

Speech of the Minister of Finance, Mrs. Ersilia de Lanooy

At the conference **Shaping our future together**

Saturday, May 30, 2009

Distinguished guests,

One of the fundamental principles of public finance management is to regulate Governments financial activities and to ensure that all revenues, expenditures, assets and liabilities are managed effectively and efficiently. For years this has been a very stressful task for me, because of the weight of the national debt conflicting with my strong desire to invest in the development of our people.

Today I stand here as a proud minister of finance because we have managed to create a surplus on our national budget. This was achieved because of effective and efficient public finance management, but especially due to the effect of the debt relief, we have negotiated with the Government of the Kingdom as part of the constitutional reform package.

It is therefore with great satisfaction that I have agreed to reserve an amount of half a million Antillean guilders to be submitted to a sport fund foundation to guarantee the financing of our sports development after the constitutional reform.

There were rumors that the benefits of our debt relief would only benefit the rich and the banks. Therefore today I want to officially hand over a symbolic check with this historic amount of half a million Antillean guilders to the representatives of the National Olympic Committee. And in order to guarantee the structural financing for this sport fund, adjustments will be made in the National lottery law to guarantee a regular yearly subsidy of half a million Antillean Guilders.

With this act we want you, dear guests to be a witness that the benefits of our financial relieve will without any doubt benefit everyone.

Money and finances is not a goal in itself but an essential management tool to accomplish welfare for all our people.

I am especially proud that this substantial amount will be invested in our youth, the future of our nation. This is just the first action of many more to follow as a result of the debt relieve.

I would like to thank all my colleagues for their support, especially Mrs. Leeflang and Mrs. de Jong-Elhage.

In Papiamentu we say: Dios bendishon'e i lague rende.

I wish you all a fruitful and inspiring conference.