mentions that the Minister indicated that there are presently 5 community schools. Can students from the other public schools attend these community school programs? How much money is needed to extend this community afterschool program to other public schools?

As it pertains to the integrated youth policy and what this project activity entails. What in practice is the actual project initiatives being carried out under this budget post? What request has the Department of Youth submitted in 2021 for this budget post?

What requests are being submitted under the post of early childhood care? What will the money be used for in the remainder of 2021? When will the plan of action for evaluation of the FBE be carried out? Is it a safe assumption to say that we can expect to see the much-needed evaluation of the FBE in 2022?

With regards to the Istep program, the faction would like the Minister to give the plans for 2021.

Can the Minister provide more information on the current breakfast program? Is this organized by each school on its own? Or is an external provider

providing to schools? Can this feed each child? Or is this done based on a selection of students?

The faction mentions a letter that was sent regarding the state of education report, the impact of COVID-19 had on education. Is it possible to survey students and school staff? What has the emotional impact and impact on learning been after this tough year that we all have experienced? There was a committee put in place a few years ago regarding vocational and technical education. Does the committee still exist, what is the status and what are the plans for vocational and technical education? The faction believes that more needs to be done.

Have there been any other talks with universities in the region to create a scholarship program for our students? Can the Minister provide an update on the agreement with AUC regarding full scholarships and partial scholarships? How many of those students are studying right now? Can we expand?

What is the status of the coaches' training program? The faction believes that when we get certified coaches we can begin to raise the level of our sports program in schools.

#### Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

The faction mentions that on the floor of Parliament, we have been discussing special needs and special needs are broader than just the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport. Regarding social assistance and care for persons with special needs and disabilities, what social assistance ( financial and non-financial) can they receive from the Ministry of VSA, and where is this reflected in the Budget?

Can the Minister elaborate on the further development of the Social Care Policy? What is there now, and what does the Minister envision for this policy when it is completed? By when does the Minister expect the further development to be completed?

Regarding the food assistance program, the faction has the following questions. When is the projected date for the program to commence? Can the Minister elucidate on the registration process for this food assistance program? It is crucial that the persons who need this assistance get it. What is the process, and how can we ensure that we reach the persons that need it but have no



access to a computer or internet, for example? How can we make sure we touch them and ensure they have the opportunity to apply? Will community councils be mobilized to assist with the registering of persons for the program?

There is a great increase in the Budget for projects and activities under the Staff bureau. Just for transparency, what does this entail?

The faction further states that the Minister mentioned the expansion of the Women's Desk. What does this entail?

As it pertains to mental health, it has been quite a debacle as of late concerning not having sufficient psychiatrists on the island to carry out the well-needed assistance for persons who are in dire need of psychiatric assistance. What is the Ministry doing in regards to safeguarding the persons who are capable of helping? Where is that reflected in the Budget?

The faction mentions that it is aware of a domestic family abuse policy in the draft and would like to know when that policy will be implemented? Are there connected or allocated amounts to this policy? Are there any collaborations with the Ministry of Justice or any other Ministry on this matter? How can we see community development and the work that has to be done during and after hurricane season in the Budget?

The faction mentions that it believes that there should be a Minister for Health and a Minister Labor. These two responsibilities are very heavy. How many requests have been submitted for the last 2 years, 2019 to present for PP Cards?

How many requests pending as it relates to Medical Aid? How many requests are pending as it related to Social Aid?

With regards to the issue of food vouchers, the faction would like to know what the criteria are for food vouchers? What is it before with the Red Cross? What has changed? Who are the institutions directly involved in issuing these food vouchers and when will it restart?

The faction mentions the labor market and a study on it. Was such a study ever done, when was that and what were the findings? The issue of the National Ordinance to deal with abuse of the short-term contract? Where is the law presently, already approved in Parliament and signed by former Minister VSA? Where is that Ordinance right now?

Who is responsible for ensuring that once an employment permit, once approved, is taken to the immigration department? When applying for an employment permit for the first time, is it so that the persons have to be abroad and authorize someone on the island to submit the documentation?

The faction suggests to the Minister that public town hall sessions should be organized with regards to the pros and cons of having a national health care insurance.

The faction mentions the issue of payslips and would like to know if it is so or not so that payslips are required by law. How can we find a way to get our people to trust the Labor Office?

Is there any documentation that talks about studies being done with regards to getting a living wage?

The faction asked if the Community Councils will be mobilized to assist with the registration of persons for the Food Program. Can the Minister explain in detail why the community councils have not been contacted from the onset of this program? The faction advises the Minister to get the Community Councils involved. It is time for us to be proactive rather than to be reactive.

Can the Minister tell us about the only two big registered psychiatrists who were formally employed by the Mental Health Foundation and after their employment were still helping so many needed Mental Health patients? And explain why their ministerial decrees were revoked? Sint Maarten has seen an enormous rise in Mental Health cases of which we know Mental Health cannot handle. The faction believes that an audit must be done on the advices, to make sure these advices are not biased. Minister just today we received a letter informing of new Management at Mental Health Foundation and according to our sources, the new director has no background in psychology. What can the Minister tell us about this new appointment?

#### Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

The Minister mentioned the Economic Recovery Plan; can the Minister please elucidate on the current status of the country's Economic Recovery Plan? And also explain through which Budget Post of the 2021 budget this is reflected? What does the Home Porting mean for direct funds for Government coffers? And how much is the Government directly recouping from this initiative?

The faction mentions that NAfl. 56.952,00 was used in the 2020 Budget. But yet there is no budgeted amount for the COVID-19 in the 2021 Budget. Can the Minister please explain why no budget for COVID-19 in the 2021 Budget?

Under Economic Transport and Telecommunications there are subsidies to various entities, for example under Budget Post 80032 for Investment Promotion there is a NAfl. 122.500 budgeted, on the Budget Post 80044 for SME Development NAfl. 140.000,00 budgeted and for Budget Post 80045 for Revitalization of Philipsburg, there is NAfl. 100,000.00 budgeted and for the Budget Post 80008 NAfl. 250,00.00 budgeted for Agriculture. Can the Minister please explain if these amounts budgeted are for particular foundations? If yes, who are these Foundations? Or, if these budgeted amounts are for incidental subsidies?

The faction mentions that it appreciates the message of the Minister regarding stakeholder consultation. Partnership is key. The blue economy. Are there any new fees or taxes that can come from the marine sector? Are there any updates on the mooring policy? Is there a need to create new positions in the Ministry?

The faction mentions the Orange economy and so many creatives on the island. Does the Minister have any update on the guild? With regards to MSMEs, are there any plans or ideas to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce or any other stakeholders as it concerns women in business in particular?

The faction indicates that the Minister mentioned that the only revenue Government will generate from the homeporting initiative is tax revenue from the business community. Can the Minister provide more clarity on this?

We have heard quite some talk on the Orange Economy; Can the Minister tell us if there were any opportunities for our creatives to provide entertainment during embarkation or even on board with this homeporting initiative? If not, is there still a possibility to arrange opportunities for our creatives to participate in such?

#### Ministry of General Affairs

The faction mentions that we speak a lot about the country packages and what our advisors are working on along with the counterparts. What exactly is the technical assistance that we are supposed to be receiving at this moment in time or what is the intention as time goes on as it concerns technical assistance?

**The United Peoples Party faction** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions and observations with regards to the draft national ordinance.

#### Ministry of Finance

In terms of the income, in almost every line item for collection, we see an increase. How much of that is based on collection efforts? Can the Minister give a bit of insight into what efforts are being made in 2021 to achieve the goals listed within the income? Are there any plans to continue strengthening and improving the efforts between the Receivers dept and other departments? Is there a good exchange of information?

The faction mentions the contracting of loans. Please explain what prevents the Minister of Finance from going on the open market and try to attract good competitive loans to help, for example, pay civil servants, pay vacation salaries, etc. Can the Minister explain if able to contract on the local market, what would be some of the favorable conditions, loan repayment terms for liquidity? What could be attracted? Please explain? Are interest rates measured? And who judges if a loan is profitable or not?

Can the Minister give an update regarding the funds from UTS? During that time, there were still other funds to be received. Is the Sint Maarten Government looking forward to any additional funds coming from the sale of UTS? Are there other components from the UTS sale to FLOW? Can we get an idea of what that might be and if that is something the Government can look forward to collecting in the future or 2021?

Can the actual concession agreement between the Government and the airport be shared with Parliament? Please list all fees/ taxes due to Country Sint Maarten that the airport is collecting because of the concession. The faction would like to understand what is being collected by the Government.

There used to be a *Pool van Deskundigen*, which was placed under the Minister of Finance. That is no longer in the 2021 budget. Can the Minister indicate what might have happened with that budget post? Was it ever spent? Is there any sort of initiative from the Ministry of Finance to create a pool of experts or a fund to pay for experts to assist the various ministries, especially regarding legislative support? What is being provided for all this different drafting of legislation?

The faction mentions the *Belastingdienst der Inspectie*. Will the Minister consider synchronizing the efforts of the inspection service together with the ATS. What needs to be done on the Minister of Finance end to integrate ATS into the tax inspection/tax auditing system in Sint Maarten? How did the Minister of Finance achieve these significant savings of 11% in interest payment on the budget post *totale rente en afschrijvingen*? Even though we're being forced to take loans from the Netherlands, which is unfortunate because that has a negative effect on our debt service ratio. Can we understand how that has been achieved? Under the budget item accounts control, there is a budgeted 1 million guilders. The faction would like an idea of the intention for that budget post and the 1.5 million guilders additional under project and activities. Is this in addition to the other items mentioned within the capital expenditures for improvement of financial control? What do those projects entail?

What are the other steps that need to be taken by the Ministry of Finance to establish the Mortgage fund, from the perspective of the foundation, appointing members, recognizing it by the Government? Has the Minister already achieved this, and then it is just a matter now of creating the funding?

CRIFT insurance is insurance based on a pre-determined scenario. Can the Minister indicate whether the CRIFT insurance still is budgeted for? Will the Government continue to make use of this? Are there any other insurance dues due to the Government that we can expect collectible within the year 2021?

The capital expenditure Budget under the Ministry of Finance, the 32 million that is budgeted for, is this all expected for budget 2021? Or are there also possibilities that additional expenses might be needed in 2022?

The faction would receive updated figures on the estimates for SSRP going forward as the economy improves and we see the many tourists on the island. Do we anticipate hopefully that the need for SSRP will not extend beyond this Budget? Can we get a breakdown in the future of what the SSRP will be for the next two quarters? The faction hopes that with the recovery of the tourism product, especially by November and December, the need for SSRP will be greatly reduced, which will be a big help in terms of the liquidity for the country.

In the section regarding the *formatieplan* of the Government, there is always a large discrepancy between what the total *werkplekken* are, so the 2420

and 1931. From a financial perspective, might it be time to adjust what that total formation is? Can those savings translate into the Budget?

What can the Government expect from the Central Bank in terms of legislation to support some of the things the Minister would like to do? Is the Minister getting support for the Mortgage guarantee? Is the Central Bank involved in that? Can they assist? Can they also maybe help with the financing of such? Is the Central Bank still going to move forward with the plans of selling some of the gold reserves? Is the Central Bank still intending to do that in 2021? The 1% license fee, is there still plans to increase this in 2021? Is this something that the Minister favors at this stage?

Can the Minister give an update on the debt to SZV? What is currently owed, and what do we suspect will be paid to SZV this year to assist the financial gap and the debt we have to them?

Can the Minister tell us what the problems are in coming up with the proper valuations to include all the infrastructural assets that fit the criteria of article 24? How can we get a better picture? And if we finally do get that picture and have it in the national Budget, is that something to strengthen your standings on the International market?

Can the Minister confirm with regards to the sale of data planet, would the country need another *machtiging* or it is already so far? Will the Minister share the concession agreement with Parliament? Regarding the maturing bond, can Parliament be provided with a schedule of all bonds that will be maturing over the next 10 years to properly plan our financing?

The faction mentions the budget post marketing. The faction suggested renaming the budget post to Marketing destination. From the accountability side, Expedia services are not something that can be put on bid. Can the Minister comment on this and if he agrees? Also investing in the film industry, can the Minister comment on this, if investing in this can help bring more funds of taxes in the coffers? Does the Minister see the viability in this?

Would the minister be willing to put in discussion / negotiate with the Central Bank the right to a bank account? The Central Bank has the means to do this and they have told us they are looking into it. Will the Minister be willing to put this discussion on the table as part of the negotiations with the Central Bank?

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

The faction mentions the emphasis placed by the Minister on income. Levies or tools that can bring revenue. Was the Minister able to examine how Aruba legislation is put up in terms of how tourist and the tourism industry is directly contributing to the cleanliness and environmental protection of the country? Also, if the Minister is in line with that and looks forward to implementing such levies? Be it if it comes as an initiative from this faction or in conjunction with the general ordinance.

Usually, when a judgment is laid down because someone through wrongdoing has made a criminal gain, it will go to this crime fund. In this case just an exchange for work. Would it not be preferable for the Ministry to have received this money, via the crime fund, in cash and contract whomever they want and what control would the Minister have, in terms of price control, for the project? What safeguards are in place regarding this? Why was it not handled that way?

In terms of long lease land. Can information be provided on how much long lease land has been given to marinas and maritime purposes? How many total square meters of land, and how many leaseholders are there?

The indicates that the Minister mentioned that vessels should pay for their wreck after a hurricane. The faction agrees, however, questions if it would not be more prudent to introduce mandatory insurance on all vessels docked within the Sint Maarten waters? What is the Minister's opinion on such?

There was a request at the Ministry of VROMI from the Turning Point to acquire land to place containers to take care of the necessary expansion. What is the status of the request to get land to do their necessary expansion? Also, regarding the Mental Health Foundation, what is the status of their request for land to expand their facilities as well?

*Key projects that will create huge plans in the building sector are Planet Hollywood, Indigo Bay, and the hospital. What is the status of those requests? What is the relationship like with the Ministry of VROMI and the Government by extension? Are they motivated and interested in continuing these projects? Can the Minister clarify if there are any requests at the Ministry of VROMI that the*

hospital is waiting on to continue their work? What is the progress in that regard?

With regards to the request for building permits as small business entrepreneurs, is there any sort of provision that the Minister could create or consider where there is a statement that can be given where it says that based on the initial plans received, should this person comply with all requirements, the Ministry will grant the permit? The faction believes that this will go a long way. Can something like that be done?

What are the interactions with the Housing Foundation? What is the status of the foundation? What are the plans to improve it? Is the Minister satisfied with the functioning? Would the Minister, if not satisfied, consider the establishment of a new entity to manage this? Regarding the ability to build affordable homes, the faction mentions that one of the issues is the way to raise the money for such. Would the Minister welcome a condo levy to go towards affordable housing if initiated by Parliament?

With regards to the Trust Fund, the following. The faction would like a distinction between what projects are related to VROMI that have been activated. What are the funds that are moving?

Are the legal discussions over with Alegria? Has the Minister investigated internally what led to these mistakes happening? Have the legal fees incurred by the Government been recovered as per the judgment? Has an internal investigation been conducted to declare who was responsible for giving the developer the feeling that he was entitled? How did the developer feel that the price that was promised was his entitlement? How do we prevent this from happening in the future?

The faction mentioned the motion regarding Shipyard NV. Has the Minister had an opportunity to fulfill the positions in this motion? Can the Minister give an update as to the amounts that are stated in the motion? Has interest accumulated? What is the debt now, and when are we going to collect that money?

Is there any recourse for Government to hold former managing directors responsible? What is the Minister's opinion on this?



Regarding the project in Dutch Quarter that has been ongoing since 2017, can the Minister indicate if there is anything in the Budget for this and indicate how this project is going?

When someone owes money to the Government, can a court case without a decision from a judge stop the Government from pursuing the funds? This can just drag on forever? In terms of whether managing directors can be held liable for not paying long lease fees? Can the Minister provide this information?

The faction would like the Minister to share the Rules of Order of the Council of Ministers. Can the Minister share the article of Shipyard NV? With regards to marinas *and maritime sectors*, please provide the number of plots of land? How many were given out in *erfpacht* for marine purposes?

#### Ministry of Justice

The faction would like to know what the financial implications are if everyone was to be placed in their proper function with their increase in pay in the next two months. Is this accounted for in this 2021 budget? If not, how will the Government afford to pay these increases? Or is this more anticipated for budget 2022?

When is the next meeting of the CFATF to report to the membership? What is the expectation that the Minister would have to be faced with? What has to be presented? Are there any implementation costs for the remainder of 2021 that the Ministry of Justice expects to incur within the MOTT and/or other justice aspects?

The faction mentions that it would like an update on the challenges the Minister faces with the fines from the Prosecutor office in their role and lack of action with the collection to the tune of NAfl. One million guilders in fines.

With regards to the Landsverordening Bestuurlijkehandhaving, is this lawfully ratified and implemented? If yes, is this assisting with the collections? If not, what would be the plan for the ratification and full implementation and use of the law *Bestuurlijkehandhaving*? Would this law help the Minister in terms of collections, not having to be done via the Criminal code as was done in the past?

The faction would like an update in terms of income for gun licenses and expenses for police records. What is the status of the issuance of gun licenses? What is the status of the new gun policy? Is there a projected increase due to the efforts to create a proper policy for issuing gun licenses? Will, there be a fee increase, and can we expect additional funds in Government coffers? What is the status of the "new reform" of police records expected to come, and what are the projected revenues to be achieved from this?

The faction mentions an ongoing concern with the decision that "nadere regels" can come after and be implemented by the Government and MOT. This can result in unintended consequences that may be as Parliamentarians we did not foresee. One unintended consequence relates to credit card transactions over NAfl. 5,000 guilders. There was confusion in the business community about what needs to be reported regarding credit card transactions to the MOT. Please clarify the current regulations, by extension the MOT, in terms of reporting credit card transactions. Can the Minister consider adjusting this regulation? Is there a need for a Twenty-five thousand guilders limit on credit cards? What are the thresholds as it relates to credit cards transactions and is this threshold necessary?

Do the online gambling licenses issued by the Government of Sint Maarten fall under the supervision of the MOT? Sint Maarten can issue online gambling licenses. The Minister can issue the license rule that locals cannot participate in that gambling. The faction believes that this should be amended to reflect that it should not accept money from locals. If such licenses are issued to an entity not established in St. Maarten but operate digitally, how does the MOT manage this component? Is the MOT equipped to do this? There is a huge opportunity to bring more funds to the government coffers by issuing more such licenses with no negative effects on the local population. If the MOT can oversee just the transactions of these online establishments, that should suffice from an AML (anti-money laundering) and a CTF (counter-terrorism financing) perspective.

Can the Minister of Justice give an update regarding the containers from the prison for Turning Point?

In the list of the rental agreement, there's nothing listed for the *Parket Officier van Justitie*. How is the rent for the Court House managed? Is there a rental transaction? Are there any funds to the Government coffers from the operations there? Regarding the *Parket Officier van Justitie en Parket PG*, is the

rent covered by the Government of Sint Maarten? If not, can we inquire what the amount of rent is that they are paying is? What is the total rental budget for the Parket van Justitie (OM) and the Parket Procureur Generaal?

Would the Minister consider trying to create a plan and present to Parliament that within a realistic time frame, we find an opportunity to create our facility where we can centralize all offices such as the Court of Guardianship, three immigration facilities, Landsrecherche, police station, etc.?

In accordance with the Landsverordening Criminaliteitbestrijdingsfonds, judgments such as to Windward Roads goes to the crime fund. Why was the US\$2 million (in the judgment of Windward Roads) not paid into the crime fund? Can the Minister find out why this was not done?

In the General Audit Chamber's 2018 crime fund review, they noted that an outstanding amount for a case called "Benito" was never deposited to the crime fund. The faction would like a follow-up on whether these funds are being pursued by the Ministry of Justice to be deposited to the crime fund? Can the Minister look into that and let Parliament know if those funds are available?

Regarding the 40<sup>th</sup> report of the *Voortgangscmissie*, 1 January 2021 to 1 April 2021, what is the Minister's opinion on the findings of that report? Does the Minister intend to take these into account in the Budget 2021 or future budgets? If so, how? What will the effects be? If not, why?

What is the projected income, if any, for the issuance of ankle bracelets? Is it the plan for us to recoup those funds by charging them to the individual using the ankle bracelet?

The faction mentions the risk-based approach of the MOT. What is the difference in such a risk-based approach when you are dealing with 25 thousand in cash versus electronic payment? Does the MOT recognize that there is a lower risk? What is the risk profile in the credit card being swiped versus cash payment? Do we recognize the risk profile?

MOT oversees the online and offline casino industry. Using a risk-based approach, does the MOT recognize the difference in risk between a physically established casino versus an online casino. Can we admit that there is a much higher risk profile when overseeing the casinos versus online casinos? The

faction would like to see the distinction between established casinos and online casinos.

Can the Minister contact the legal entities and request that their rental agreements be provided so that this can be included in the budget so that it is clear what is being spent on rent? Can the Minister of Justice ask this question to these entities and let Parliament know what reply is received?

The faction would like to know if there was another fine issued to Windward Roads prior to the “Larimar” case. Can the Minister provide clarity as to who manages the crime fund? Is it the OM or the Government?

#### Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

The faction would like to know if the Minister also recognizes that Sint Maarten is a party, via the State, to many international regulations. There is an international spotlight on ensuring that every country must be able to provide sufficiently for the education of its people. The Charter gives the Netherlands power to admonish us if we do not abide by international, but then the Cft will tell the Minister of Education cut. If the Government's responsibility is to provide adequate education to our people, we are a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but when we fall short, the proper thing for the State to do is fill that gap. Is that happening right now? Can the education gap be quantified? Can the Minister give a wish list? What is the magic number? The faction believes that it is time to send that bill where it belongs.

The faction would like the Minister to give the Minister a mental exercise going to the Council of Ministers meeting and presenting a concept budget that solves all our education problems. What happens then? What does the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister tell you? What does Cft tell you, and what will the Netherlands say? Are they going to say *goed zo*, here you go, or will you get resistance? How does the Minister believe that exercise will go?

Can the Minister go to an international funding organization saying we see the problems in education and would like to offer One hundred million guilders at a one percent interest? Can the Minister do that? No, because of the Statute, because of the Cft. How does the advising of Cft to Ministers and Council of Ministers go? We see evidence that the Cft is making our Government cut much need things. Cut education, cut social responsibility, pension, food

vouchers. These are the type of things they are saying to cut. How does that strong advice come in? How does that process go?

When looking at the 12,5% cut and the amount for subsidies in the Budget, the faction noticed that there is no change between the 2020 and 2021 budgets. Why is that? Is it that the subsidized institutions have told the Minister that they will not apply the cut? Are they going to use the cut? Can we understand how the 12,5% cut is being applied to those subsidies?

The Minister has to get creative to be able to find ways to make money. The faction would like to know if the Minister still intends to propose to increase the excise on gasoline to put towards sports. What can that be materialized into? What is the process to get there? Regrettably, the sports budget is nowhere where it needs to be.

The faction asks if it is known what sports can do to promote your destination nowadays. Sports create athletes that become ambassadors. One of the most successful influencers any brand can get is its athletes. The faction mentions that we should stop looking at sports as an annoying expense and see sports as a real economic viable thing, especially for a tourism destination.

#### Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

The faction would like the Minister to explain from both health and labor perspectives his take on the implemented business closure for businesses that operate past a certain time? What is the scientific process?

What are the differences between the Budget of the Ministry before and after COVID-19? What are the different challenges that the Ministry faces when it comes to Human and Financial resources? What are the Ministry's plans and actions to implement to avoid SZV from going belly up when it comes to social care?

The faction would like to know what challenges and opportunities the Ministry has experienced so far? What are the plans to improve the labor market of Sint Maarten? For example, the online portal for jobs. Can the Minister share some more about those initiatives and how they can help to improve the labor market of Sint Maarten?

With regards to the hospital agreement of the Dutch Caribbean Health Alliance, how binding is it? What are the costs for this hospital association?

The faction would like to know what were some of the tasks of CPS before COVID-19 and how much attention is being given to these tasks at this time? What attention and provisions are being made in the Budget for these regular tasks? Are we going to have vector controls?

What are the Minister's views on restructuring the granting of the work permits process and the person's process to enter the country? Can there not be synchronicity to this process? Which legislative changes will be needed to achieve this? Would the Minister agree to increase the fees? Would that be something that can be done at this time? Is the Minister open for an initiative from Parliament to see a balance in the service provided and increase the fees?

What is the Minister's position on converting the current COVID-19 insurance fee into a solidarity fee, similar to the French system, with a portion going to finance social and health issues? What is the Minister's position on possibly levying a fee to high-end condos that can be used to subsidize social housing?

Would the Minister agree with allowing NAfl. 3000 in tips to be exempted from taxes?

The faction mentions the closure chart and the correlation of the chart. Do we have scientific evidence that as a result of the 11.00 pm closure we helped keep COVID-19 down?

Can the Minister share confidentially with Parliament, list of companies mentioned that employ a lot of persons and are currently closed? Have there been spikes in these areas? What are we going to do now going forward?

Would the Minister be able to share if indeed that the spread of COVID-19 outdoor is vastly different than indoor?

Is the Minister aware of a situation in the Netherlands where sensors were placed to ascertain if the spread outside is left? Can we consider changing this policy to this? Allow for outdoor establishments? And look at in-door establishments differently? Can we look at extending the hours for indoor

establishments but ensure that there are fewer persons inside and masks are given to everyone upon entrance?

Can the Minister clarify, is it not that every single person has to be vaccinated and tested prior to entering the venue? Is this a policy that Government might want to consider putting in place?

The faction mentions that vaccination was mentioned as a key measure for opening: vaccination benchmark. How did we get to this number and does this number take into account the large number of persons who left the island since COVID-19?

Antibody testing: is taking into account persons being immunized by antibody? Is there any way to measure how many persons had contracted the virus but have been vaccinated?

#### Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

What can we do to complement and supplement the budget of the Ministry? Would the Minister agree to take 5% of the 63 million guilders budgeted for the SSRP and put towards the efforts of business development and marketing of the Country? Would the effect balance out, if not have a net positive effect on our economy?

The faction points out that as there is no budget for the film industry. If additional funds become available, would the Minister welcome an amendment to changing a budget post that has been on zero and un-used for years and rename and transfer funds to that account? Has the Minister had the opportunity to look into this industry or meet producers, actors, etc. and receive any feedback from them? How does the Minister feel we should involve ourselves going forward?

The faction continues and would like to know what the Minister's opinion is on putting a significant increase of at least half a million guilders to the Expedia marketing program. What would that mean for Sint Maarten in terms of return? The faction queries if there is a provision in the Accountability Ordinance that allows for unique situations such as this, whereby a National Ordinance you are able to deviate from the bidding process? The faction proposes to change the "charter post" which currently stands at zero and rename it Expedia.

Can the Minister update on any plans for Coop Marketing Campaigns?  
Does the possibility exist of a budget increase? What would be a sufficient budget for Coop Marketing campaigns?

The faction request urgent attention for the following critical vacancies to be filled, such as Marketing Office and Secretary. Other critical functions that are not listed but are most needed are a Legal advisor for the drafting regulations, an internal creative designer, and an aviation specialist. Would the Minister going forward together with the department heads, agree to draft new proposals/advice in accordance with article 10 of the LIOL to restructure those departments?

The faction would like to know how many persons within the Ministry of TEATT are currently in this *aanloopschaal*. What are the plans going forward to correct this and put them on their correct salary scale? How many persons currently in TEATT are functioning outside of their duties? How many persons should be entitled to the *toelage*? How many persons are collecting the *toelage*?

Would the Minister agree that it would be more effective and efficient to treat Carnival as a marketing contract rather than as a subsidy?

The faction mentions that Texaco has recently been acquired by SOL. Does the Minister foresee economic dangers because of this potential monopoly? What would the Ministry of TEATT do to prevent the fuel price increase?

The faction has the following questions regarding relief for Seniors. What are Government's plans to permanently establish tariffs for the seniors? What are the Government's plans to establish more competitive rates for businesses? Why hasn't the Government initiated a "green energy" tariff allowing energy to flow back to the grid?

After waiting on funds from the Trust Fund, the lagoon is being cleaned. What are the plans, from a maritime perspective, to prevent this from happening in the future? Would the Minister agree to implement mandatory insurance on all vessels coming into the country to ensure that whether the owners are present or not the insurance would be active and at zero cost to the Government the lagoon will be cleaned?



The faction further mentions that questions were already posed regarding the Timeshare Ordinance and that it looks forward to the answers.

The faction would like to know how many business licenses are currently outstanding? What can be done more to be able to collect these fees in a timely manner, seeing we are currently faced with liquidity issues? What is currently the status of staffing at Economic Affairs in general? Not only the critical functions. Are temps being hired? What efforts are being made to improve the hiring of temps? Are we giving opportunities within the entire Ministry of TEATT to have persons within the Ministry move up into higher functions rather than bringing persons in from the outside?

The faction has the following questions regarding transportation. What is the ratio between how many French licensed taxis are allowed to come to the Dutch side? How many assistance chauffeurs are there currently? What are the Minister's plans with the "master licenses (not sure of the legal term)" that are floating around within the transportation industry for busses? Does the Minister see the need to look at the concerns of many bus drivers that are operating under these so-call "master bus licenses" for bus companies? The faction states that these bus drivers have to maintain and invest in the bus; they are not insured (not entitled to SZV) nor able to open a bank account etc. How many bus licenses are issued under the "master bus licenses"? How many of these licenses exist?

Can the Minister explain what are the risks types when dealing with credit cards versus dealing with cash? Is a NAfl. 25,000 transaction equally risky from an AML/CTF perspective as with a cash transaction?

In reference to the National Ordinance that was carried over from the Netherlands Antilles which deals with establishing of online casinos; do we see the risks are much different? If the MOT is the entity that oversees this, do you see an economic benefit of the Ministry of TEATT when giving out the online gambling licenses for the rest of the world (but not to a Sint Maartener)? For a financial return, would this be good? What would the possible risks be, if any? How can we possibly mitigate these?

The faction would like to know what the proposed solution is for the situation of master licenses in bus transportation in particular? The faction would like to understand more, what are the solutions, what the options are for persons working under master bus licenses, under unfair conditions.

With regards to BTP. What is the basis for the 1.5 million being calculated? How far is the 1.5 million is from what we are supposed to get? What is the basis of this 1.5 million from BTP?

The faction mentions the concession agreement PJIA and charged fees. Can the Minister provide an overview of the concession agreement with PJIA? Sint Maarten has not been collecting overflights fees. Can the Minister confirm if indeed we are not collecting these fees and what the plans are to start collecting overflight fees?

Can the Minister confirm that airport handlers adding a tax on the handling of noncommercial aircraft? Can the Minister confirm if this is indeed being done by handlers at the airport and whether or not this is being remitted to the Government?

#### Ministry of General Affairs

The faction would like to receive some specific information from the department of personnel. How many civil servants are currently placed in an *aanloopschaal*? Is this data available to be shared?

With regards to Pre-clearance the faction has the following questions. Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on pre-clearance? What is the timeline that the Minister, as well as her Ministry of foreign affairs, going to keep in mind for the part of preclearance becoming a reality? How long since we have had contact with the state department, does there still seem to be any interest from the state department in pursuing pre-clearance in Sint Maarten? Are there any budgetary consequences that we may need to know about of cost involved (not talking about the establishment of a preclearance facility)? From the perspective of foreign affairs, are there any budgeted costs? Has any other further discussion taken place with the signatory to such a treaty, which is the Netherlands? Pre-clearance is a huge opportunity for Sint Maarten. The faction would like to know what the Prime Minister has to tell Parliament about that?

Outside of cooperate governance council itself are there any unforeseen costs or have we properly accounted for everything? Currently, the Director at the Holding of the Airport is on suspension, whatever disciplinary action that has been taken until now has sufficed and whatever plans that have been put in place are clear and understood so we don't need to hear of the goal post moving

again in regards to cooperate governance at the airport. Can the Prime Minister give Parliament some assurances in that regard? Has the Prime Minister and her team taken time to look at the articles of incorporation of the Royal Schiphol Group? Does any government-owned company on Sint Maarten have such a far-reaching statement within their articles as RSG?

With regards to car rentals, the faction would like to know if it would be more prudent rather than doing any sort of car rentals by the Government of Sint Maarten to instead consider lease to purchase agreements? Can the Prime Minister clarify Budget post #30 43499 0013 and what that NAfl.3 million difference is?

The faction mentions the subsidy for VKS and that it has not seen any increase. How do we come to this subsidy budget? Can we get an explanation of how that calculation is made?

The faction further mentions the census and service center. Are there any plans to expand the Service Centers, where we can get another one like that in another district outside of Philipsburg, like Dutch Quarter/ Middle Region? Is it something that the Prime Minister is considering? What has contributed to the big improvement that we have seen in these service centers? Has it been because of improved training, technology, have we restaffed? What can we learn from the improvements we have seen within that division?

With regards to the NRPB, what sort of evaluation system is there in place regarding their performance? We tend to rely on [overheid.nl](http://overheid.nl) where a lot of information is booked online. Lately, it has been having issues stating page not found. Can the Prime Minister give us an update? Is there any involvement of General Affairs or is it just the Netherlands? Are there any plans for Sint Maarten to create our own portal for all legislative documents?

**The United St. Maarten Party faction** has taken note of the draft with interest and has the following questions and remarks.

#### Ministry of Finance

The faction would like to know if, at present, the Government can pay the salaries of the civil servants at the end of June, seeing that the Daily Herald

reported that State Secretary Knops stated that the country would not be able to pay salaries without liquidity support. How much of the liquidity support is being used to pay the June salaries of civil servants?

Why isn't vacation allowance not being paid when we notice that other entities subsidized by Government are paying vacation allowance? It creates a very strange atmosphere between the approved legislation and the legislation not being adhered to by all yet receiving monies from Government. What is the Ministers position on this?

Will the planned automation of the various departments in the Ministry of Finance lead to redundancy in functions, and if so, what's the plan for the redundant employees? Will there be retraining of staff possible or early retirement with all benefits?

The faction mentions that it noticed that there was Naf. 9.5 million ow will the Naf 9,5 million guilders reserved for vacancies to be divided among the various ministries regarding implementing the country reform packages and the acute shortages presently in certain ministries? The faction would like a breakdown of how the money will be spread, particularly with the country packages.

Why is the old Receivers office, which presently houses the Post office, also not been finalized fully so the Receivers can go back to full force after four years? Is there a reason why the closure is at 2 PM for the Receivers, when we are looking to collect as much money as possible? What's the reason or logic to send out so many automated tax assessments when we know they are not correct?

Because of the pandemic, a lot of people have fallen behind in filing taxes or paying taxes. Is there any kind of policy where agreements can be made, exceptions can be made to the existing laws, or are we just going to bully the taxpayers into paying, as what the faction has been complaining about regarding the seniors?

Successive governments have contributed to the laidback approach to tax compliance. Maybe it's because of understaffing, not having the right staff, or knowing that the data is compromised. Regardless of the reason, it is not reasonable to go from one extreme to another. The tax officials refuse to make arrangements with taxpayers and auction their property instead of seeking solutions that suit all parties. Does the Minister stand behind this type of

behavior by the Tax office, and if not, what can the Minister do about it and what will the Minister do about it?

Has any consideration been made in Budget 2021 that the COVID-19 liquidity support/loans have to be repaid in 2022? If not, what happens if the Dutch Government asks for the repayment per the agreement in 2022?

How high, at present, is our borrowing ability compared to the IMF norm of 45% of our BNP? Was this all caused solely by the liquidity support loans given to us by the Dutch Government? How high have the loans put us, and what can we do moving forward? One of the criticisms of the Budget every year by the CFT, is the missing year accounts. When will the Parliament receive the year accounts for approval for 2017, 2018, and 2019?

When it comes to the 10% pension premiums to be paid by the political office holders, will this be included as part of the present 25% salary cuts, or will it now become 35%?

The faction mentions that it realized that in the Budget, there is a NAfl. Ten million COVID-19 related liquidity support to be given to the St. Maarten Medical Center. From which liquidity tranche is this money to be received and provided to the Medical Center coming? What exactly is it for? Are there any monies being made available by the Government to assist SZV in covering its premium losses for 2021? If so, where is this located in the Budget? Does the Government have any indication when it brings the adjusted law to Parliament to increase the salary border to NAfl. 10.000,- per month when it concerns SZV cardholders instead of the present NAfl. 5640,-? How many more of the working population will then become SZV members? Which risk will be mitigated by making this adjustment for the healthcare funds?

In the Budget, One hundred twenty-eight million guilders were allocated as funds to support the COVID-19 related cost. Is this number still accurate, seeing we have not received any liquidity support other than 8.7 million in January 2021 to handle most, if not any COVID-19 related expenses? If there is a six tranche, how much will that be?

When we look at the *dienstverlening overeenkomsten*, the points out the following, there are no amounts listed for any contractual works for the Justice Ministry. Can we get clarity on that? The garbage collection amounts aren't in line with the approved contracts? Under education, we have insurance items to

the tune of some 300.000-. What are they insuring, and why isn't this done collectively with the other Government insurances? Do we have different types of insurances going on, or do we have one comprehensive Government insurance? When we look at the *veiligheidsdienst*, the faction mentions that we pay 226.800 for office space rental. Why is this so high, and why is a secondary location for another 100.000- needed? How many people work there? Is there any place in the Budget taken up to cover all the withholdings of the civil servants and other affected personnel if the Constitutional Court says the laws aren't valid and must be pulled back?

Ninety-seven million guilders are reserved for capital expenses. How much will truly be used this year, and why? Does the Minister truly believe that the money can be spent?

How many loans have the Government stand guarantee for exactly, and for how much and what effect does this have on our borrowing capacity? The airport has saddled up the Government with 218.1 million guilders on loans with about 182 million at 4.5% when it comes to long-term loan guarantees. While the largest amounts are the Trust Fund and EIB loans, primarily at 4.5%. The faction would like to know what this means for our borrowing capacity as a country that guarantees these loans.

When it comes to concessions, the faction points out that it noticed that the airport doesn't pay the Government one cent. In 2012 to safeguard their Moody rating, the Government once again extended their concession for 15 years. Why isn't Government reviewing the concession agreement seeing the issues we have at the airport and the rebuilding of the airport, and ensure that some of the monies that the airport is collecting on the departure tax can be used to pay the concession?

Why is the BTP concession so low when the law states that BTP collects all the money from all the license holders, deducts their expenses, and turns over the rest of the money to the Government? Have we checked their operational accounts? Too much money is staying someplace and is not coming to Government.

When it comes to the collective sector entities on the island, the faction mentions that we have taken along only a few government-owned companies, not all? Why is that done this way?

The collective sector entities are used when we calculate our debt ratio for the GDP. Under other entities, I see many government institutions listed. How many loans do they presently have, and what effect does it have on our debt ratio?

Looking at all the participation Government has in the various companies, its subsidiaries, Saba bank, etc., has there been a value placed on all of these assets individually? Is there an overall value?

When it comes to the water distribution management contract with NV GEBE, are there any obligations on the Government's side towards this contract? If so, what are they exactly? What is the Government position on these losses? Who owns the water distribution network, and how much is said valued presently? Where in the Budget can the value of these assets be found? The same goes for the sewage. Those are Government-owned assets. Why are they not registered any place in the Government books? How many monies does the Government receive as profit from the water sales yearly, and what's the solution regarding the severe water network losses we have yearly? Who is responsible for such? Who owns the sewage collection and processing plant, and what is that asset worth in monetary value?

When it comes to the Integrity Chamber, the faction noticed that some 580 thousand guilders were dropped in support of that Chamber from the Netherlands. So it means that we are now paying Five hundred eighty thousand guilders more this year. Is there a reason for this? Does this mean that next year that we are paying, we are paying for the Integrity Chamber ourselves, and we don't have money?

There are Twenty-two million guilders listed to carry out the restructuring of the tax department in capital expenses. What exactly is going to be done with the 22 million this year? What about the DPO monies (30 million dollars) that are being placed in the hope yet to be established COHO for the same program? How much is the tax office going to cost?

Are there any reserves in the Budget regarding the Court Case that Government had with a company in the event the company claims damages, or will these damages be passed on to the responsible Minister who created this?

When it comes to the country's income, the faction noticed that our projections are showing an increase in about 10% sales tax (TOT) in income. Also,

there a projection for almost a 10% increase in wage tax. Does the Minister agree that the 3% economic recovery increase projection of the economy is not correct and can turn out to be higher?

Was the projection of 52 million dollars income for the island due to homeporting been incorporated in the Budget 2021? If not, why not?

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

The faction would like to know how many vacancies are still open in the Ministry and where are these in the organization?

When it comes to domain grounds, the faction noticed that the average cannon price hasn't truly risen much, with the exception of the 33% jump back in 2017 (NAfl. 0,89 ) to 2018 (NAfl. 1,23). Would it be fair to state that we should review the prices and raise the cannon price (square meter price) every five years? We can make more money even if we raise the price by about 10 cents on average. We can exclude seniors.

Any update on getting lands available to execute agriculture, and is the Government willing to purchase land to execute agriculture? The faction states that it has not seen Government take an active approach to find land. Have we gotten any place with Emilio Wilson and giving back land?

The faction mentions that in the Minister's presentation, the Government receives 224 thousand guilders for sewage trucks that dump at the sewage plant. Minister, why are the fees to discharge sewage at the sewage plant still NAfl. 15,- per truckload instead of NAfl. 30,- per truckload? The cost to have your septic removed can easily cover such.

The sanitary landfill was and is still the biggest monster and problem the country knows. The Dutch Government wants the Sint Maarten Government to live up to its promises and start doing so. It reported that an additional 25 million dollars are allocated to the Emergency Debris Management Project to pay for the shipwreck removal project and the reallocation of the persons living around the dump. How much was budgeted for the shipwreck removal, and how much is being paid for it before the additional monies were allocated? What exactly will be done at the sanitary landfill over the next six months besides what



Government is doing presently? The Budget shows a decrease in machinery on the landfill.

How much money has been allocated to resettle the people around the sanitary landfill? Where are they planning to build the houses to house these people? Is it the FOGO land that we are going to use? If the resettlement doesn't go there anymore, what does that mean for the sanitary landfill project? Will the Government still ask for the remaining funds to build a housing project for the Government?

The faction recalls there was a bid for the machines on the landfill. That bid or contract is coming to an end. When it comes to an end, is it going to be extended until we know what is going to happen with the landfill? Or is it not going to be extended? And if it is not going to be extended, who is going to handle the landfill? Three pieces of machinery have been granted to the Government for the landfill; a bulldozer, a loader, and a compactor. Are they all working properly, and how much money has the Government reserved to maintain these machines?

If the Irma landfill will be cleared, how much money has been allocated to do that? With which money is it going to be done? How does the Minister anticipate paying for the cleaning of the Irma landfill?

How does the Minister believe the Government can afford any effective changes on the landfills themselves when the Budget to maintain the landfill went down with some NAfl. 610.000,- and the problem is far from solved?

How much of the machinery donated by the Netherlands in 2017 is still operational, and if they aren't, what are the issues?

How many monies have been allocated specifically to the beach cleanup of the various beaches frequently visited by our people and tourist-based on the contracts? How many funds have been set aside to have the beaches cleaned with the beach cleaning machine presently on the island?

Why is the cost of collecting garbage for some 2 million guilders higher than the previous years? What additional services are they providing exactly per parcel or in general?

Regarding the cost of burial and the shortage of land we presently have, does the Government believe that the budgeted amount will be sufficient to construct the new vaults, the needed roads, and the retaining walls? Has the Government ever thought about subsidizing cremations? Has the Ministry proposed cremation becoming the new norm for funerals and creating a location to house the urns as is presently already being done at some cemeteries?

One of the biggest problems we have in the Philipsburg area is the lack of parking. What exactly are the Government planning to resolve this matter in the short term and the long term? How many monies are allocated for the short term and the long term projects/programs?

Regarding the connection of the sewage lines in Front street and the FOGA area, there were agreements made to have said done with the monies fined to Windward Roads by the Public Prosecutors Office in the Larimar case. Why haven't these works started until present in none of the areas? The faction notes that they are labeled as future projects?

Regarding the stormwater pumps, the faction would like to know if the Government has been able to procure any new pumps to ensure that water management can be guaranteed during calamities or inclement weather. Has the Minister thought about asking the Trust Fund?

When it comes to the streetlight maintenance contract, the faction mentions that it is surprised that the cost of electricity is still so high when all lights should be LED, and the cost should drop easily by some 50%. Why isn't that reflected in the Budget?

The faction notes that there is NAfl. 312.521 available for traffic management plans. What exactly is meant by traffic management plans? Is the post 9210.43443.905 accurate, as this is roads and not a drains Budget?

What is the Government's vision for affordable housing, and where can any reservations be found for such, be it capital or operational? If the vision already exists, what kind of money are we looking at when it comes to land acquisition and building of the homes themselves.

When reviewing the Ministry's capital expenses, the faction noticed a reservation for some NAfl. 9.725.000- guilders. What exactly is it for? The faction has the following questions that are related directly to this amount. There is NAfl. 200.000,- for recycling car wrecks. So what is the World Bank car wreck

program covering exactly, and does this amount include removing the car wrecks from the island?

There is NAfl. 300.000,- to hard surface the entrance road to the landfill and US\$ 35 million by the World Bank to redo the landfill. So why are we now in a time of financial crises doing these works in a project that since 2018 was the biggest issue on the island? The NAfl. 1.250.000, for sewage and house connections listed. Where is this exactly, and will it be connected to an existing sewage line?

The 1 million for the Bethlehem link (link 6). What exactly is this covering and are all the land issues legally resolved, and are all parties in agreement? There isn't anything reserved to upgrade the capital of the country where we have serious parking issues and also a very bad road deck on Front street presently. Why isn't this a priority, or will the operational Budget be used to fix this?

When looking at the generated income, the faction noticed that we had dropped some 22.5% on building permit fees income. Why is that as construction is booming all over the island? In the "totals per economic category" page 62, the other maintenance has risen with some NAfl. 3.485.318,- and the garbage collection and processing has dropped with some NAfl. 2.215.198,-. How is this possible when the garbage contracts went up with some 2 million or were the district cleaning contracts removed from this post and placed under other maintenance? Why is the multi-year district cleaning contract placed under other maintenance? Isn't this a specific maintenance?

In the "totals per economic category" page 62, the security of the VROMI yard has gone up with some 310% from NAfl. 100.000,- to a whopping NAfl. 410.880,- for this year. How is this possible?

Why is it that the salaries went down in the cabinet of the Minister by some NAfl. 138.922,- but the various allowances in the same cabinet went up with NAfl. 167.036,-?

Are there any projects or programs to clean up the car wrecks presently littering the island all over and pose a serious health issue and a social issue qua living standards?

With regards to the establishing of the Solid Waste Authority, on what principle will it be based? Ownership, rentals of equipment etc.?

Is there any date for the TDSR that should have already been established, seeing the role it should play?

When it comes to dredging in the countries waters, what are the requirements for these types of permits, and who controls them? Who issues such permits, and is the application form now readily available?

We are now once again in the hurricane season. The faction would like to know from the Minister if any precautions have been made to ensure that all vessels are insured. The faction informs that once the vessel becomes a wreck, the Minister is the one responsible for clearing it up.

#### Ministry of Justice

The faction mentions that the comprehension of the Dutch language is a serious issue, yet the levels of certain schools or higher than the schools that are being accepted to become police officers. Is there any reason why certain schools are excluded, or is that just a myth? The faction wonders if the SDA and SMA students have also been considered for Coast Guard candidates instead of the others whose overall knowledge is sometimes less?

What does the NAfl. 2.4 million KPSM support exactly entail in budget post 5201/43499/50004?

The faction noticed that in the capital expense budget, there are some 13 cars to be purchased, all for entities that don't need specialized vehicles like the police. Why weren't these part of the recently purchased new vehicle fleet by the World Bank?

In capital expense, there is 6 million guilders reserved for the building of the new prison for this year. Has the Dutch Government agreed that such is acceptable regarding the grant for the new prison project?

Why is it that we are projecting an income of NAfl. 1.912.852,- for residency permits, an increase of over 300.000- compared to last year when we have much fewer jobs available in the country presently and the labor office giving off at least 13% fewer work permits qua income. What's wrong with this picture, Minister?

Can Parliament get a breakdown of budget post 43476 "Rechts- en ander deskundig advies" which is budgeted at some NAfl. 400.000,-. Please explain the

breakdown hereof: is this solely for the justice workbook, or are there other tasks involved in this expense. What contracts are covered by this amount?

The cabinet salary expenses went up to NAfl. 514,936. An increase of some NAfl. 68,312,-. Can this increase be explained? The staff bureau salary expenses went up to some NAfl. 559.124,-. An increase of some NAfl. 60.168,-. Can this be explained?

The faction further indicates that as well as for the Minister (400 thousand) as the cabinet (200 thousand), there are monies allocated for Rechtsdeskundigen. Who are these persons exactly, and what type of contracts are tied there?

Budget post 43452, *Verzekering personeel*, is budgeted at NAfl. 264.000,-. Is this a specific insurance of the personnel, and if yes, why is that? Budget post 43453, *Schadevergoedingen*, has increased to NAfl. 750.000,- three times last year. These are penalty charges for what exactly?

Budget post 43489 50007, *Projecten en Activiteiten*, specifically electronic monitoring is budgeted for NAfl. 250.000,-. Are all these ankle bands being used? And if we are investing these types of monies, are the released prisoners being put to do maintenance of buildings and so forth where we have a lot of funds budgeted?

Budget post 43440, *Huur gebouwen en ruimten*, basically remained unchanged in these difficult times at NAfl. 1.104.209,-. Wasn't any lowering of the rent possible?

The faction has the following question regarding the police. Why was the budget post 43468, *Overige verpleegkosten*, reduced to zero while COVID-19 is still ongoing? Please explain why the budget post 43482, *Kosten laboratorium*, was increased with NAfl. 200.000,- to a total of NAfl. 300.000,-.

With the various changes ongoing at the KPSM, why aren't there any changes to the *overige goederen en diensten* budget post 43499 50004? Why are there no monies budgeted on 43499 50003 for, *overige goederen en diensten wederopbouw KPSM*, when the force is being restructured? Border control is budgeted at zero while overseas assistants to KPSM remain unchanged for the high amount of 2.4 million. Why is that? What exactly are we getting from overseas? What is this negative figure under 44110, *overdracht aan het land*, of NAfl. 1.930.415,-. What is that exactly?

The faction has the following question regarding the prison. The budget post 41039, *Retroactive uitkering*, has been slashed with NAfl. 100.000,-. This decrease of 100% means no overtime and the entitlement to retroactive payment. When will this be seen for those entitled? Budget post 43000, *Personeel van derden*, has increased to NAfl. 500.000,-. Can the Minister explain why this increase? Budget post 43411, *Dienst- en werkkleding en uitrusting*, has gone from basically NAfl. 3.000,- to NAfl. 150.000,-. Is it that we are buying new clothing for the prison guards and the prisoners? Please explain this significant increase?

Budget post 43430, *Onderhoud gebouwen en terreinen*, went down with about NAfl. 105.000,-. What are these reductions based on? Budget post 43489, *Projecten en Activiteiten*, is budgeted for NAfl. 4.000.000,-. Please explain what projects these are?

The faction continues and has the following questions regarding the Coast Guard. Budget post 41001, *Bezoldiging*, has increased with some NAfl. 241.998,-. Can this increase be justified? Do we have more employees now employed? Budget post 43440, *Huur gebouwen en ruimten*, is budgeted this year for NAfl. 260.000,-. Why in 2021 an increase of 260 thousand? What was this building for, and where is it? Is it necessary at this point, and for how long is this contract? To who is this contract? When was the starting date in 2021, as it wasn't there before?

The faction has the following questions regarding the Financial Intelligence Unit. Budget post 41001, *Bezoldiging*, was increased with NAfl. 241.967,- to NAfl. 1.226.308,-. Please explain this increase? Budget post 43000, *Personeel van derden*, also increased with Naf 84.000,-. Please explain what this entails exactly? Budget post 43101, *Elecktra*, is zero. Does the contract include the utility, or is this a human omission? Don't they pay utilities? Budget post 43493, *Contributie en Lidmaatschap*, is budgeted for NAfl. 130.000,-. What are these monies for?

The budget post 44102, *Overheidsinstellingen Parket prosecutor general*, Budget has been increased by 125% to an amount of NAfl. 1.555.049,- which is an increase of NAfl. 863 thousand. Why was that, and what is the justification hereof?

Budget post 44102, *Overheidsinstellingen Gemeenschappelijk Hof van Justitie*, budget was increased with NAfl. 317.000,- to an amount of NAfl. 5.578.000,-. Can a proper explanation be given as to what this increase of NAfl. 317.000- is based on?

Budget post 5209 44301, *Subsidies can instellingen* Turning Point, has remained the same while Turning Point is receiving many more walk-ins. Why isn't this reviewed?

Can an explanation be given why the salary budget was increased by the prosecutor's office while salaries are being frozen in the Government apparatus? Does the Justice academy presently function as there is NAfl. 200.000- budgeted for such?

The faction would like to know why there is such an increase in the UNOPS project? The faction believes that it was about \$ 33-34 million and now it's about US\$ 47 million. This is a significant increase of some 38%.

The faction mentions that today there seems to be a whole march from the WIFOL building to the police station. The faction mentions that it understood that this has to do directly with the function books issues. What exactly are they debating regarding the function book and how can this affect the present budget?

The repair/rebuilding of the SOLEMAR building hasn't been forthcoming for years. Does the Ministry still believe that they will use that property for the shooting range, the forensic department, etc. and if yes where can such be found in the budget?

Why is the assistance to Turning Point only based on the mentally ill offenders and not also the drug or alcohol-addicted offenders? The faction further mentions that it noted that the Netherlands removed the visa right for the sex industry girls since back in 2019, due to human trafficking and abuse. How does this tie in with the regulation for the *annimeer meisjes* regulation that is being proposed in the legislation?

#### Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

The faction would like to know if Government gets value for money when it comes to the budget versus the education of our children and their ability to get a job in the market? Has any research been done lately to see if our education system is catering to our economical market?

The faction would like to know if any programs are being prepared to educate our own to become teachers at present or are we going to continue to import teachers? What's being done to enhance our teachers working atmosphere and safety at school?

Does Government still believe in Foundation Based Education, and how long has this method been implemented in Sint Maarten? When last has this been evaluated and is this still the methodology to use to educate our children? Can an explanation be given what the reserved NAfl. 3.5 million guilders will be used for ICT equipment for the repairs and upgrading of the sports accommodations in the capital expenses budget?

When it comes to the school repair project of the Trust Fund monies from the ERP 1 school repair project, the faction indicates that it was happy to see that Lionel Connor School is done and also the Sister Regina School is done.

What about the roof of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. School and the Ruby Labega school? When will these two schools with leaky roofs be repaired? What happened to the repairs of these 2 schools that were to be repaired with insurance funds that were advanced in 2018?

The faction would also like to know what happened to the contractor(s) who was/were contracted via public bidding to repair these schools? What is the holdback with these repairs and when will the repairs finally commence?

The faction mentions the Prins Willem Alexander School in St. Peters. Last year we were all very happy when we saw work commenced at the building site in St. Peters with a wonderful groundbreaking. Since that time the project is once again frozen, as the project came to a screeching halt. The faction would like to know what happened here, why is there a building stop once again? When and what are the plans to continue with the construction works of the Prince William Alexander School? Will a name change be considered for the school and named after a local that has tirelessly worked in that field for over 30 to 40 years?

The faction would like to know if the new wing at the Sint Maarten Vocation School is operational now and are the students using the building? If no, why isn't the building still not being used and when are they planning to start using it?



Can the Minister share the results of the research regarding the SMVTS and include the objective of the research and state when it was commissioned and why? Can the Minister share when the proposals of the research will be implemented at the school and if there's a financial component to it, please elucidate where that can be found in the budget exactly and how much it is?

Can the Minister indicate what are the plans for SMVTS for the upcoming school year and is there a financial component to it? If yes, what is it and how much is it? Will the school continue as status quo or can the teachers and students look forward to the much-needed reforms that are now stuck in the pipeline?

The faction further mentions the organization for the Public schools. Can the Minister share what happened to the plans to restructure the Public schools into a public entity? Are these also stuck in the pipeline, and why they are stuck exactly?

Please explain when we will finally start with the implementation of these plans, and what will be the financial implications of such? Minister, what are your plans for Public schools for the coming school year? Will all the schools be repaired during the summer vacation, including the roof of the gym at the Dr. Alma Fleming-Rogers school in Belvedere?

The faction would also like to know if the much-needed school materials have been ordered for the new school year already or will the children be starting the year without the materials and students being in a disadvantageous position?

The faction mentions the school bus policy and would like to know if the Minister agrees that this is a waste of our taxpayers' money and that this needs to be regulated? Are we going to cut the budget by 2 million? Are we paying the bus driver per child or load? Why increase the amount when we don't have a school bus policy? The faction would like to know when will we see this much-needed reform in the school bus policy being implemented and what are the projected savings? Has the Ministry been able to finalize this policy? If yes, when will it be finally implemented, and if no, what is the holdup and when will we see this realized? Can we get an indication or an overview of the number of persons that are working with the Education ministry with a school bus license that is presently in operation? What does it cost the Government per month for the school bus operation?

The faction would like to know if there is still a Government feeding program in the Public schools and if yes how much funds have been allocated for such? What does the feeding program entail and who are the beneficiaries of this program?

The faction mentions vacation allowance and Government subsidized and Public schools teachers. How is it possible that Government-subsidized schools can continue to pay out vacation allowance to their teachers while Government issued the 12.5% cut resulting in half of the vacation pay in 2020 and no vacation pay in 2021? Will this continue every year while the teachers employed in the Public schools and the civil servants in the ministries have to do without? The faction would also like to know if the Minister met with the Government subsidized school boards and provide them with information on the 12.5% cut across the board? What will happen now to the NIPA board and the other government subsidized schools that may follow suit and paid out the 6% vacation allowance? Will or can there be any legal repercussions for this bold/courageous act of the NIPA board and the other government subsidized schools seeing the laws aren't legal yet? What will happen to those teachers employed in the Public schools and within the Ministry? Will they once again be punished and not receive their vacation allowance?

Has a budget post been made in the budget to grant a scholarship to the students that finish their secondary education and want to enhance their labor market skills? Think about the technical studies, the nursing field, etc.?

Why is the funding to the University of Sint Maarten so low and why isn't a teacher program established now once again seeing how many teachers we have in Sint Maarten that are of foreign origin? The faction would like to know if anything is happening in the maritime world when it comes to educational programs etc.?

When it comes to sports facilities, we only see names and figures, but we cannot back check these numbers. Can some more clarity be given on what the cost allocations are per sports facility and what they are allocated for?

The faction continues and mentions that the water usage of the public schools is extremely high. Are the cisterns still being used? Are the toilets still hooked up to cisterns or not? If not, why wasn't the project maintained?

How many AGO students do we have and who executes these tests and how often is this done per year?

What exactly is meant with *onderstand bij wijze van Pension* for an amount of NAfl. 200.000, - by the department of public education. Are the teachers not in the pension fund?

The appointment of the interim head of the DPE created a serious stir up in the community and even here in Parliament. Has the process of hiring for a permanent head started and if no, why not?

#### Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

When will the legislation for the needed SZV adjustments to ensure the coverage platform is moved to NAfl. 10 thousand guilders a month come to Parliament and what are the projected savings for the Government when it comes to the health care fund? Is the Minister working on a National Health Insurance and if yes when does the Minister believe it will reach Parliament? Is it the Ministers intention to have the airport loan turned over to SZV as the beneficiary for the collection of that loan and in return the OZR fund be cleared off for the NAfl. 100 million guilders we owe them presently?

In the budget, there is a reservation for a new car for the SG of VSA. The faction mentions that it knows the VSA received new cars and the SG is driving a new truck. So will that NAfl. 50 thousand guilders be removed?

Where in the budget can the faction find where monies have been made available to ensure the movement of the disabled by means of having disability ramps placed in certain places on the island? What legislation proposals is the Ministry working on and where reflected in the budget to ensure that their livelihood and the quality of life are properly safeguarded, instead of yearly having to go through the daunting bureaucratic process of submitting information and documents to the social affairs department when their physical impairments are irreversible?

Has an inventory been done regarding the status of the physical, social and financial aspects of the physically challenged persons so that where needed we can draft proper legislation to have these needs met, instead of the one size fits all methodology we presently apply to these persons?

The faction further mentions that the Minister stated that business cannot tell their employees to vaccinate or be fired as it is against the law. Which law is that exactly? And does it apply in this crisis situation? Will Government compensate when they lose income because their personnel is not vaccinated?

The budget post 41080 *overlijdingsuitkering* is budgeted to zero. Has this post been nullified completely and why? Is this taken up someplace else in the budget?

The faction would like an explanation as to what the budget post 43476 *Rechts- en ander deskundig advies* to the tune of NAfl. 355.000,- is being used for exactly?

The budget post 43489 "Projecten en activiteiten" went up with some NAfl. 5.655.000,-. Can we get a breakdown of what these projects entail?

The budget post 43476 "Rechts- en ander deskundig advise" is budget for NAfl. 350.000,-, while being zero last year. How many cases has the labor dept dealt with already and who are the lawyers that this type of money is going to?

The budget post 43493 "Contributie en Lidmaatschap" increased with some NAfl. 180.000,-. What is that increase for exactly? At the department of social development there NAfl. 1.095.000,- allotted for projects and activities. Can we receive a breakdown of these projects?

At the Department of Social Services, the budget post 43489 00013 Projects and activities have a significant increase and is now standing at some NAfl. 8.630.000,-. Please specify the reason for this significant increase and also please indicate which projects all are covered with this budget? Is the vector program still ongoing?

Under the heading of the Social Insurance and Medical the budget post 44210 Welfare assistance benefit has not gone up from the 6 million guilders budgeted last year and this year. Is there a reason why we left it at the 6 million? How come this post has not increased with the amount of jobless people and unemployment? What is the plan of action if it becomes a problem?

Why did the budget at collective prevention department for personnel and 3rd parties go down with over NAfl. 400.000,- while we have the pandemic still ongoing? What and who does this cover exactly?

Under budget post 43000 00013 *personeel van derden* we have an amount budgeted of some Naf 1.4 million guilders. What and who does this cover exactly? Budget post 70006 Subsidies for the AIDS foundation received a total amount of some NAfl. 1.580.000,-. An increase of some NAfl. 900.000,-. The faction would like to know what and why such a significant increase in this subsidy?

When it comes to budget post 44212 *Begrafeniskosten onvermogenen* it is budgeted at NAfl 50.000,-. Is there any reason seeing the serious issues we have economically that we believe this amount will be enough? Will this be enough money to help?

The faction mentions that on July 31, 2021, the free vaccination comes to an end and would like to know if any funds have been allocated to do vaccines after the 31<sup>st</sup> of July or is everyone responsible? if so what is the cost? How many persons are projected to have been vaccinated by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 and how close will this be to herd immunity?

Is it now clear if vaccinated persons can transmit the virus or not? What is the added value to reach herd immunity if you can still transmit the disease? The awareness campaign has to address if you can transmit the virus if you are fully vaccinated.

When it comes to the Mental Health Foundation and their new building to properly give service to the needs of the country, where can the faction see the needed assistance in the budget, or has the Minister asked the World Bank through the steering committee to make a grant available to build such a center for the foundation on lands to be made available by the Government?

When it comes to Turning Point how much funds have been made available seeing that containers are being made available to be placed at Turning Point to execute crisis care around the clock? How do we foresee that we are going to run the crisis center we are going to have to pay for the needed nurses and physiatrist to handle such? Is there any money allocated to handle those additional services in crisis care?

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Can the Minister provide a copy of the study, no matter how short or long, which led to the conclusion that Sint Maarten could potentially generate 52 million dollars in its economy as a result of homeporting for 3 months? Can we get an indication of how many jobs would be created or people will be put back to work with homeporting and how much tax revenue this will bring into the government coffers?

When it comes to the multi-annual prognosis of our economic recovery we realize that in 2021 a meager 3% economic growth is projected. Does the Minister stand by this number even though homeporting is to bring in US\$52 million dollars, more airlift is already in progress and the hotels are doing much better business than was anticipated? Can the Minister indicate what the Minister believes it will be in reality seeing the present economic activity and the Minister's background?

The Government was just allotted several new cars through a purchase by the World Bank. Many of the older ones are still usable for at least a year. The faction would like to know why we are reserving NAfl. 550.000,- for 11 new vehicles in capital expenses for this year when we hardly have funds to survive this year?

The faction continues and mentions that the vendors on the Walter Nisbeth are being told they must move by July 1, 2021 and go into the Festival Village. Their present vending permit cost then NAfl. 1200,- per year. The cost for a spot at the Festival Village will cost them between US\$ 500,- to US\$600,- per month on rent. How does the Government expect these persons/vendors to survive and has the Government made any funds available on the budget to support them for the transition to the Festival Village and rental payments for the 1<sup>st</sup> year seeing the situation of the economy? What exactly is understood under the vendors village development and where is this village located?

How exactly is the casino income calculated as the faction noticed that we are to collect NAfl. 2.23 million for 13 casino's in 2021? Will the Government review the methodology of the manner in how we tax the casinos? The faction mentions the reservation of NAfl. 250.000,- as a subsidy for the gaming board establishment that we have been told was being worked on since 2020. This is also one of the country package tasks that need urgent attention. Is the gaming board operational or not?

The faction would also like to know where the subsidy of NAfl. 250.000,- for agriculture is going exactly and for what purpose? Is there an agriculture subsidy policy and who all can apply for it? Has the diversification study been completed and if not when do we expect it to be completed and who is carrying out the study and at what cost?

The faction inquires if the National Economic Development Plan has been completed and if not when do we expect it to be completed and who is doing the plan and at what cost?

Has the Public Transportation assessment been completed and if not when do we expect it to be completed and who is carrying out the assessment and at what cost?

The faction would like to know how many critical vacancies there are in the civil aviation department presently. How does the Ministry plan to ensure that civil aviation has its independence and can ensure that our airport will once again become a category 1 airport? Is there presently any working relationship and/or cooperation with the Curaçao Civil Aviation Authority (CCAA) in how we can get both countries back to category 1? Sint Maarten shares the (Papa Juliet) aircraft registration with Curaçao presently. How much income is yielded for this registry yearly and can a copy of said agreement be provided?

Does Sint Maarten do Ship registries and if not why not and if yes where is it done and how much revenues are derived from this yearly for the country? The faction noticed that we haven't made any sort of reservations for the cruise, yachting, and maritime industry. Why is that?

When it comes to the bureau of statistics, what exactly is received from them regarding data used in the country's economic diversification plan? Is the bureau of statistics handling the online ED card implementation? What specific researches are planned this year for the NAfl. 400.000,- reserved on budget post 43506/8250?

Has the procurement process already started for the construction of the new med office seeing the funds reserved for such in the capital budget for 2022? The faction mentions that it noticed that the BTP building purchase doesn't have a price tag. Is that to indicate that the building isn't being bought anymore or that the building belongs to the Government of Sint Maarten?

The largest cultural event on the island isn't receiving any subsidy this year. Wouldn't it be prudent to let them start their marketing from now so we can get a spectacular event in 2022?

Does the BIP generate revenue that it's capable to do or not? If not why isn't it reaching its potential? Is there a business plan? Why is BIP operating as a Government entity and not a business seeing the income potential it has? How many international registrations are there at BIP? The faction would like to receive a breakdown of how many trademarks, I-envelopes, patents, and any other intellectual properties that are currently registered at BIP?

With the closure of so many hotels in 2019 and now all being open what is the occupancy rate now with all the hotels open for the hotels themselves? The marketing budget is not realistic with the needs of the country. Why isn't a drastic change made to increase that budget post drastically? The faction believes that we seem not to accept the reality needs of the present product we have and the dilemma we have of not having more pillars.

Why can't the aspect of legislation writing be outsourced? The faction points out that SZV is doing that to ensure the needed legislation is written correctly. Maybe cooperation with the business community can be reached to write the needed legislation.

Did the Government have any involvement with Pretty Boy activities which were held on the island some time back? If yes what cost did this have in general when we think about fees, travel, hotel, meals, transportation, venue cost, etc.?

With regards to the gaming board, why isn't the priority not given to this when it's also in the country packages, it hurts our international reputation qua money laundering and it's a significant revenue generator. The faction believes that if we are going to prioritize, this should be one at the top of the list. Why isn't this done?

Is there any particular reason why the Caribbean tourism marketing amounts went down while all other marketing groups went up?

With regards to the vendors on the Walter Nisbeth, the faction would like to know what will happen on July 1, 2021. The faction mentions that Qcredits is



sitting on 35 million of which 1.2 to 1.7 million has been spent. The faction suggests that we find a vendor's location, ask Qcreditis for 150 thousand per vendor, build a location that needs to be built and the 35% that needs to be paid back can be paid back. These people were placed there by the Government.

How can the lottery booths issue be tackled? They should pay to do business just like

The faction mentions that it was mentioned that ships are registered at maritime affairs. To the factions understanding all ships are registered at Cadaster. Can the Minister give clarity as to what exactly is correct here?

Who owns the BTP building? Is it Government or is it the entity BTP? Is the asset a BTP asset or that of the Government?

Room inventory. How many rooms do we have right now that are usable? That gives an idea as to what 50% means. Then we can know how many tourists we have coming to the island.

Marketing budget. The faction believes that the Ministry has an amount of money in the budget. Has the Ministry considered money from certain places that at this point in time, marketing-wise, doesn't make any sense?

With regards to legislation, is the lottery regulation based on how you give a license or how you operate the license?

The faction mentions Governments involvement with Pretty Boy activities. What was the cost involved in this? Did we truly get a bang for our money in the venture of this Orange economy?

The faction would like to know if the Government would consider investing in the Small Soca Cruise and promoting it.

Caribbean airlines is cutting its fleet and sending home 450 people. Will this affect airlift to Sint Maarten from the south and is it not time that the Government picks up the baton and talks to the national carrier Windward Island Airways to see if they can take over some of these routes or fill some of the routes that LIAT isn't filling either at this time?

#### Ministry of General Affairs

The faction would like to know how many persons have not been hired because the Government is offering the lowest possible salary in critical jobs. When will the Government adjust the laws that will allow persons that get a new

position in Government to be paid the correct salary and not constantly be confronted with the so-called maximum 2 *tredes* (those for internal recruitment) or *aanloopschalen* that are too low?

How many persons are working in the judicial department and how many formation spaces are not filled presently creating a very serious shortfall in efficiency of judicial advice to the Government? How many positions in the personnel department are not filled presently creating a very serious shortfall in efficiency? Is the amount of persons working from home due to COVID-19 effecting the efficiency of the Government apparatus?

When it comes to the rental of spaces for the Government apparatus to function the faction mentions that it noticed that we spend about NAfl. 15 million guilders a year. Why don't we ask APS to build another building and parking lot and make about 5 million a year available to pay back the loan + interest over a period of 20 years and own our own building and save easily some 150 to 200 million guilders or about 15 million per year?

The faction points out that the *Bezoldiging en toelagen directie Veiligheid* budget post 2090/41001 and 2090/41019 have gone up significantly. Why is that?

The faction noticed that there are many expenses being made in the capital budget when it relates to ICT equipment and systems. What exactly was/is the digitalization of the Government apparatus exactly covering in the Trust Fund program named; Sint Maarten Digital Government Transformation project?

What exactly has the NAfl. 3.5 million reserved for in the capital expenses for ICT been designated for? There are many expenses related to the VDSM in the capital budget. The faction noticed that 2 office spaces have been needed and a lot of ICT is needed. Why is this exactly?

There are various *commissie vergoedingen* (committee stipends) paid to different councils. What are these exactly? Nearly all the funds for courses and training have been removed this year. Don't the employees need to be schooled especially if we are going to digitalize the Government? Or are there funds allocated elsewhere for such?

The faction states that the Appeals Court decided that dismissal at the age of 60 years as mentioned in the CLA is in violation of the law, as the legal

pension age has been increased to 62 in 2016. Based on case law making a distinction between persons based on age is illegal and forbidden, unless there is an objective justification to do so. (HR 13 januari 1995 and HR 8 oktober 2004). The Appeals Court is of the opinion that in this case there is no objective justification for age discrimination. The Appeals Court concludes that the pension clause (age 60) as applied by Telem is therefore null and void. At present persons are being told they cannot afford them in the company so they cannot work until 65 years as the law of the country states for the AOV and Government employees. What is the Government's position on these types of matters? Can the Minister verify why APS isn't presently paying out the vacation allowance to the ex-civil servants or is there also a change in that policy by means of the law?

Budget post 43010 states "SLA, Contract, and Licenses" and is budgeted for NAfl. 3.126.422,- . Can clarification be given as to which SLA's, licenses, and contracts are covered under this budget? Budget post 43515 "huurvoertuigen" is budgeted for Naf 170.000,-. Why do we need this amount when we just got so many cars from the Trust fund? In the budget post of PNO no. 41039 *Retroactieve uitkering* went down with some 68%. The faction would like to know if this entails that there's no plan to pay all the *uitkeringen*?

The faction would further like to know if there is any clarity about what we didn't live up to in regards to the 6<sup>th</sup> tranche? The faction would like to clarify regarding if the tax reform will be paid by country Sint Maarten directly from our capital expenses and the money placed in the COHO from the DPO will be put in the Trust Fund and eventually all programs that have been funded, if monies remain that can be for the tax reform. Is that what was said? Can we see the breakdown of the Trust Fund amounts that were allocated versus spent? The faction mentions that maybe we should review the 35 million dollars that were made available for the microloans. If only 1.7 million paid out thus far, it says that maybe the norms to get to this money is too high and eventually the money will be sent back.

What advice are we requesting regarding TelEm if the verdict of the judge is based on the law? If they are not going to adhere to the law, why have a law? When does the Prime Minister expect to get this advice?

Is the Prime Minister aware of a letter of June 11, 2021, to the Minister of ECYS informing him regarding the lack of clarity and transparency with regards to the motives, legality, and the implementation of the requested cuts to the

employee benefits by 12,5%? How do you tell the other civil servants that they can't get their pay?

**The Party for Progress faction** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions.

Ministry of Finance

The faction points out that in the Explanatory Notes, there is mention made of NAfl. 5 million being held back in the event the Constitutional Court rules against the three-cost-cutting condition national ordinances. Still, there's no indication of where this is being held back in the Budget. Would this be in *Onvoorzien Uitgaven*, which reflects a 700% budgeted increase of NAfl. 5 million, or is it found at some other post?

Can the Minister elucidate a bit on the 182% increase in bank costs under the Ministry of Finance?

How many applications were received for the vacancies published in March 2021? Have any other actions, other than vacancies being published in local media, been taken to fill the critical vacancies at the tax office, for example?

Regarding Parliament's budget under *Gewone Dienst Uitgaven*, for *Ondersteuning en Griffie*, under *Rechts en Ander Deskundig Advies*, there is an increase in the budgeted amount of 225%, from NAfl. 100,000 to NAfl. 325,000. However, in the Explanatory Notes, there is no accounting for this increase. Can the Minister expand on what this increase is related to precisely?

Regarding the ICT equipment and investments mentioned in the Explanatory Notes, what is Government's usual approach to acquiring ICT equipment, software licenses, etc.? Because eventually, especially equipment becomes obsolete, so is Government investigating lease agreements that would lead to cost savings in the long-term? This ties in a bit with what MP Wescot-Williams asked regarding Government's digitization plan. Throughout the Budget, different posts are noted regarding software and anti-virus license costs, but it seems very ad-hoc and sort of every Ministry for themselves.

The faction further mentions that section 4 of article 4 states that the Minister of Finance can mandate SZV to decide on his behalf. What is the definition of decisions in this sense, and if it only pertains to the SSRP and liquidity support?

The faction also mentions article 5 of this National Ordinance. It seems to be contradicting itself. If the Constitution is read, then this article cannot be passed as is. Why is there no explanation of what qualifies the urgency in this Budget as a *spoedeisend belang*, and why was this not taken up in the explanatory memorandum of the budget National Ordinance? When we look at article 127 of the Constitution that regulates the urgency, the law is very clear. If there is a case of urgency, this cancels out the authority of the Ombudsman. Article 5 of the draft budget says the opposite, and it goes even further. The faction would like some clarity on this.

It is not practical to put a condition within a National Ordinance based on uncertainty. In this case, the verdict of the Constitutional Court, which we cannot anticipate. It is also not practical to mention that the enforcement will be partially dependent on the advice of the Cft, especially if we haven't received this advice yet. As Members of Parliament pass this law, it leaves room for a lot of interpretation and uncertainty about what will happen.

#### Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

The faction would like to know if there are any priorities regarding policy creation? Concerning the VROMI ordinance, in this regard, what will happen to the other ordinances? What else can we expect in this VROMI law? Will there be a section for land, one for inspection and one for permits? Will this same law also have to regulate the abilities of the Minister and then also regulate the building code?

A landfill weighbridge was purchased, approved by COM and paid for, and was supposed to be delivered by a company. The faction would like to know the status. Have we received it, and are we using it?

In regards to the spatial development strategy, is this in connection with the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI)? Or has that come to a stop?

The faction further queries the status of the suspended Secretary-General? Is the Secretary-General still suspended, and if so, how long has he been suspended for, and has he been receiving pay all this time?

The faction mentions the garbage tender and has the following questions. Did the procedure go per the departmental procedures? Who were all in the evaluation committee? Can the Minister provide the final evaluation report? Did VROMI use any external expertise when drafting the Terms of Reference and formulating the requirements and the point evaluation system? In the Terms of Reference, each parcel must have two garbage trucks per parcel; we can see that this is not the case. What is the infrastructure management department doing about this? Are these contractors going to be held in default?

With regards to the *diensten* can the Minister confirm that the list that Parliament received in the Budget, if this list is the most recent list of companies who are in possession of Government contracts for solid waste collection, district cleaning, or other services. Did the evaluation committee only consist of civil servants in the Ministry of VROMI? What are the Ministry's plans for over the bank property and what is going to be the status of the prospective long leaseholders who received a signed and stamped signed draft decree by the then Minister?

#### Ministry of Justice

The faction mentions budget post 5202 – 43421, *Voeding/Meals*, and states that much was said about 2020's meal costs, but there is an increase to NAfl. 600,000 under this post. Can the Minister on this? Minister, the faction is aware that the Ministry of Justice is not revenue-generating but elsewhere in the world. If you take a look at the French Side, there are sometimes quotas set for collecting fines, etc., for violations controlled by the police. The faction would like to know if this is an area that the Minister has been investigating?

The faction recalls that CFATF had several recommendations and requirements regarding our capacity to comply, for example, at the MOT, etc. Where in the budget 2021 has this consideration been taken up for supplying these critical vacancies?

#### Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

The faction mentions five budget posts related to Projects and Activities for the Department of Sports, three of them showing substantial increases in their budgeted expense amounts. However, in the Explanatory Notes, no actual plan or policy is referencing how these budgeted amounts may be spent. For example, under Development of National Teams, we see an increase from NAfl. 200,000 to NAfl. 400,000, but nothing in the Explanatory Notes under policy priorities that would facilitate the development of national team-level athletes across various sports. Can the Minister expand on this, please?

The task of the NSI is the execution of sports programs and management and maintenance of the sports facilities. What is the Ministry's plan for the Great Bay Sports Auditorium? This ties into the lack of policy priorities I saw with regards to sports in the Explanatory Notes.

Under *Dienstverlenings Overeenkomsten*, Minister, there are a few annual amounts that the faction would like some clarity on, namely, the amounts listed for the University of Curaçao, USC Foundation in the Netherlands, St. Maarten Tallahassee Foundation, *Begeleiders* Nederland, *Begeleider* Curaçao, *Begeleider* Aruba, and *Begeleider* Tallahassee, as well as several private citizens who are on this list. Are these numbers realistic? Are these people being paid? Because if not, then the faction questions the inclusion of these posts and amounts in the Budget.

The faction would like to receive the documents regarding the sports policy, the program of requirements policy regarding the subsidy program. Could we receive the NSI annual plan? Regarding the amounts earmarked for certain organizations in the Netherlands and the US, are the funds being used?

#### Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

The faction would like clarity on the budget post *diverse vergoedingen en toelagen* in the Minister's cabinet.

In total, an increase of NAfl. 900,000 guilders for Rechts en Ander Deskudig Advies. The faction would like to know what kind of legal expertise are we talking about?

The budgeted post for *projecten en activiteiten* increased from 2020 at NAfl. 8.3 million guilders NAfl. 22.8 million guilders in 2021. The faction would like clarity on this big amount. Can the Minister provide a specification as to what

we see as future *projecten en activiteiten*? Why couldn't some of this be allocated to another Ministry?

#### Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

The faction mentions the critical projects outlined in the Ministry's policy priorities such as the review of the business license database and tax collection agreement with Airbnb. Are there any timelines attached to these? Will the business license database cleanup and other projects at Economic Affairs also include procedure or workflow link to the department of Domain Affairs in VROMI?

Regarding agencies hired for our various target markets. What type of review or evaluation process is in place for these international marketing services providers? Is there a channel open to receive feedback from stakeholders operating in those markets to ensure that our tourism marketing dollars are well spent? Are we going to measure the impact of the agencies we select?

The faction would also like to know if there is an incoming tax for yachts and boats that come to moor here at the private docks especially those at residence over Government long lease water parcels?

The faction mentions that the Minister spoke of the Orange economy and explained the benefits for the island and our tourism product. Can the Minister provide her opinion on the matter of locals not receiving compensation for performances conducted? Did the aforementioned record label receive funds from the Government? If yes, how much? And were they supposed to compensate the local artist from these funds? Considering the funds budgeted for marketing and promotion what can be done to ensure the local artist don't get a similar situation in the future?

#### Ministry of General Affairs

The faction would like to know what are Government's plan for assets such as the former fire brigade building and the old administration building. The SER appears in the budget but essentially inactive. Is there an update and are they able to function?

So to clarify, the SER should be able to operate, so all pending advice requests have been or will be forwarded to them for handling? The faction also requested the answers from Prime Minister in writing to gain clarification regarding the ICT planning for equipment.



**The United Democrats faction** has taken note of the draft with interest and has the following questions and remarks as it pertains to this national ordinance.

Ministry of Finance

The faction mentions that this budget has been long in the making. As a general observation, the Cft and the Council of Advice have been very critical of the draft budget for 2021. The Council of Advice experienced it as a decline in budgets presented, *achteruitgang*. There is a serious lack of synchronization between the numbers in the budget, the policies identified, and the governing program.

The faction mentions the revival of the Mortgage guarantee fund. Please explain the objective of the mortgage guarantee fund. What is that bigger housing vision of the Government that would necessitate that mortgage guarantee fund? What is Government's intention with the EDC? How was the budget put together? English and Dutch languages are being used or translated into Dutch.

The faction would like the Minister to provide an overview with respect to the financial administration of Parliament. This was requested and received in the past, the faction would like an update on this.

Can the Minister provide some kind of substantiation and motivation on the following items under COVID-19 related cost? Explain the approximately 128 mil guilders COVID-19 related cost e.g. subsidy for SMMC, amount estimated for the food voucher program, additional support for CPS, PPEs, quarantine facility and testing material, the vaccination program, based on what are these items estimated to this amount?

The faction mentions the 161 vacancies (*formatieplaatsen*) mentioned by Cft. What is the current situation with respect to the vacancies taken up in the draft budget 2021? If the numbers mentioned by Cft are not correct, what are the correct numbers for vacancies now in this draft budget 2021 per ministry?

With regards to the cost-cutting ordinances. The faction mentions that an amount of 5 million guilders have been estimated in the event the decision by Constitutional Court on the cost-cutting ordinances submitted by the Ombudsman makes it necessary to refund what is already taking place. Please explain the basis of the NAfl. 5 million guilders.

Please provide proof of the reduced subsidies for subsidized entities by 10% that fall under the cost-cutting ordinances. What is the intention of these measures have to be revised?

Provide an explanation of these proposed capital projects. What is the basis for these estimates? Provide an explanation on the post. What is the overall digitalizing strategy of the Government? Is there such?

Is the Minister aware of recent comments by persons that it has been stated that the next pandemic is going to be a digital pandemic? Is the Minister familiar with this comment by international digital experts? The money that is being estimated for automation, digitalization what is Government's overall plan? What is the Government thinking of when it comes to digitalization?

The faction mentions that the Minister mentioned fiscal development and the direction tax reform should take. The faction has not seen any specifics. What does the Minister say regarding specific items of tax reform, administration, organization, and the system? Where is the synchronization between what the budget says it wants to do and what the government put forward to the people of Sint Maarten, the governing program and the implementation agenda? The faction mentions the motion about homeownership. Where are they now?

Can the Minister provide a status update on the national workforce development program? What has it cost so far and what has it yielded?

The faction mentions Annex 2A of the budget. Please explain what this is. The faction believes that it deserves a more prominent place in the budget. Those are the issues that the Government will be executing on the basis of this budget. What is Annex 2A considered to be?

With regards to the Trust Fund and the projects that are being financed and that are to be financed. It has been stated that no new projects should be initiated. Can Government provide Parliament with an update as to where things stand right now? The faction would like the Minister to provide that same connectivity in the issue of casinos. In 2021 the Minister expects to collect 4.9 million in terms of casino fees. In 2020 only 1.7 million was realized. What is under regular circumstances the amount collected per year? What is the projected income of casinos based on the number of casinos on the island etc.?

Does the Minister have any financial, but especially economic, insights of the first half of 2021 to give an indication if the information from the IMF is accurate?

Provide insights on really what is happening here on Sint Maarten where our economic recovery is cornered.

With respect to the matter of when this 2021 budget will go into effect. There was a very strange combination of urgency and going through the Constitutional Court. The Council of Advice mentioned this and the Government agreed and amended it. This has not changed. In how far is the responses to the Council of Advice that they are correct with comments and remarks and have the Government adjusted it? In how far have these adjustments really taken place and will Government adjust that?

Please clarify where the financing for the incorporation of the country package is in this budget 2021?

The faction continues and mentions loans and loan conditions and the possibility that the loans (from the Netherlands) can be made into grants in 2022. What are the conditions of these loan agreements to make it possible? What would Government have to do to make the loans into grants in 2022?

Has the plan of approach financial management been actualized? What is this actualized plan of approach financial management, and can it be shared with the Parliament?

Subsidized entities falling under the 12.5% measure, the Government has cut 10% of these subsidies. Can the Minister confirm that this indeed has been done? Provide proof of the cut of 10% from subsidized entities, that fall under the cost-cutting ordinances.

With regards to the *10% contribution pension political authorities*, how will the 10% pension contribution of political office-holders be legally embedded and how will it go into effect?

The faction would like to know if it understood the Minister correctly that there is no need to tap into the 5<sup>th</sup> tranche for salaries and the like for this month

end? Does this mean that Government has sufficient funds separate from the 5<sup>th</sup> tranche to pay salaries for this month?

Based on what was the 39 million guilders calculated by Cft based on? What did the Cft calculate to advise that the fifth tranche for the second quarter amount to 39 million guilders? Did the Cft propose liquidity assistance to include more than just the bare minimum than what Government needs to comply with per month? Are other creditors for the Government included?

How soon will the evaluation of Government-owned companies be provided to Parliament? How recent is this information and were government-owned companies evaluated?

With regards to the proposed capital expenditures, the Minister referred to the *getallenboek* page 75 of the budget, however, the elucidation is not listed in the *getallenboek* for example ITC equipment and the like is not explained, in terms of capital projects.

The faction mentions that the implementation agenda talks about an internal investigation within Government-owned companies and semi-government entities to see if they are meeting their objectives. Does that mean that we have an investigation/research being carried out? If this is the case, would this not be a cost for Government and where would such a cost reflect in the budget? Where do we find these types of matters back in the budget?

Parliament's financial administration: the Minister referred to the *Griffier*, however, the finance department is better to provide this information rather than the secretariat of Parliament. The faction states that the financial administration of Parliament is not at Parliament.

#### Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

The faction mentions the matter of a general VROMI ordinance. Is this feasible? If the general VROMI ordinance is feasible, within what period of time does the Minister think this draft general VROMI ordinance will get to Parliament? And what about the changes in the different ordinances that are urgent? Are all of these changes awaiting this general VROMI ordinance?

The Minister has presented an ear and eyes full. Given the budget received and the very limited amount of finances for capital projects within VROMI, provide what are the plans and projects achievable in 2021 and 2022? Capital funding, what can be done with regards to priority projects that can be initiated in 2021.

It is stated in the budget that with respect to solid waste management, a strategy has to be developed: what is the strategy for solid waste? Is there a solid waste strategy for Sint Maarten for the landfill?

Can the Minister confirm that the building code will be upgraded? Draft ordinance (building code) what period of time will this ordinance be completed.

The faction would like to know on the basis of what points of departure will the SLA with Nature foundation be upgraded. What is the vision? With regards to the intention to upgrade nature and environment plans; what is feasible and achievable with these intended upgrades?

With regards to the enforcement of the different policies/laws and the lack of transportation and human resources, provide an update regarding the different laws and ordinances and address the matter raised regarding the car wrecks on the island.

Regarding economic recovery on investments public and private, the faction mentions SMMC and PJIA. Where it pertains to private investments, can the Minister indicate what is on his desk from the perspective of building permits, etc?

What solid waste management strategy is this? Can the Minister answer in the context of NRPB funding.

Can the Minister confirm that the demolition includes the old Government building and post office? Are there any other buildings to be demolished and how quickly can the old Government building be demolished?

Is there any additional subsidy involved with the new SLA being prepared for the Nature Foundation? The faction would further like to know what the development is that seemingly is coming in the area of Little Bay and pond?

What are the Minister's plans for car wrecks removal if any? And if, so how quickly will the Ministry resume the project of removing the car wrecks on the island?

#### Ministry of Justice

The faction would firstly like to know if the elucidation as provided in the budget received regarding justice from the hand of the Ministry of Justice?

A letter regarding vehicle theft and motor vehicle registration on Sint Maarten was sent to the Minister of Justice. Can the Minister provide the answers to the questions in this letter in the Minister's response?

Can the Minister indicate as to if, and if so what and how is the Minister thinking about implementing the law on the ban on single-use plastic bag Styrofoam and straws that should go into effect July 1, 2021? What is the status of this law as passed by Parliament? Was the law ratified by the Government?

Can the Minister explain the process, status, and discussions regarding the 6.5 million mentioned in the budget for the construction of a new prison for Sint Maarten? Where does this fit in the overall discussion with UNOPS for the prison? What is the Government's part of it what is UNOPS's part of it?

Does the Law school program fall under the Ministry of Justice and if yes what is the status thereof?

In the elucidation a list of ordinances to be changed and amended are mentioned, can the Minister give a rundown on the basis for these amendments?

What is the current immigration repatriation policy (changes, strategy) on immigration repatriation? Can the Minister provide figures on these?

In the capital budget of the Justice Ministry mention is made of 3.4 million guilders for new equipment; please provide clarity on this post.

With regards to law enforcement the faction mentions that in the elucidation mention is made of across-the-board policy, animation girls will be reviewed. What is the thinking and the rationale behind this?

Can the Minister go more in debt regarding the going into effect of the single-use plastic bag ban? July 1<sup>st</sup> is the effective date, what are the thoughts of the Ministry of the going into effect date changing to the date mentioned of September?

The faction queries if the amendments proposed to the Minister of Finance, have to do with its question regarding a Government-wide policy for animation girls? When the Minister indicated proposed changes to the elucidation, what exactly was this? What is the amendment on?

The faction would like the Minister to provide a little more in debt information regarding the issue of car theft, who are the stakeholders? Can the Minister give more content to the answer what is the minister planning and doing regarding this?

Where would the Minister say that things stand now with respect to the agreement with the Netherlands regarding detention facilities on Sint Maarten? Is there a program according to which the Minister is working with the Netherlands? If this is the case, where are we now? Is the Minister of Justice up to date with respect to agreements with the Netherlands regarding detention facilities on the island?

#### Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

The faction would like to know what the intention is of the Charles Leopold Bell school? Please explain the whole situation of making it part of the Leonard Connor school and the repairs of the schools. Please explain projects that the Ministry can continue with or initiate in 2021.

The faction would like to know the Minister's thoughts on the creative arts. What are some of the ideas that the Ministry has in the context of our youths? Is the Ministry thinking of anything new with regards to the creative arts for our children? The faction indicates that space is not enough to cater to the number of children making use of the NIA. Is the Ministry thinking about talking about other ways of promoting the creative arts? What is the sentiment of the Minister on this matter?

Can the Minister explain more in-depth the issues of transfer from the calamity account, in terms of how much, etc.? The faction mentions the Integrated youth policy 2020-2025, the potential risk that the Ministry will

encounter, cross ministries collaborations; what of these ideas and plans in terms of the Minister's policies for the youth are translated into executable items in the budget? Can the policy be shared with Parliament?

### Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

The faction has the following questions regarding the Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor. Please provide data on requests and grants for, Medical assistance, Financial assistance, foreign work permits. What is the status of the annual indexation of the minimum wage? Where are we with the Health Information System (HIS)? What is the general health of the country? What is the subsidy to the St. Maarten Medical Center based on?

What are the VSA projects awaiting Trust Fund approval?

Is the Community Resilience project in any way related to the R4CR project financed by the Dutch Government?

What is Government's take on the NHI? Where is this matter currently at? What concrete steps will be taken in the short term?

The faction would like to know the percentage is of uninsured persons on Sint Maarten? What is the Government's action in the area of Mental health? Is there a Mental Health policy?

What are the urgent legislations required for our social security funds to keep these afloat? Where are these draft legislation at?

With respect to the question regarding medical assistance and financial assistance, work permits and social assistance, can the Minister be more specific as to this information? How many in 2019, how many in 2020 and 2021?

The faction would like to know where are we right now with the matter of the indexation of the minimum wage.

Expenditures relating to COVID-19 for 2021 totaling in this budget 127 million guilders. Provide a specification of the items. On the basis of what did these estimates come into play? What is the basis of these numbers?



Can the Minister confirm that there has been consultation with the stakeholders regarding the NHI, went through the vetting and the final draft law for a national health insurance is on the Minister's desk now? Is that what was put forward in the presentation by the minister?

The faction mentions Mental Health. What is the Ministry doing, if anything, with respect to mental health right now, while working on the policy? What is being done about mental health on Sint Maarten? Is the Ministry getting information from the field? Is there anything happening from a Government's perspective?

What are the current legislations required for our social security funds to keep afloat and where are these legislations at?

What is the status of the tripartite consultations? Is that body still operational, if yes, what are the main points being addressed by the Ministry in the setting of the tripartite consultation?

Can the Minister get and give a very clear response on the matter of mandatory or not vaccination by businesses? What is the Ministry's position and what is legally correct?

With regards to the policy with respect to assistance for burial cost, the faction has the following question. Considering what the Government assists persons with as far as burial cost is concerned, does the Minister not think there is a need to review the current policy for burial cost?

#### Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport, and Telecommunication

The faction mentions the creative arts and the many struggling organization whose task and objective it is to assist our young people in maximizing and channeling their talents. Isn't it remarkable that an island like Sint Maarten, after all of these years, doesn't speak of a Blue economy? Has the Minister given this matter any thought at all?

The faction would like to make sure that arrival figures year to date is from January to May. And the comparisons with 2019 and 2020 are the same period of a year to date. Can the Minister confirm this?

The faction would like to know how much of what the Ministry would like to do is in the budget 2021? Which of these items are reflected in the national budget 2021 for the Ministry? Are there any plans that the Government/Ministry is collaborating on with respect to Philipsburg? Any attention being paid to the marketplace, the vendors? What is the Ministry's involvement regarding the vendors on the ring road?

Regarding the demolition of at least two buildings in Philipsburg. Is the Ministry aware of any plans or collaborations? The budget goes out from IMF economic predictions for 2021, does the Ministry have any indicators that would substantiate this prediction by the IMF? Can the Ministry present any indication as to what the economic effects are of the measures taken in the public sector? What has the cuts in the public sector done to the economy of Sint Maarten? Specifically where it pertains to buying power and consumption.

The faction would like to know if the Ministry is aware of any major investments coming online to booster the economy of Sint Maarten. If so, what are these? Any concessions being asked from the Government?

With regards to the promotion of the destination, what is our larger recovery strategy? The Government speaks of a recovery plan, but no measures for this recovery plan are reflected in the budget. What are we mandating with this budget? What of the Ministers economic recovery plan is reflected in the budget 2021? What is the Ministry's involvement with the items in the country package and implementation agenda for Sint Maarten?

Where do proposals coming from a Ministry in particular, such as a tax revenue, relate to the country package and also the economic items in the country package? The faction is concerned that these are plans that are going to be plans developed by others to be executed by us.

The faction would like the Minister to provide the economic assessment for the homeporting, with regards to 52 million being yielded in 13 weeks. What sectors on Sint Maarten stand to benefit and to what amount from the amount that was quoted? Or was this just a general homeporting report, or was it specific for Sint Maarten? Do we have any Sint Maarten specific information regarding homeporting?

The faction would like to be updated with regards to the payment on the outstanding to TelEm. Does this have to do with the agreement signed between BTP and TelEm? What is the situation regarding the BTP building? The intention was to buy it we understood? Has this intention been dropped? The rental and offices occupying that building, what is the status there?

Where do we stand in attempting to get back to Cat 1 status?

The faction would like to know what the bottlenecks are for MSMEs? Does the Minister have any information from the ESP, in terms of what applicants have been facing? What has that program prompted the Ministry of TEATT to do with respect to the MSME sector? Please provide the MSME policy.

What are the plans to revive the EDC based on? With what intentions are we looking at the EDC? The faction would like the Minister to provide the country's investment guide. What is the current investment guide?

The faction would like an overview of existing, pending, operational and dormant casino licenses, their payments, and their outstanding. Also, lottery licenses, how many, dormant, payments, etc., etc. Can the Minister substantiate receipt of NAfl. 4.9 million guilders from casinos and the like?

What are the plans and steps for regulating the gaming industry (gaming control board).

Since February 2019, has the Government undertaken any action regarding the Timeshare Ordinance? What has the Government done with respect to this law that is there, passed by Parliament but not ratified by Government because of the reaction of the Governor? Does the Government even think it is necessary to have any type of regulations regarding Timeshare? Or is that not really something we should occupy ourselves with at this time? Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the Timeshare Ordinance?

What are the (further) elements of the COVID 19 recovery strategy? "Work from Home on St. Maarten" still feasible?

Has what is written in the budget in the explanatory notes come from the hand of the Ministry of TEATT?

Can the Minister give an update on where things stand today with the Princess Juliana International Airport etc. etc. ? What about the airport financing? Is more needed due to inflation and for operation as stated in the budget? Please substantiate.

The faction mentions the Blue economy. What is the objective of the Ministry for the blue economy? Is it to come to an understanding or policy? The discussion that has started, what is the Ministries' objective with starting this discussion?

With regards to the Orange economy, from an economic point of view, does the Government have a policy? Are the different activities that Government has encouraged and supported based on a policy? What are these based on?

Can the SME policy be shared with Parliament? Provide clarification in terms of the Government having contracted someone or persons to provide support to small enterprises. Who has the Government contracted? Is it from within the Government or someone/persons who use to be in Government and is now taken on by the Ministry to give this guidance?

Does the Minister have any updated information regarding the location of the old Administration Building, parking lot, and old Post office area? Can the Minister share this information?

The faction would like to know what the status is regarding the tax holiday laws? What is happening in the area of tax holidays? Is there any interest in tax holidays or other initiatives by the Ministry to attract investments?

The faction would like to know if it understood correctly that fiscal reform work has been outsourced.

Is it Government's intention to purchase the BTP building or rent the building? Is Government still seeking to purchase this building or will other arrangements be made?

The faction would like to know if there is some type of timeline with regards to the gaming board and if this matter also dependent on the availability or not of finances?

Where does the matter of the Timeshare legislation stand right now? Did the faction understand correctly that a letter has been sent to the Joint Court of Justice but at the same time the Ministry has approved to have this law translated into Dutch?

The economic recovery plan, in the Ministry's discussion, has there ever been any discussion in conjunction with Foreign Affairs what about Sint Maarten to the US; to reciprocate service under this very old treaty?

The faction would like to know when the population census is planned for realistically? Is this already planned?

Is there already a plan for the Philipsburg market area and is it just a matter of money? Is this correct? What is the matter of the public bathrooms at the marketplace at this time? Are these restrooms now useable and in use?

### Ministry of General Affairs

The faction mentions the Country package and Implementation agendas and would like to know when the meeting on the country package and implementation agendas will take place?

With regards to Kingdom relations. What is the Government's position on the relationship of Sint Maarten within the Kingdom? What is the current status we hold within the Kingdom of the Netherlands?

What is the government's strategy with regards to digitalization of the Government's administration? Can the Government be specific and provide targets and a timeline?

The faction mentions the TWO which is the predecessor of the COHO. The faction would like to be provided with insight into how this relationship works at the moment? TWO organization, how exactly does it function? How are the different studies and evaluations done? How are they sourced? How does this work, especially the preliminary work in terms of the implementation agenda that relates to the country package?

With regards to capital expenditures automation, the faction has the following questions. What of the Country Package/implementation agenda is reflected in the draft budget 2021? Can these be broken down? Under which would these fall? If there is such a strategy under what will they fall?

In this listing of priority appear the following items which were part of this governing program, review of organic laws, Kingdom laws, electoral law and policies. Do AZ legislative priorities include the review of all organic laws, the kingdom laws, and the review of the electoral law and policies, as per the NA/UP Governing Program?

The faction mentions that the amount of 161 vacancies proposed to be filled, is a misconception; what is the total amount of vacancies that the budget seeks to fill? And what is the cost?

With regards to the decision to release the 39 million guilders for the 5<sup>th</sup> tranche, did that particular letter, the one that it is alleged that the Government of Sint Maarten made it known in general and pertaining to the airport, did it ever reach the State Secretary? The letter of February 20<sup>th</sup> did it ever go to the State Secretary? If yes, the statement of the State Secretary would that not have been untrue? What exactly were those proposals? Was it / is it the proposal of the Government to change the structure of the corporate governance council and change it into a foundation and give them more say over the airport? Please share this letter with Parliament. Would it not be so that the State Secretary was not completely forthcoming with the plans that Sint Maarten had planned to take? Are these not the same plans in the letter?

Please explain Government's stance on corporate governance in Government-owned companies in general.

Does Government maintain that it is more prudent to persist with the illegal application of the cost-cutting laws than await the outcome by the Constitutional Court?

Please provide the list of legislative priorities.

Government-owned companies. Can the Minister provide the report from the task force? With regards to the position of the shareholder of Government-owned companies, what is the vision or responsibility between the relevant minister and the COM? What decisions lie with the shareholder Rep. (the relevant minister)?

The faction would like to know if it is still so that no communication has been had with Sint Maarten regarding the actual payment of the 5<sup>th</sup> tranche. In the last Kingdom Council of Ministers, the issue of the 6<sup>th</sup> tranche was discussed. Is the Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance aware of what are the conditions for the 6<sup>th</sup> tranche?

With respect to the matter of the advice from the Council of State on the draft COHO law, the faction would like to know if any further discussion has taken place between the Governments of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten and

the State Secretary in terms of formulating the response of the Governments to the advice of the Council of State.

**The Independent Member Emmanuel** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions and remarks.

Ministry of Justice

Why is that there no sort of collection in the budget at the tune of 0 for the Douane and Immigration? Is the Minister aware that the terminal ferry in Marigot is not operational? If the ferry in Marigot is not operational, where are the boats from Anguilla docking now? Can the Minister indicate how many immigration officers are stationed where those ferries are coming in? Can the Minister outline the operational cost for the immigration at said locations? What is the Minister's idea to facilitate where immigration officers and douane can bring money into the country instead of zero? Is there a building in those locations that the immigration is operating from? Can the Minister explain in detail the procedure for a Member of Parliament to request and acquire a gun permit/license?

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport

The faction indicates that out of all the Government subsidized institutions, the University of St. Maarten is budgeted for the smallest amount at 1.6 million guilders. What is the financial position of USM currently? What are the shortcomings that are still negatively affecting the institution? Has the institution been fully repaired from damaged cause by hurricane Irma? Have all classes fully resumed at USM? What are the enrollment numbers at USM presently and how many study financing students attend USM?

Can the Minister clarify that the subsidized schools will not implement the 12,5% cut?

How many students from Sint Maarten are on study financing currently? Please list amounts and countries of study. Is Government up to date with all student scholarship payments? If yes, what is the total amount paid out for subsidies? If not, please explain why not.

Tangible Cultural Heritage, Tracking of Cultural Goods, and Promoting Culture Nationally all have budgetary increases for a total of 337 thousand

guilders in the budget. Please explain what each of these activities are and what they entail and what 337 thousand guilders will be used for? Please explain what past activities the Culture Department has undertaken in the context of the aforementioned and what these results were. How much budget was actually spent on these three areas over the past two years? What successes can be claimed? Please provide an update on the Philipsburg Jubilee Library Building. What and who comprises the Cultural Development Foundation and what warrants a budget of 118 thousand guilders for this foundation? The faction would like to know what exactly the task is of this foundation and what have been its activities to date.

The Integrated Youth Policy implementation is budgeted for 230 thousand guilders. Has anything from this aging policy been implemented? Please provide a list as well as the plans for further implementation in 2021. What are the priority areas for the implementation of this policy?

The faction indicates that the Development of National Sports Teams is budgeted for 400 thousand guilders, which is an increase of 200 thousand guilders. Please explain which sports teams are meant to be developed and what activities are being undertaken to support The Development of National Sports Teams.

The faction would like to know if the Minister has started a recruitment process for a permanent head of DPE? If not, when will this process begin? If yes, please explain if internal and/or external vacancy ads went out. Are there teacher shortages going into the new school year? If yes, please detail how many per school.

The faction would like to know if there is a flag policy. Is there a flag law? Can I fly the Sint Maarten flag in combination with the unity flag? Is there a law? If every individual that has private property and decides to fly a flag in their yard, must there be a legal basis for that?

#### Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

The faction has the following questions for the Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor. How many Countries exist in the World? How many countries registered at United Nations? Which Country does the Minister think in the whole entire world has the lowest-paid COVID-19 Nurses? Is there a difference or any sort of level COVID-19 Nurses here in Sint Maarten? Is there a



level in terms of the experience that CPS Nurses are rendering services in Sint Maarten at different locations? Those at the hospital get NAfl. 16,85 and those at CPS get NAfl. 15,00, those at the airport get NAfl. 25,00, the Supervisor gets NAfl. 32,00. Those at the container from AMI get US\$85,00, food is provided, and living conditions. And to add insult to injury the local nurses that assist the nurses at AMI get NAfl. 16,85 per hour. Can the Minister explain the difference in compensation of the nurses? Why? Can the Minister explain if the cabinet of the Ministry pays nurses at the airport? Where is that budget coming from? How much is budgeted from NRBP for the nurses at the Hospital and why is the NRBP spearheading this project? Can the Minister explain why and where is that budget coming from? The Nurses from AMI, where are they from? The faction is of the opinion that equal work should get equal pay.

How much is budgeted from NRBP for the nurses at the hospital? Who determines the rate that the local nurses at the hospital for COVID should get NAfl. 16.85 those at CPS NAfl. 15.00, those at the airport should get NAfl 25.00 and those in the container should get US\$85.00? How do you come up with compensation? What expertise does the NRBP have to determine a project, such as or involving nurses to deal with COVID-19? Why was it done in that manner?

The faction would like to know if COVID-19 only exists at night starting at 11 pm. Is the Minister aware of why the Census Office Government Building is closed? And in Simpson Bay? Is the Minister aware of the number of Civil Servants affected in the daytime?

The faction would like the Minister to give a detailed explanation as to how COVID-19 is spread? Can the Minister give a detailed description of what is done now in the Government Building where we have a record number of individuals with COVID-19? Should we jump also at the Tax Office? What measures have been taken through the Ministry at the tax office? What is being done now to secure the other civil servants? What are the plans in the Government Building, in particular, to mitigate and stop the spread of COVID-19?

#### Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport, and Telecommunication

The faction mentions the issue with the vendors on the Pondfill stretch. How many vendors are we talking about to be relocated? What is the real reason that both Ministries are asking to have them removed? How many landowners are requesting the property? By which means have the landowners request the removal of the vendors? Which landowners? How many of the landowners have

indicated through the Ministry that they have use for the property at this present moment? Has the Minister spoken to the Carnival Committee and what was their response on having the vendors relocated in the Carnival Village? Did the Minister have a discussion with the tour busses to pass the location where the vendors are? How accurate is this? What is the real reason for relocating the vendors?

How was it possible in the first place for the vendors to be at the said location? Who put them there? How did they manage to get there? What type of permit or vending license was given to them to be at said location and for what duration of time? Which Minister issued the vending licenses for those vendors for the first time they took stationery positions at the said location? Why can't the vendors themselves speak to the landowners?

The faction would like to know if the Minister has spoken to the vendors. Has anyone of the landowners contacted the Minister? The Ministry of TEATT should be the one forging ahead with entrepreneurship and encouraging it.

The faction mentions movement within the region. Sint Maarten owns 98% of a regional airline, and there is nothing in the budget to encourage that regional airline to grow. Has the Minister had discussions with Chastanet, with the Prime Minister of Barbados, with anyone in that conference on how your regional airline can have lower landing fees, and we can have a dialogue and a movement within the Caribbean seeing that LIAT is not operational right now?

Are there no proposals, no programs to encourage regional travel? The budget is dropped in this region.

Does Government have an Economic Recovery Plan for the next 5 years? If yes, can we receive a copy? If not, why not at this stage of the crisis? In the opinion of the Government, what needs to be done to Jump-start the economy and put it back on rails post-COVID 19? Not just waiting on tourists to come back, but what is the Government doing in terms of real stimulation?

Based on the Government's research, which sectors of the economy are likely to recover the fastest? Which the slowest? And why? Has the Government made any realistic headway when it comes to diversification of the economy considering the economic shocks of hurricane Irma and now COVID-19? Has the announcement of a COVID-19 vaccine had any impact on the outlook of economic recovery? What real incentives are Government considering for entrepreneurs and small business owners?

The faction would like to know if Government will be offering any tax holidays for entrepreneurs and small business owners? There is an explosion of new Chinese Supermarkets on the island again. It seems like every few yards there is another one. Is the Government considering re-implementing the moratorium on supermarkets? If yes, when? And if not, why not?

How is the Government improving traveller confidence to the destination? Please list related activities by the Tourism Bureau. What are the new tourism market trends that the Government has observed due to COVID-19 and what are the drivers of this demand? How are Government and its tourism partners and stakeholders going to build a more resilient, innovative and inclusive tourism sector? Please provide examples.

The faction points out that Government has announced that home-porting could generate 52 million dollars in 14 weeks. Please explain how the Government arrived at this figure and how much did it generate for the country so far? How is this measured? Is the 52 million dollars that the Minister said could be raised in 14 weeks mentioned in the budget? If yes, please indicate where. If not, why not?

Is there some sort of sharing scheme with taxi drivers for the moving of the home-porting passengers from the airport to cruise port or is this performed by one company? Which company? The faction would further like to know how much of the food provisioning for home-porting is done on Sint Maarten? Please provide the percentage compared to what is provided from overseas. Please indicate where the rest comes from. How much of the fuel provisioning for home-porting is done on Sint Maarten? Please provide the percentage compared to what is provided from overseas. Please indicate where the rest comes from.

What are some of the new commercial opportunities local suppliers have with home-porting? How long is the home-porting agreement with Celebrity Cruises for? What is Government doing to try and retain these services before the cruise lines simply return to Florida when the pandemic and the strict US hygiene restrictions on sailings out of US ports end?

The faction points out that Barbados is already thinking ahead. The government there intends on using the experience of home-porting to develop a southern Caribbean cruise alliance for summer itineraries based on Barbados. Has the Government of Sint Maarten engaged in this type of strategic thinking to

take advantage of the home-porting opportunity? If yes, please explain the strategy.

What strategies does Government have to encourage cruisers to spend some time in Philipsburg before boarding the ship and/or return to the destination as stay-over visitors? The faction mentions that it has noted budget increases for marketing and promotion in the European, US, Latin American and Canadian markets for over 1 million guilders. It has also noted a decrease for the Caribbean and regional marketing, which was already receiving the smallest share of the marketing funds. What is Government's strategy behind reducing promotion in the Caribbean region?

What activities in the region does the Tourist Office execute annually? And what are the results of these activities in terms of visitor arrivals from the Caribbean? The Product development and visitor relations sections of the Tourist Office also received increases in the budget by NAfl. 200,000. Please explain what activities these two sections will undertake in 2021. How will the increase in budget further develop our tourism product and improve visitor relations?

The faction mentions the Harbour and would like the Minister to please provide an update on the appointment of a CEO at the Harbour Group. At present, who functions in that position and under what legal construct?

The Government boasts about high stay-over numbers. Worldwide we see that this is the result of people's eagerness to travel post-pandemic, not what governments have done. So besides our geographic and hub location, what has Sint Maarten done strategically to sustain these numbers when the excitement of post-pandemic travel dies down?

Our competition in the region speaks about the "Rejuvenation" of their product, featuring a blend of creative ideas and cutting-edge thinking on what can be done to add vitality, energy and freshness into their product. Why have we not used the opportunity to call a general summit of partners and stakeholders to discuss the rejuvenation of our product? And what is the Minister's opinion on this? What happened to the Economic Recovery Group the Minister said she was forming in May 2020? Were meetings held? Who comprised this group? And what did this group initiate and implement to help Sint Maarten?

### Ministry of General Affairs

The faction has the following questions for the Ministry of General Affairs. Liquidity support is now linked to the airport, what are the specific problems and/or shortcomings with corporate governance at PJIA that Government is using as a premise for sweeping corporate changes at PJIA? The faction would like to know if the letter of the Prime Minister dated February 20, which was disseminated publicly and addressed to State Secretary Knops, was actually sent to State Secretary Knops? What was the State Secretary's response to this letter? If he responded yes, please provide a copy of his response that he sent or an explanation if he responded verbally. Have there been additional letters sent to the State Secretary or Schiphol as follow-ups to this specific letter of February 20, 2021? Did the Prime Minister or the Government assure the State Secretary that all actions to improve corporate governance as mentioned in the aforementioned letter will be executed? Is the implementation plan for the improvement of corporate governance at PJIA still on the table or have changes been made? If yes, please explain in detail these changes.

What specifically does State Secretary Knops want to see happen with corporate governance that would convince him to release the NAfl. 39 million in liquidity support? If the State Secretary put these actions in writing, please provide a copy or an explanation of what he said verbally.

The letter of February 20, 2021, mentioned recommendations made by the Task Force for Corporate Governance. Who makes up this task force and please provide a copy of these recommendations?

The faction would like to know why changing the Corporate Governance Council (CGC) into a foundation as mentioned in the aforementioned letter is necessary? Have any steps been taken to change the structure of the CGC to a foundation since the letter of February 20, 2021, was sent? If yes, please explain these steps in detail. How will changing the structure of the CGC improve corporate governance at PJIA? How is giving the CGC more power than PJIAH and to some extent the Shareholder, more beneficial to PJIA and Sint Maarten? Why did the Prime Minister /Government entertain such a change to CGC? Why not dismiss the idea in its entirety considering it weakens PJIAH and by extension the Shareholder?

The faction continues and mentions that the letter from the Prime Minister to State Secretary Knops also mentions changing the articles of

incorporation of the PJIAH and PJIAE to adjust the number of members of both boards. Please explain why this is necessary and how this was or is a problem that requires changing? Also, what amount of board members are being considered?

Is it true that State Secretary Knops and/or Schiphol suggested a board position go to someone from Schiphol or the Dutch Government? Has the suspended Managing Director of the airport holding company officially been heard as yet? If yes, did Government receive any new information that would lead to the lifting of his suspension? If he has not been heard as yet, why not? And when will this happen?

Will the Government renew the cooperation agreement with Schiphol Airport? If yes, why? What were Schiphol's deliverables in the first agreement over the past two years? Did Schiphol deliver on all? If not, why not? If Government intends on re-signing with Schiphol, at what stage is the negotiations of the cooperation agreement? What is the Government's opinion of a private, management entity such as Schiphol having a say over whether or not an entire country receives liquidity support? And why does Government tolerate this type of disrespect towards Sint Maarten? Has the Prime Minister and/or COM given the holding company or the airport approval, in writing or verbally, to sign the extension of the cooperation agreement between Schiphol, BZK, and PJIA? If yes, please indicate when? If not, please update on the negotiations of the extension of this agreement. What were the deliverables stipulated in the original cooperation agreement with Schiphol airport? Please indicate which of these deliverables were met by Schiphol and which were not. What are the deliverables stipulated in the agreement extension?

The faction points out that in a live COM Press Briefing the Prime Minister said to be in agreement with the inclusion of the termination date of the agreement. What is the termination date of this agreement? What changes did the PJIAH want to be included in any new extension of the agreement? Please explain why, for each change. Which of the changes as suggested by PJIAH is included in the extension of the cooperation agreement?

Was there an appointment of a local counterpart to the CFO of PJIA? If yes, why has this not happened? Is the appointment of a local counterpart to the CFO part of the extension to the new agreement? Has the Government had any talks with the Holding board of the airport to explore letting the holding board

secure financing for the reconstruction? If not why not. If yes, what were the details of this discussion?

Does the Prime Minister consider it good corporate governance to have Schiphol appointees to airport boards, Schiphol consultants and the Schiphol appointed CFO, also advise on contracts and other activities that Schiphol itself has a vested financial interest in as is outlined in the current cooperation agreement? Is this not a conflict of interest? Is this not against good corporate governance and has the Prime Minister raised this issue with the Royal Schiphol Group and BZK?

Is it indicated in the extension of the agreement who will be responsible for the excess costs by Schiphol appointed consultants including the CFO? If yes, please explain who. Please provide Parliament with a copy of the original cooperation agreement and this new agreement if already approved. In a letter dated June 17, 2021, from State Secretary Raymond Knops, the State Secretary stated that the Prime Minister informed him of the steps taken to restore good governance at PJIA. He also stated that the Royal Schiphol Group, and the faction quotes, “has played an essential role in both the recovery project and securing good governance in recent years”. Please explain how the Royal Schiphol Group has secured good governance at PJIA over the years as stated by Knops and what role Royal Schiphol Group has played in the recovery project considering we are almost 4 years later and the airport is in the same state.

The State Secretary also stated in the same June 17 letter, that Sint Maarten would not be able to pay salaries at the end of June without the 39 million guilders in liquidity support. Finance Minister Ardwell Irion said on June 10 that salaries for June could be paid without the 39 million. So who is lying? Knops or Irion?

Knops again in the same letter, said that the Netherlands suddenly thinks it is urgent that Sint Maarten received the 39 million or face possible business bankruptcies due to non-payment of the SSRP and mass unemployment. The faction finds it funny that Knops suddenly woke up and acknowledged this, which begs my question to the Government, what did Knops get in return? Specifically, if it was about corporate governance at PJIA, now more than ever the Government has to explain what was wrong with corporate governance at PJIA and how this was fixed?

Did Mr. Knops at any point in time include the extension of the cooperation agreement as a condition? Has the airport begun an investigation into the misuse of its corporate credit cards by its CEO? If yes, what was the outcome? If not, has the Government instructed the airport to do so since the Prime Minister stated that Government would do its due diligence on this issue? If yes, what was the outcome? If not, why not and when will Government conduct its due diligence?

The faction has the following questions regarding the food assistance program. How long will the Government be able to execute the food assistance program? How many people are actually dependent on this program? How was this program being abused? What has Government's investigations uncovered? What actions have the Government taken to address the abuse of this program? Is the Government aware of the damaging financial consequences that the current group of supermarket owners, who are not part of the food program, faces? Can the supermarkets that are not part of the food program and have suffered financial losses because of the food program, register for payroll support?

The faction points out that the decline in tourism as a result of COVID-19 led to decreased spending by tourists, hotel and associated tourism service closures and job losses. Such outcomes translated to higher levels of indebtedness, unemployment and psychological stress. All of these factors made many residents anxious about their ability to ensure food security in the coming months because without money they cannot afford to buy food. So how is the Government addressing food security in the country considering Government's growing debts? What are the Government's plans to protect major food suppliers in the hurricane season considering what occurs in the aftermath of hurricanes with the looting of food supplies?

The pandemic has highlighted the fragility of regional supply chains. After months of vastly reduced tourism and tourist dollars, reserves dwindled and food prices are becoming a serious and prolonged concern for much of the population. What are Government's plans in preparation for continued food price increases and does Government have any mitigating initiatives to offer food importers?

With regards to direct liquidity, the faction has the following questions. What is the Government's actual liquidity at present? In other words, how much money do we have in the bank now and in reserve? What is the Government's



projected liquidity at the end of June 2021? Based on monthly expenditures, how long will the 39 million in liquidity support last? Will the Government be requesting more liquidity support in the near future? How long will it be before the country is in a good enough state financially to stop requesting liquidity support and multiple loans?

Has the Government started discussions about a 6<sup>th</sup> tranche of liquidity support? If yes, please explain what this entails in terms of the amount? Are there conditions attached to this 6<sup>th</sup> tranche? If yes, what are these conditions? What is Government's Plan B in the worst case that it cannot pay civil servants and the SSRP? How will Government help people if this happens? The Finance Minister stated publicly that the country is living month to month. So at this rate, there is a real possibility that Government could face the scenario of not being able to pay civil servants. So why is there not a hiring freeze? If you are living month to month, why are you increasing your expenditures? Has the Government implemented any new and/or additional cost-saving measures? When does Government anticipate being able to pay civil servants the 50% vacation allowance owed from 2020 and the full amount owed from 2021?

The faction has the following questions regarding the *Stichting Overheids Gebouwen (SOG)*. Who are the members of the board of SOG? What is the term of board members and when does the term of the current board expire? How long have the current members of the board been serving on the board? Is there a supervisory board for SOG? If yes, Who are the members? What is the term of this board? When does the term expire? What is the financial compensation to board members for serving on the boards?

What is the financial situation of SOG currently? Please provide financial reports from the last 5 years. Has an audit ever been executed on SOG? If yes, when and please provide audit results/report. If not why not? Please provide a copy of the articles that govern SOG as a ZBO. What is the annual operational cost of SOG? Please provide a detailed list of the cost.

Which facilities does SOG currently manage for the Government? What are the annual management costs for each of these facilities? Were these facilities damaged by Hurricane Irma? If yes, have they been repaired and what was the cost of repairs? How many third-party contractors does SOG utilize at these facilities? Please list names and services they provide as well as the cost of their services and how often these contractors provide these services.

Does SOG employ permanent employees? If yes, how many? If not, who manages the day-to-day operations? Why has the St. Maarten Festival Village not been repaired after being damaged by Hurricane Irma in 2017? Has SOG received insurance funds to repair the Festival Village? If yes, please list the amount and explain why the Festival Village has not been repaired. If not, why not? What is the total estimated repair cost of the Festival Village? Please list areas to be repaired. Does SOG have a plan of action for the repair and upgrading of the Festival Village? If yes, please provide details. If not, why not?

What are the details (financial and operational) of the agreement SOG currently has with persons renting booths in the Festival Village? Please provide a copy of this agreement. How many persons are currently renting booths in the Festival Village and at what cost? Do people who currently rent a booth in the Festival Village form part of an association in the Festival Village? If yes, please explain the working relationship between SOG and its renters.

The faction would like to know if the Government has decided to relocate the vendors located along the Pondfill to the Festival Village. If yes, why is relocation necessary? Will these vendors fall within the SOG annual program and under the same stipulations and costs as the other vendors already in the Festival Village? If not, please explain why not and under what structure and regulations will they be placed in the Festival Village?

Does SOG derive revenue/income from any other means? How many funds has SOG raised from events held in the Festival Village for the past 7 years? Please list the name of events and how much was paid to SOG.

The faction would like the Prime Minister to detail the entire process of third parties who wish to rent the entire Festival Village for an event, including costs.

Is it true that SOG owes Sheriff Security company over US\$1 million for services the company rendered to SOG? If yes, please explain how this debt was built up and if Government has since paid this debt? What are the consequences of this situation for SOG and the Festival Village? In total does the Government owe Sherriff Security US \$4.3 million? Please explain how this was built up and for what purposes? How is this situation being rectified and is the Government currently in court with Sheriff Security or an affiliated/subsidiary company?

What is SOG's relationship with the TelEm Group of Companies? Is there an agreement between SOG and the TelEm Group of Companies? If yes, why was this agreement entered into? For what period is this agreement? When does it expire? The faction would like a copy of this agreement to be provided.

Does TelEm have exclusive rights in the Festival Village? If yes, please explain in detail what these rights entail. If there is an agreement between SOG and TelEm, what is the monetary value attached to this agreement? In other words, how does SOG benefit from this agreement with the TelEm Group of Companies? Do third parties who rent the village have to adhere to stipulations outlined in the agreement between TelEm and SOG? If yes, why? And doesn't this put third parties at a disadvantage? Is it the intention to renew this agreement with the TelEm Group of Companies once it expires? When does it expire? Was it already renewed previously and under what terms?

The faction mentions the Integrity Chamber and High Councils and mentions that there is a budgeted amount for the Integrity Chamber of NAfl. 1.2 million guilders a year. What is this amount of money for? Please provide a breakdown. What activities has the Integrity Chamber undertaken since its inception? How has the Government measured the success or relevance of the Integrity Chamber? What qualifies a person to be selected to serve at the Integrity Chamber? How long is the service term for persons who sit on the board of the Integrity Chamber? Has the Government revisited or tried to renegotiate the annual rent amounts it is paying to private property owners? If yes, what were the results of these attempts? If not, why not? Did the property owner of the Parliament building find it fit as a good citizen of the country seeing that COVID-19 has strapped the Government of its funds, reduced the rent of the building? If yes, can the Prime Minister give an indication as to when and how much? The rent for properties housing the high councils of state has increased by 24%. The faction would like to know why? The Council of Advice and General Audit Chamber has increased from 110 thousand guilders to 115 thousand guilders *each*. The Ombudsman is 138 thousand guilders annually and the SER is 170 thousand guilders annually. Why is the Government paying so much in rent considering the part-time working nature of these entities?

Does the Government of Sint Maarten have the available funds to pay half of the vacation pay?

This report can be considered the final report.

Adopted at the meeting of the Central Committee of 23 June 2021.

The Reporter,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R. Brison', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

R. Brison