



**PRIME MINISTER S. JACOBS**  
**Letter to Civil Servants**  
**COST CUTTING MEASURES**

Dear Civil Servants,

“The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence”, – Confucius.

No civil servant should believe there is a conflict between complying with the law and serving the Government of the day – and no Prime Minister or Minister should place the civil service in such an invidious position.

Since the inception of the COVID-19 reality and its effects on the economy of St. Maarten, the Minister of Finance, to safeguard the required liquidity to sustain the country, prepared a SSRP.

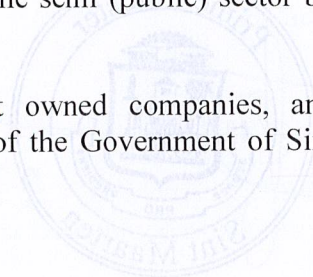
In addition to this, the Government of Sint Maarten requested liquidity support for the immediate recovery of the economic fallout due to the coronavirus outbreak. As a result, thereof, Sint Maarten will receive its second liquidity support until June 30, 2020, to the amount of **ANG 53 million**, to be paid in two installments:

- a. **ANG 24 million** to be paid out immediately;
- b. **ANG 29 million** for salary support after Sint Maarten has complied with contribution of its employees and the adjustment of the graduated scales with respect to the SSRP.

As it relates to the essential conditions set by the Kingdom Council of Ministers:

- I. Sint Maarten must increase the pension and AOV age from 62 to 65 ultimately July 1, 2020;
- II. An adjustment, resulting in the decrease of the total package of labor conditions (salaries, (vacation) allowance, etc.) of the Ministers and Parliamentarians by 25% ultimately July 1, 2020 and until further notice;
- III. An adjustment, resulting in the decrease of the total package of labor conditions (salaries, (vacation) allowance etc.) of all employees, workers within the semi (public) sector by 12,5% ultimately July 1, 2020 and until further notice.

The aforementioned adjustment, applies to all Government owned companies, and foundations or other entities subsidized through the budget of the Government of Sint Maarten by at least 50%.





This decrease applies to all workers regardless of their salary with the understanding that the gross salary after deduction is not less than the minimum wage.

In addition, no indexation is permitted, effective July 1, 2020 and until further notice;

On the pension and AOV age adjustments, please note that Government has already been in the process to do these adjustments. Both pieces of legislation are already in the process and after due diligence will be sent to parliament for debate and approval.

- IV. Salary and fee limit of all labour/consulting conditions of top executives working within the semi (public) sector including workers, consultants of all Government owned companies, and foundations or other entities subsidized through the budget of the Government of Sint Maarten by at least 50%.

The salary/fee limit is equivalent to 130% of the new salary norm (primary and secondary labour conditions) of the Prime Minister and applies to existing and future employees, workers, consultants.

The legality of these conditions were questioned from inception. General concerns were, whether the unilateral and (temporary) decrease in salary of the semi (public) sector by 12,5% is lawful?

Pursuant to the constitution of the Civil Servants, affectionately known as the Landsverordenening Materieel Ambtenarenrecht or the LMA, the labor conditions of a worker/employee can only be amended, if the employee/worker has explicitly consented to the change. Said adjustment resulting in decrease of salary is an amendment to the labor conditions. This Government will do in accordance with our laws and procedures.

Given the current circumstances, specifically the current COVID-19 crisis, it is in my opinion just to say that the proposal of Government to the unions is considered reasonable and fair. The unions should be more reasonable, and fair in their approach towards Government.

In closing, civil servants, please indulge me the opportunity to remind you, the good hardworking people of Sint Maarten, though in the face of adversity -

“We, who call S’Maartin our home, and see it as a place where opportunities exist, as a place where each citizen is empowered to realize their own strength to progress at all levels, should stand together in this time of crisis.

We are St. Maarten, a place where EVERY DREAM CAN BE ACHIEVED TOGETHER!”

I remain

Silvina E. Jacobs  
Prime Minister / Minister of General Affairs



27 MAY 2020