

**Speech of the Minister of Education, Culture and Sports
Conference “Shaping our future together”
29 may 2009**

Distinguished guests,

One of the fundamental principles of sports and more specific Olympics is that it is a philosophy of life. It seeks to exalt and combine in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. For that reason the combination of sport, culture and education, creates a balanced person where joy is found in effort.

Therefore every nation that has mankind in the center of its development must invest in sports and must have a sports policy.

Even amid this historic moment of constitutional reform of the Netherlands Antilles, the national Olympic movement finds itself with an equally historic opportunity, to either shape our future together in favor and for the benefit of our sporters or be shaped out. And I am proud to stand here to declare that all those responsible for the national Olympic movement stepped up to the plate and declared that although the Netherlands Antilles will cease to exist, **WE THE NATIONAL OLYMPIC MOVEMENT OF THE FIVE ISLANDS OF THE DUTCH CARIBBEAN WILL CONTINUE TOGETHER. FOR WE UNDERSTAND THE TRUE MEANING OF STANDING UNITED.**

This is also the moment for the Government to trough it's weight behind our sports vision and policy to prove that we are not proclaiming just words. Because it is one thing to have a vision it is another thing to accomplish that vision. Lately I have met those who believe that it is possible to execute a policy without money.

But I am proud to be part of a government that doesn't only believe that we need money to fulfill our policies, but also find a way to put that money on the table. And so our Minister of Finance minister Ersilia de Lanooy, as a result of the dept relieve from Holland found financial room in our own budget to make an amount of half a million, 500.000, available to establish a sports fund that will be established to finance the future of the development of our sporters and the national Olympic committee after the dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles. And in order to guarantee the financing for this sport fund, adjustments will be made in the National lottery law to quarantine a regular yearly subside of half a million.

For those who do not believe that we can, tomorrow the minister of Finance will hand over a visible check to the representative of the five islands of the Dutch Caribbean.

Distinguish guests,

WE THE NATIONAL OLYMPIC MOVEMENT OF THE FIVE ISLANDS OF THE DUTCH CARIBBEAN WILL CONTINUE TOGETHER. FOR WE UNDERSTAND THE TRUE MEANING OF STANDING TOGETHER.

Today with this conference “shaping the future together”, we mark the beginning of a bright future together. As Minister of Education, Culture and sports I want to encourage all to have only one beneficiary on our minds and in our hearts, and that is the sporters and the development of their talents and the shaping of their characters with principles such as fairness, respect, fair play, courage, determination and, of course, equality.”

Sport is a unique instrument to shape the characters of our young treasures, the youth.

Yes we can and must do this together.

In closing I want to express my sincere appreciation for your presence here.

A special word of appreciation goes to the organizing committee for the organization of this very special and historic conference.

And I hereby declare this conference shaping our future together for open.