

SINT MAARTEN CHRISTIAN PARTY MANIFESTO



2018 Rebuilding, Resetting, Recommitting

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Preface

According to Article 15 of the National Ordinance, governing the Electoral Council, political parties must publish “a political program in good time before the election”. A party’s political program is also commonly known as a political platform or manifesto!

There is a clear distinction between a political program (manifesto) and a governing program.

The governing program details the plans, projects and tasks that the Government (Council of Ministers) intends to accomplish during its four-year term. It is specific about the who, what, why, when, where, how and costs of the execution of a program or a project.

A manifesto, on the other hand, only gives an outline of the beliefs, intentions, motives, and principles of a political party.

To date, manifestos in Sint Maarten look and read more like governing programs, expounding on what the party plans to do when in Government i.e., Council of Ministers. This is very confusing to the people because political parties and politicians are contesting a parliamentary election while at the same time pretending to be vying for a ministerial position.

Sint Maarten voters need to know once and for all that Ministers are appointed and not elected. It is time that the Sint Maarten voters understand that they have absolutely no say in the appointment of a Minister.

As the Sint Maarten voter can only elect parliamentarians it is extremely important that during the campaign, candidates for parliament inform the people what they intend to do for them when they are elected to Parliament.

A parliamentarian has two main functions namely to legislate (initiate and approve laws) and to oversee (monitor, control) Government or the Council of Ministers.

In the political program or manifesto at hand SMCP will inform you what its representatives in Parliament plan to do during the next parliamentary term: 2018 -2022.

Since SMCP expects, after the elections, to be involved in forming the government and appointing ministers, SMCP will also include in this manifesto issues that are to be tackled by the Council of Ministers.

Section One of this Manifesto describes what our Members of Parliament will be doing once they are elected (See page 3). In this way, the people who elected SMCP parliamentarians can hold them accountable by simply checking this Manifesto for the things that SMCP purposed to do when elected to Parliament. The second section presents issues and problems that must be dealt with by the Council of Ministers (page 9).



Manifesto of the SMCP

“Serving YOU for a Change!”

What is the Sint Maarten Christian Party (SMCP)?

A “Christian Party” is not a new phenomenon in politics. Most countries in Europe and South America have parties based on Christian principles.

The Sint Maarten Christian Party is a political party comprising of persons who have accepted to live and work according to the principles of Jesus the Christ. SMCP is not a denomination, neither is it a church but a group that embraces the Constitution of Country Sint Maarten which reads " *WE, THE PEOPLE OF SINT MAARTEN AFFIRM that we acknowledge the guiding principles of Almighty God as the core of our values...*".

These universal principles are, among others: accountability, compassion, honesty, integrity, justice, loyalty, respect and transparency. Based on these principles, SMCP is of the opinion that it can offer genuine leadership when in Parliament and in Government.

Our Philosophy

The Sint Maarten Christian Party:

1. acknowledges the sovereignty of the Almighty God over all the affairs of man, including government.
2. will be guided by Christian values, norms and principles.

Our Vision

We envision a Sint Maarten where people feel safe, there is affordable healthcare, gainful employment, quality education, equal business opportunities for all, unbiased justice and a protected environment.

Our Mission

To promote good governance through Christian principles, norms and values.

Our Core Values

- Accountability
- Compassion
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Loyalty
- Respect
- Team work
- Transparency
- Service

Our Objectives

1. To attain seats in parliament and positions in government in order to be able to serve the people of Sint Maarten and to help improve the quality of life for all.
2. To restore and promote accountability, transparency, integrity and decency to public life and to governance.
3. To form, as needed, alliances with political parties that ascribe to SMCP's guiding principles and are willing to pursue similar objectives in the interest of good governance.

SECTION ONE: Parliament

As SMCP is contesting this parliamentary election it is important that SMCP informs the people of its intentions once its representatives have been elected to parliament. SMCP is of the opinion that since the establishment of Country Sint Maarten on 10-10-10, not much improvement has taken place in Parliament. Having observed the mediocre work ethic and the low productivity of Parliament (1 law initiated and approved, non-functioning of the parliamentary committees) SMCP is more than ever committed to "RAISING THE BAR" in Parliament when elected, as we have pledged since our 2016 manifesto.

SMCP believes that the following proposals will definitely help to improve the functioning of Parliament during the 2018-2022 parliamentary term.

1. Stable Government

When SMCP obtains the majority of seats (8 or more) in Parliament, SMCP purposes to work towards a stable government that will last its four-year term. However, should SMCP get a minority representation in parliament but is asked to help form a coalition government, then SMCP will bring certain conditions to the negotiating table that would help to guarantee a stable government for the next four years. Some of these conditions are:

- (1) follow the procedure of utilizing an informateur and a formateur;
- (2) include the elected Members of Parliament (MPs) in the selection of ministers;
- (3) formation discussions in the House of Parliament;
- (4) appoint the Prime Minister from the participating coalition parties;
- (5) appoint competent, qualified, professionals as ministers.

2. National Reconstruction Plan

On the 6th of September 2017, Sint. Maarten was hit by the worst hurricane ever. This resulted in severe devastation of buildings, homes and infrastructure. In October 2017, Government published a descriptive report of the damages under the name National Recovery Plan Interim Report. To date, four months later, the final report is yet to be seen. This final report should specify how the Dutch aid would be spent on the reconstruction of the country as far as the economy, businesses, homes, and infrastructure are concerned. The aid should also go towards uplifting our people out of poverty. The report would also outline the working relationship between Sint

Maarten, the Netherlands and the World Bank. Shortly after SMCP's MPs are sworn into Parliament, they will call in the Minister of General Affairs to provide information to Parliament and to the people about the reconstruction plan and its execution.

3. Electoral Reform

Sint Maarten is in dire need of reform of our electoral laws. SMCP's MPs will submit a motion to charge Government to tackle electoral reform and to submit their report concerning the needed reforms within six months. The report will present proposals concerning the following:

- how to deal with ship jumping; for example, reducing the incentives that a one-person faction gets in parliament;
- the amendment of Article 59 of the Constitution to regulate when, where and under which conditions Parliament can be dissolved and snap elections can be called;
- change the way the public endorsement of political parties is done to date and establish anonymous endorsements, respecting privacy and transparency throughout the process;
- other changes to the Election Ordinance, the National Ordinance Registration and the Finances of Political Parties as proposed by the Central Voting Bureau and the Electoral Council respectively.

4. Reduce MP Salaries by 15%

SMCP MPs will present a motion to amend the Ordinance that regulates the salaries of Members of Parliament with the intention of reducing the salary by 15% within the first 100 days in office. For years, the people have been outraged by the high salaries of our MPs who over the years have not been able to show high productivity for the money they have been making. Imagine in the last seven years, our MPs have never initiated and passed any kind of legislation. Furthermore, in this season of post hurricane Irma, when people are hurting financially, SMCP is of the opinion that MPs can easily give up a small portion of their salary to help alleviate the country's budget deficit.

5. Reduce Salaries of SMCP MPs

In the event the majority of the MPs refuses to support the motion to reduce the MP's salary then the SMCP MPs will voluntarily deduct the 15%, on a monthly basis, from their salary and donate said amount to a Foundation that will be established to help mitigate immediate personal and social situations related to families or individuals. This Foundation will not be managed by the MPs or the party but by neutral persons in the community.

6. Reduction of Severance Pay

After active duty, MPs receive severance pay commensurate with the time period that they served in Parliament. Currently, the minimum amount to be paid is one year. For example, if an MP served 3 months, he/she is entitled to one year's pay. MPs over 60 years are not entitled to severance pay. Given the financial situation of the country, SMCP is of the opinion that the severance pay for MPs should be reduced. Consequently, SMCP MPs will present a motion to reduce the severance pay-period for elected MPs who are no longer active.

7. Code of Conduct

For years our parliamentarians have avoided establishing a code of conduct which is a very common law among parliaments in the region and around the world. A code of conduct would require financial disclosure by Members of Parliament before accepting their seat in Parliament and also at the end of their parliamentary tenure. MPs would also have to disclose all of their side jobs and their business interests, including their shareholdings. The code would stipulate whether the monthly salary that our MPs currently enjoy is commensurate with a part-time or a full-time position. The code of conduct would also regulate the acceptance of gifts or favors received by Members of Parliament. SMCP intends to put forward a proposal and revive the debate concerning a code of conduct for parliamentarians.

8. Annual Reports by the High Councils of State

Annually, the General Audit Chamber, the Council of Advice and the Ombudsman submit their reports to Parliament. In addition, institutions like the SER and the Electoral Council also submit their reports on an annual basis. Sometimes these reports are quite critical of Parliament and of Government. Parliament is supposed to use these reports to monitor Government and to evaluate itself. Unfortunately, these reports are simply shelved and nothing is done with them. It must be quite discouraging this can be for the staff of the High Councils of State who put so much time and effort in researching, evaluating and analyzing the state of affairs of Government and Government Entities. SMCP will ensure that these reports are no longer shelved but that they are presented to the Parliament for debate and follow-up.

9. Integrity Reports

Three Integrity Reports and the 2014 State of Affairs Institutional Integrity Management issued by the General Audit Chamber have been shelved. SMCP intends to have these reports, even though late, brought to the floor of Parliament and debated. Furthermore, the recommendations from these reports should be reviewed and if need be, executed.

10. Audit of decisions taken by recent Care-taker and Interim Governments

In the interest of integrity, SMCP MPs will request the Minister of General Affairs to have an audit done of all new decisions made outside the scope of the daily affairs of Government, that were taken by the Care-taker and Interim Governments. A report of the audit findings must be presented to the Parliament within a period of two months.

11. Accountability from the Council of Ministers and individual Ministers

In the past, Members of Parliament apparently did not consider their oversight function and responsibility as being very important. Hence, Ministers were seldom called to Parliament to give an account of their decisions and actions. SMCP's MPs intend to monitor the decisions and actions of the Council of Ministers and the individual Ministers closely and to call them to Parliament to give an account as often as necessary. SMCP MPs intend to uphold the principles of good governance. Ministers must also be aware that they can also be held personally liable for decisions that have an adverse effect on government and the country.

12. Parliamentary Committees

It is no secret that the 12 committees in Parliament (8 permanent and 4 ad-hoc) are not functioning. The annual report of Parliament shows that the only meetings called by these committees are to appoint the chairpersons. The proper functioning of Parliament depends on the proper functioning of these committees. It is therefore imperative that these committees begin to function as soon as possible. SMCP MPs intend to reactivate these committees and have them functioning so that Parliament can become effective in carrying out its duties. SMCP will demand that these committees report at least once a month to the Central Committee.

13. Disaster Preparation and Management

According to the Ordinance regulating Disaster Preparedness and Management the Minister of General Affairs is required to present Parliament with a disaster preparedness and management plan on an annual basis. Furthermore, the law requires that six months after a disaster has occurred the Minister of General Affairs must submit an evaluation report of the disaster to the Parliament. This means that by March 2018, the Minister must submit such a report to Parliament. SMCP's representatives in Parliament will be requesting this report plus the 2018 disaster plan that has been put in place to deal with the pending hurricane season which starts on the 1st of June 2018. In addition, the MPs of SMCP will be asking the Government to draft an earthquake and tsunami disaster preparedness and management plan as well.

14. Legislation Higher Education

Since 10-10-10, tertiary education became the responsibility of Sint Maarten. Nevertheless, neither Government nor Parliament ever followed through to regulate tertiary education and the role of the University of St. Martin in higher education on Sint Maarten. The ordinance on higher education will ensure that structural funding for the USM is available and that the quality of higher education is guaranteed. SMCP MPs will ensure that by the end of 2018 the law on higher education is presented to Parliament for approval. This legislation should enable the USM to become the epicenter of higher education for Sint Maarten and the Caribbean.

15. National Budget

According to Article 100 of the Constitution, Parliament has the right to amend and approve the budget. Hence, via this article Parliament is able to establish its financial priorities. SMCP has observed that Parliament does not make use of this means to establish priorities as far as the development of the country is concerned. For example, in a given year parliament can allocate more funds in a particular sector of the society (e.g. tourism) whilst economizing in another sector. The MPs of SMCP intend to make more use of Article 100 than the past MPs have done. The government will be encouraged to present a budget geared towards the development of the island rather than a traditional maintenance budget.

16. Public Relations

As a direct body of representatives of the people, Parliament should keep the people constantly informed as to what is going on. When in Parliament SMCP MPs will propose that the President of Parliament and the other members of the Presidium hold regular press briefings and that the chairperson of the permanent and ad hoc Committees also update the people on a regular basis.

SECTION TWO: Government / Council of Ministers

After the election, the majority party or a coalition sets out to form a government (Council of Ministers). With regard to the formation of government, SMCP has presented its plan on page 3 as to how to obtain a stable government comprising of capable, competent, professional and qualified ministers.

An inherent task of forming a government is the development of a governing program that specifies what the government plans to do in the coming four years and why, how it will be executed and how much it will cost?

SCMP has a list of projects and programs that it suggests Government to tackle in the coming four-year term. In the event SMCP does not obtain the majority of seats in Parliament, then these projects and programs will have to be negotiated with the coalition partner(s). Of course, SMCP will do its utmost to negotiate to ensure that the issues that it considers fundamental for the development of Sint Maarten are included in the governing program.

Below is the list of projects that according to SMCP should be included in the governing program and therefore need to be discussed and negotiated in the event SMCP is required to become a partner of a coalition government.

1. The Reconstruction of Sint Maarten

- a. Short Term
 - i. Repair damaged roofs and houses
 - ii. Restore damaged infrastructure (e.g. streets, lighting)
 - iii. Amend the building code to include among other things a cistern for each home and that the roof be covered by 30-40% concrete
- b. Medium Term
 - i. Rebuild homes
 - ii. Restore/rebuild tourist sites
 - iii. Synchronize the reconstruction efforts between Dutch and French sides.
 - iv. Prepare a national disaster and recovery plan in the event of hurricane, earthquake and/or tsunami.
- c. Long Term
 - i. Ensure key infrastructure such as; Airport, GEBE, Harbor, Hospital, Telem
 - ii. Enforce the new building codes
 - iii. National Development Fund

2. The Landfill/Dump

- a. Find and execute solutions to rid Sint Maarten of this health hazard which is also a serious environmental concern and a touristic and cultural eyesore.
- b. Find and begin to execute waste-to-energy solutions such as a waste-to-energy plant that can handle the Dutch side waste but also French side, St. Barth's, Saba, St. Eustatius and surrounding islands. Our goal is to have sustainable garbage processing and to create new economic development.

3. Energy Policy

- a. Revisit the National Energy Policy for Sint Maarten that was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2014.
- b. Begin to make plans for the execution of solar, green and renewable energy.

4. Health Care

- a. Update the legislation listed on the Government website under the Department of Health which is grossly outdated
- b. Ensure that a health policy is established that will include the construction of the new hospital, implementation of health care certification and the National Health Insurance.

5. Education and Training

- a. SMCP views education as a means to effect change in Sint Maarten. SMCP therefore will seek ways to improve the quality of education at all levels and to introduce a diversity of training programs for the population that is no longer attending the regular school system.

6. Eradication of Poverty

75% of the households in Sint Maarten live in poverty according to the 2015 Transparency International Report on Integrity in Sint Maarten (p. 22). According to calculation a household on Sint Maarten needs at least US\$ 2,200 or Fls. 4.000 in order to survive. Some of the ways to begin to eradicate poverty on Sint Maarten are:

- i. Increase the Old Age Pension
- ii. Transition from a minimum wage to a living wage system
- iii. Eliminate the abuse of the short-term labor contracts
- iv. Replace the TOT with a fair sales tax
- v. Stimulate the economy with proposals for government incentives
- vi. Follow guidelines issued by the Sint Maarten Anti-Poverty Platform

7. Short Term Labor Contracts

On the 10th of December 2017 the legislation on short-term labor contracts was debated in Parliament but needed to be further worked out by the Government. This legislation must be revisited and presented again to Parliament.

8. Sustainable National Development Plan

- a. Sint Maarten's development in every sector of the society has evolved more or less in an ad hoc manner. SMCP is of the opinion that a National Development Plan is to serve as a blueprint for Sint Maarten for the next 20 - 30 years. This sustainable development plan will include matters related to cultural, economic, educational, environmental and social development. Other topics such as e-government, e-commerce, new investments, information technology, telecommunications, ownership/empowerment of the Sint Maartener, will also be included.
- b. SMCP will instruct the Government to develop a strategic, sustainable National Development Plan within a one-year time frame.

9. National Disaster Preparation & Management

- a. The Disaster Preparedness and Management Plan needs to be updated to be able to deal with super hurricanes, earthquakes, floods and tsunamis; the organizational and administrative structures need to be revised and adapted to current situations such as dealing with international relief and charitable organizations.
- b. Hurricane shelters need to be assigned, made hurricane-proof and equipped before the next hurricane season begins. Community centers and public schools can be prepared with a concrete roof, generator, diesel tank, medical emergency and food supplies. These shelters would be manned as part of the new disaster management plan with nurses, marines, police/VKS and community leaders. These would need to be self-sufficient for at least 2 weeks in case of another category 4+ hurricane or other natural disaster.
- c. Establish a National Disaster Fund to be funded by the government of Sint Maarten and the Kingdom Government.

10. Public Transportation

- a. The Government needs to establish a policy on public transportation and infrastructure. This policy will address the serious traffic congestions and start to implement measures to restrict the amount of cars on the island.

11. Tourism

- a. Tourism is the main industry of Sint Maarten. This sector is also one of the most competitive sectors in the Caribbean. It is important that the development of this economic pillar is sufficiently supported and promoted by Government and everything must be done to enhance the visitor experience on Sint Maarten.
- b. Develop a marketing plan to revitalize the relevant stakeholders and re-boost our economy. It is important to strike the right balance between cruise, timeshare and stay-over tourism.

12.Environment and Well-being

- a. Ensure that the natural environment is thoroughly cleaned such as the Simpson Bay Lagoon, the Freshwater Pond, the Salt Pond, etc. These areas also need to be beautified. The mangroves in the Freshwater Pond need to be trimmed and maintained. Develop a sustainable environmental policy which also includes eco-tourism.
- b. Bird watching is a huge tourism market and needs to be developed. Include advice from the Sint Maarten Nature Foundation regarding marine and terrestrial environmental preservation and development.

13.Empowering our Youth

- a. SMCP will ensure that our youth are better engaged in community development to help instill in them appreciation and a sense of pride for Sint Maarten as their home and their future and as such are more committed to participate in nation building and national development.
- b. In our current environment our youth are not only concerned about their future but also about the current issues affecting their lives, many of which are focal areas in this manifesto.

14.Our Senior Citizens – Taking Care of our elderly

According to a comprehensive report on the status of our senior citizens of 60 years and older, commissioned by the Department of Social Development in 2013, our elderly population has increased dramatically over the last ten years. The Report lists many recommendations that SMCP will strive to implement when in Government.

15.Agriculture

Develop an agricultural policy to maximize the potential of farming and fisheries in a sustainable fashion.

16.Immigration

- a. Amend the immigration policy to address the land-size limitations of the island, the monitoring of lives aboard water vessels, and the availability of jobs.
- b. Enforce the immigration regulations in an expeditious and humane manner.
- c. Implement the Border Control agreement made with the Kingdom.

17. Taxes

Over the years there has been a lot of discussion about revamping and simplifying the tax system. Many attempts have also been made to improve the financial management, tax compliance and financial reporting of Government. It is time for talk to be converted into action. Our tax system is not compatible with the socio-economic and cultural context of Sint Maarten. SMCP purposes to review of our tax system to make it more simplified and relevant to the socio-economic needs of Sint Maarten and promote tax compliance and collection by implementing elements of Fiscal Responsibility.

The following are some of the points and issues that need to be addressed by the newly appointed Government:

- a. ensuring that all tourism related establishments pay the required taxes and fees;
- b. offering tax incentives to businesses that have been affected by the hurricane as well as to innovative start-up small businesses and entrepreneurs;
- c. replacing the Turnover Tax (TOT) by exploring the possibilities of new indirect taxes, as recommended by the Social Economic Council; in this manner the tax burden would be spread out over every single citizen and visitor on the island. This policy should also include incentives to boost investment in the island locally and internationally.
- d. exploring the possibilities of reducing the Profit Tax;
- e. seeking to reduce the wage tax bracket percentages;
- f. introducing a progressive transfer tax on the value of real estate to help curb property speculation;
- g. exploring the possibilities of levying a road tax based on vehicular weight and value;
- h. offering tax- exemptions and/or incentives for companies that contribute socially and environmentally to the development of Sint Maarten and its community;
- i. creating facilities through e.g. a Sint Maarten Development Bank to be able to grant local entrepreneurs soft loans as well as assist in the development of affordable homes.

In the area of Financial Management SMCP will discuss:

- j. establishing through the Central Bank, a minimum saving- and maximum lending rate at commercial banks;
- k. outsourcing certain government functions to government entities that will be established;
- l. establishing a capital investment policy;
- m. introducing a progressive remittance tax and other forms of control to help curb money leakages to foreign countries.

18. Integrity Chamber

- a. Now that the Integrity Chamber has passed the scrutiny of the Ombudsman the Government must do whatever is needed to appoint the members and put the structure in place so that the Chamber can begin to function asap.

19. Safety and National Security – Crime

- a. Residents and visitors have expressed great concern about safety and protection. The goal of SMCP is to stem the tide of crime and restore protection, safety and a sense of community for all in Sint Maarten. SMCP believes that crime is a matter of interest and importance to everyone and that every citizen has the responsibility to report crime and corruption. This topic will be a serious matter of concern when negotiating a coalition Government.

20. External Relationships

- a. SMCP will seek to promote and establish a close relationship with French Saint Martin in the areas of culture, education, sports and youth affairs.
- b. SMCP will also strive to establish a close working relationship with Saba and St. Eustatius in the areas such as: trans-shipment of goods, sea and air transportation, health care services, etc.
- c. SMCP will also seek to improve the relationship between Aruba and Curacao as far as air transportation, Government expertise and services such as the Central Bank are concerned.
- d. The relationship with the Kingdom Government needs to be repaired. Sint Maarten needs to be able to profit more from its relationship with the Netherlands.
- e. Regional relationship need to be strengthened.

21. Appreciate and respect our Christian Heritage

- a. Sint Maarten has a rich Christian heritage which has shaped and served our people well for many generations. We are now a country made up of people with multiple faiths. SMCP is committed to freedom of belief and worship as a basic human right and sees faith-based organizations as playing a positive role in the continued development of our country. However, since Christianity is the bedrock of our belief system it should be respected. SMCP will ensure that the five annual national ecumenical services are upheld:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - The National Day of Prayer | - 2 nd Sunday in January |
| - Emancipation Day | - July 1 st |
| - Constitutional Day | - 2 nd Monday in October |
| - Sint Maarten Day | - November 11 th |
| - Thanksgiving Service | - 2 nd Sunday in December |

SECTION THREE: SMCP's Stance on Controversial Issues

Since the ideology and the values of SMCP are considered more traditional and religious based, SMCP is the only party that is questioned on the following topics and issues which are considered controversial. SMCP believes that it should be open and transparent about its stance on these controversial issues so that the voters know up front what they can expect from SMCP once elected to parliament.

1. Separation of Church and State

- a. SMCP believes that the Church and State should be separated but that you cannot separate God and Government. One has to do it God's way if one wants good governance. The Hon. Michael Manley, former Prime Minister of Jamaica, described the relationship between church and government as "distinct but inseparable". SMCP is of the opinion that neither the church nor the state should have any form of institutional control over each other. In other words, the state should not dictate what the church should do, neither should the church dictate what the state does.
- b. We must recognize that the church, is also an integral part of our cultural heritage and as such can have an influence on our society including on Government and Government decisions. Furthermore, many of our elected and appointed officials have a religious or church upbringing and as such their decision making would be consistent with their Christian belief.

2. Same Gender Marriage

- a. As far as same-sex marriage is concerned, SMCP is in agreement with the law, as mentioned in Sint Maarten's Civil Code: Book I, Title 5, Art. 30 which states that marriage is between a man and a woman.
SMCP will not champion same-sex marriage in Parliament.
- b. Sexual orientation and gender identity should never lead to discrimination or abuse.

3. Abortion

- a. SMCP believes in the sanctity of life, therefore every stage of human life has the right to live and deserves to be protected. Abortion should not be seen as a form of birth control. SMCP's stance on abortion is one of pro-life. However, there may be exceptional cases that warrant an abortion, such as when the life of the mother is threatened. The articles on abortion included in the Penal Code of Sint Maarten date back to the Dutch law of 1918 when abortion was totally prohibited with no exceptions whatsoever. This law will need to be adapted.

- b. SMCP also believes that in cases of abortion, provision should be made to offer counseling to both parents (mother and father) as well as offer social assistance.
- c. SMCP is of the opinion that disseminating information to youngsters at an early age about sex and unplanned and unwanted pregnancies would help to reduce/avoid the number of abortions in the country.

4. Euthanasia

- a. SMCP believes in the sanctity and dignity of human life. Hence, in the case of euthanasia, SMCP is opposed to the withholding or withdrawal of care or treatment from persons who are elderly, sick or disabled. SMCP will not be championing any laws related to euthanasia in Parliament.

5. Prostitution

- a. Prostitution is a demeaning practice which turns a person, (female as well as male) into an object. Until recently women were brought in from abroad under false pretense, namely as dancers and bartenders. These women were exploited, harassed and often abused or ill-treated. It is known that young males are also used as prostitutes. Prostitution on Sint Maarten is illegal and the SMCP is opposed to legalizing it.

6. Casinos and Gambling

- a. The SMCP recognizes that casinos contribute to the Sint Maarten economy by attracting tourists to the island, by providing jobs and revenue in the form of taxes.
- b. SMCP is aware of the financial social and emotional pressure that casinos bring to bear on our local population. For example, it is common knowledge that men and women waste their entire pay check in the casino in the hope of winning. Mothers leave their children unattended (in the car, or at home) in the hope of winning. Fathers and men become so addicted to gambling that they lose their jobs, their families and all that they worked for.
- c. SMCP is also aware of the fact that casinos are not paying their share in taxes. There are laws in place to control the casinos but they are not properly enforced.
- d. As casinos are legal business on Sint Maarten, SMCP being a law-abiding political party, would have to uphold the law and maintain the casinos. However, as many of the laws controlling casinos are not being enforced, SMCP will ensure that these laws are enforced. SMCP will place a moratorium on casino licenses. Thirteen (13) casinos on a 16 square-mile country are more than enough.

7. Carnival

- a. SMCP is not opposed to Carnival as a cultural event. What SMCP opposes is the amount of nudity, drunkenness, vulgarity (gyrating and obscene language) etc. that take during this festival. SMCP would like to bring back the cultural aspect so that parents can take their children to watch and enjoy Carnival or even allow them to take part in the various cultural events during the carnival season.
- b. To make Carnival a cleaner and more cultural event, SMCP would work with the St. Maarten Carnival Development Foundation (SCDF) and the authorities to create a more wholesome and cultural festivity by ensuring that children are supervised, and curbing the vulgarity, nudity and drunkenness.

8. Marijuana

- a. SMCP is in favor of regulating marijuana for medicinal use and scientific purposes. However, SMCP is opposed to legalizing marijuana for recreational use.

9. Post-Election Agenda

- a. Most political parties and their candidates come to you prior to the elections to get your vote. But after elections they are no longer visible in the community. SMCP believes that you are always important and we are making ourselves available to serve before and after elections. When in Parliament or in government SMCP will continue to inform you of what is taking place as well as consult with you on major issues and decisions that concern you the people so that you can continue to participate in the governing process of Sint Maarten.
- b. After the September 2016 elections, SMCP kept its promise and continued to be visible and audible via print media, social media and radio. We were about to start town hall meetings when hurricane Irma struck on the 6th of September 2017, Government fell on the 2nd of November 2017 resulting in the dissolution of Parliament on the 3rd of November 2017.
- c. SMCP intends to continue to inform the voters and the people of Sint Maarten by means of:
 - i. general membership meetings;
 - ii. the media and social media;
 - iii. town hall meetings.

10. Conclusion

SMCP, given the opportunity to be in Parliament and/or in Government will make a change in the areas listed above as well as in other relevant areas. We are appealing to all eligible voters to make a difference now. Your future will be in capable hands when you give SMCP the opportunity to serve you the people of this great Country and make a change ... the change is NOW!

SECTION FOUR: List of SMCP Candidates



Candidate #1: **Wycliffe S. Smith**

During more than 30 years of experience in government service, Mr. Smith, who holds two Masters Degrees, functioned as a Teacher, Inspector of Education, Director of the Department of Education of the Windward Islands, President of the University of St. Martin, as educational and cultural advisor to the Executive Council of St. Maarten and as Lt. Governor of Saba. As a community-minded person, Smith has volunteered and sat on several boards and committees, served as a church minister for over 30 years, then as pastor for 14 years. In his profession and career, Mr. Smith has always focused on service to people. Now with his educational background, training and experience Mr. Smith is ready to serve the people of Sint Maarten for a change.



Candidate #2: **Keith Peter J. Gittens**

A firm believer in Justice with a passion for the youth and the elderly, Mr. Gittens has a proven track record of selfless giving and service to the community. As an astute businessman, he is greatly interested in providing sustainable opportunities for the entrepreneur. With strong family values and Biblical principles to direct his path, "Peter J" pursues the interests of his country and fellowman by his personal motto "For the Greater Good".



Candidate #3: **Mulrose Toulon-Sponsper**

Born and raised on the Island of St. Maarten, her father is Mr. Herve Baker Sponsper: the Guavaberry man. Her mother is Ms. Eudora Rogers-Mardenborough. After high school, Mulrose went straight into the airline industry and stayed there for a decade. In 2012, Mulrose answered the call and went into ministry. She is now pursuing her Masters degree in theology. Mulrose is a bright and well-spoken young lady with a love for her country.



Candidate #4: **Claude A.H. Peterson**

Affectionately known as Chacho, he is the son of retired Police Affairs Head, Hans Peterson and political activist, Aline Choisy. He was raised with his grandfather, Felix Choisy who instilled in him a passion and love for his island and its people. After studying abroad, he returned to St. Maarten in 2001 as an entrepreneur. Peterson has been a political activist, enlightening his people through social media, challenging the nepotism and corruption plaguing Government and Parliament. He is making himself available to SERVE YOU in Parliament and defending your rights to a better standard of living. Corruption is not his culture. Don't let it be yours!



Candidate #5: **Beverly Gibbs**

The youngest of five children, Gibbs was born to a father with St. Maarten strength in his veins, and a mother, born of strong Saban pride. Specializing in special needs education, especially for Autism, Down's syndrome, and learning disabilities, Gibbs has dedicated herself to improving the lives of these children and their families for a brighter future. Gibbs has also served as Island Secretary in Saba, and while living in the Netherlands she contested the Municipal Council elections in Amstelveen with the Dutch Labour Party.



Candidate #6: **Benjamin Bell**

Bell has a passion for the people, workers' rights and justice. As an entrepreneur with experience as a former employee of the Pelican Resort, the Department of Economic Affairs and the Inspectorate of Taxes, Benjamin has a proven record of standing up for others and standing up against manipulation and injustice. With a love for this country, he gives back to the community by volunteering in various settings, using the platforms of pastor and musician to bring national pride.



Candidate #7: **Francelise Alexandra Mauricia-Peterson**

Born on the French side and educated on Dutch St Maarten, Francelise completed her studies in Aruba and then returned to her island home. She has many years of experience in the Hotel and Tourism industry, banking and in the civil service as an extraordinary police officer under the Ministry of TEATT, section Casino Control, a Supervisor of Section Casino Control. Francelise is a social activist, youth mentor and mother of three. "The pursuit of truth and justice are my passions. With my convictions I will stand firm for my country and my people".



Candidate #8: **Christian President**

Born on the northern side of this island and raised for the most part on the southern side where he also obtained his education. After completing his studies abroad, he landed a job in the Aviation industry at PJIAE. As a citizen of our failed political climate, he passionately feels it is his duty to provide St. Maarten the best possible representation. He therefore offers himself as your representative in Parliament as a candidate on the SMCP slate.



Candidate #9: **Michaël Somersall**

Husband and father of four, an accomplished businessman and former chief public health inspector, Somersall is a strong advocate for public health, offering 25 years of ethical leadership experience. He played a pivotal role in the development of food safety awareness and the enforcement of regulations on the island. Michaël voluntarily provides pest control services at schools, food safety training at several institutions as well as to cooks at soup kitchens. Somersall pledges to work relentlessly to help rebuild a resilient St. Maarten, where every individual will have access to the education, services, and resources needed to succeed in life.



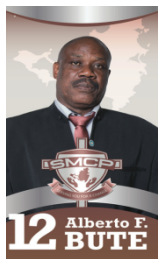
Candidate #10: **Richard Patrick**

Patrick is a people's person with humble upbringings from Sucker Garden. With a degree in Business Administration, he has several years of experience in the Hospitality Industry, the Marine Industry, and the Business Industry. He has been a political activist for many years. Patrick stands ready to serve you. Change is here.



Candidate #11: **Marylouise Rattan-Poulo**

Rattan-Poulo is married with two stepchildren. She has spent 33 years as a Civil Servant. Currently she works in the Tax Administration's Audit and Criminal Investigation Department as a Tax Auditor. She has excellent organizational and administration skills with experience in dealing with Tax Laws and Customers. Marylouise believes that a great leader inspires people to have confidence first in themselves. Rattan-Poulo is offering to serve you as a Member of Parliament for the Country of Sint Maarten to bring changes and new legislation, to bring comfort and economic relief for the people of Sint Maarten.



Candidate #12: **Alberto F. Bute**

As an activist he has participated in many actions to defend the less fortunate in our society. His efforts led to the "Employees' Bill of Rights". Bute has experience as the president of SUNFED, founder of several social and sports organizations, and representative of the UFA Union. He has championed causes related to the Fort Amsterdam sale, the operators of heavy equipment, students expelled for lack of paying school fees, among others. As a representative of NGOs, he is now working on the National Development Plan for Sint Maarten while being a co-coordinator of the Sint Maarten Anti-Poverty Platform and of the Sint Maarten Consumer Coalition to fight to realize the right the development and all other human rights of the people of Sint Maarten.

SECTION FIVE: APPENDIX

Table 1: Declaration & Agreement to Give Up 15% of the MP's Salary



Sint Maarten Christian Party
SERVING YOU FOR A CHANGE

DECLARATION & AGREEMENT to GIVE UP 15% OF THE MP's SALARY

We, the undersigned 12 candidates, taking part in the 2018 election on the SMCP Slate, hereby declare that we collectively and individually support and agree to the lowering of the salaries of the MP's as described in the 2018 Manifesto of the Party.

In the event the motion, presented by SMCP'S Members of Parliament, to reduce the MP's salary by 15% is not passed by Parliament then all SMCP MPs agree to voluntarily give 15% of their salaries to a Foundation, established to administer the funds that will be used to alleviate individual and family social situations as the Foundation deems necessary.

Voluntarily signed, this 30th day of January 2018, by the 12 candidates whose signatures are affixed below:

Nr.	SURNAME	NAME	SIGNATURE
1	SMITH	Wycliffe S.	
2	GITTENS	Keith Peter J.	
3	TOULON, SPONSPER	Mulrose I. A.	
4	PETERSON	Claude A. H.	
5	GIBBS	Beverley D.	
6	BELL	Benjamin S.	
7	MAURICIA PETERSON	Francelise A.	
8	PRESIDENT	Christian G.	
9	SOMERSALL	Michael O.	
10	PATRICK	Richard A.	
11	RATTAN-POULO	Marylouse G.	
12	BUTE	Alberto F.	

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Table 2: Agreement to Ensure Stable Representation



Sint Maarten Christian Party
SERVING YOU FOR A CHANGE

AGREEMENT to ENSURE STABLE REPRESENTATION

During the past seven years the Government of Sint Maarten has fallen multiple times, causing the public as well as the private sectors to be seriously destabilized. The people of Sint Maarten are tired of the ship jumping which has resulted in frequent coalition changes in Parliament and multiple changes of Government.

In a serious effort to ensure that Sint Maarten retains stable representation in Parliament and continuity in Government during the governing period 2018-2022 we, the undersigned 12 SMCP Candidates, hereby declare that when elected to Parliament we will not defect or jump ship.

We are making this agreement public, prior to the elections, so that the voters will know in advance that SMCP is serious about Sint Maarten maintaining stability in Parliament and in Government.

Voluntarily signed on this 30th day of January 2018 by the 12 candidates whose signatures are affixed below:

Nr.	SURNAME	NAME	SIGNATURE
1	SMITH	Wycliffe S.	
2	GITTENS	Keith Peter J.	
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9	SOMERSALL	Michael O.	
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Table 3: Declaration – Eradication of Poverty In Sint Maarten



Sint Maarten Christian Party
SERVING YOU FOR A CHANGE

DECLARATION ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN SINT MAARTEN

February 3, 2018

Considering:

- that poverty is a violation of Human Rights;
- the Sustainable Development Goal set by the UNDP in 2015 to eradicate poverty in all its forms everywhere by 2030;
- that 75% of the households in Sint Maarten live in poverty;
- the public appeals concerning the eradication of poverty, presented by the Sint Maarten Anti-Poverty Platform and recorded in the attached addendum.

The Sint Maarten Christian Party hereby declares:

- that when elected to parliament SMCP will:

- begin the process towards eradicating poverty in Sint Maarten during the upcoming parliamentary term;
- engage in a structural dialogue with the Sint Maarten Anti-Poverty Platform and with various social organizations in Sint Maarten to discuss and achieve consensus on ways and means to eradicate poverty in Sint Maarten;
- instruct its MPs to bring the issue of the eradication of poverty in Sint Maarten to the fore in parliament;
- strive to ensure that the income amounts of citizens in Sint Maarten be determined by the minimum reference budgets;
- champion the creation of full employment as well as on-the-job and off-the-job training opportunities, so that a just and more evenly distribution of income can be realized in Sint Maarten;
- champion lowering the cost of living in Sint Maarten to an affordable level;
- ensure the right to the highest attainable level of health care for all in Sint Maarten;
- ensure the right to development of the people of Sint Maarten;
- include the eradication of poverty as a significant item in the governing program when involved in the formation of the government;

Signed this 3rd day of February 2018, on behalf of the Sint Maarten Christian Party

The President

Jacqueline Godet

The Leader

Wycliffe Smith

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