

One Kingdom,  
four prime ministers

On the road to the  
UN Climate Summit

The success of  
TNO Caribbean

Happy Flow  
ready for take-off

# ARUBA

Dushi Tera

Volume 6, Issue 4  
September 2015  
€ 1.95

**Vanessa Benlolo:  
A better world  
thanks to Yeplive**

**Aruba: role model  
for sustainability**

# CONTENTS

Sharing best practices	3
Working towards a sustainable Aruba	7
TEDxAruba: the world is watching	10
Yeplive makes the world a better place	12
Rethinking education	14
Climate: the facts don't lie	15
Why the Dutch flag waves in the Caribbean	16
The Kingdom: a reliable partner	18
The watchful eye of the Coastguard	22
On the road to the UN Climate Summit	24
One kingdom, four prime ministers	26
The World Bank supports sustainability	28
Parlatino: truly inspiring	29
Sustainability Week	31
A test-bed for innovation	33
Dutch maritime tradition chooses Aruba	36
Happy Flow launch	38



Aruba Dushi Tera is a two-monthly publication for everyone who is interested in the country and people of Aruba. The magazine's name echoes the opening lines of Aruba's national anthem in Papiamentu ('Aruba, Sweet Land').

**Production:** ADCaribbean BV

**Contributors to this issue:**

Marjanne Havelaar  
Myriam Tonk-Croes  
René Zwart  
Nico van der Ven  
Santiago Cortes  
Elnathan Hijmering  
Noel Werleman  
Marko Espinoza  
Pedro Diaz  
Sidney Kock  
Tera Group

**Translation:** Translation Department (AVT), Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Design and print:**  
Schotanus & Jens BV

**Circulation:** 2,500

All authorial rights reserved. Articles may be reprinted with reference to the source.

**SUBSCRIBE**

If you would like to receive a copy of Aruba Dushi Tera at your home or work address, please email [info@arubahuis.nl](mailto:info@arubahuis.nl)

**ADVERTISE**

For information about the opportunities and fees for advertising in Aruba Dushi Tera, email: [info@arubahuis.nl](mailto:info@arubahuis.nl)

**Arubahuis**

R.J. Schimmelpennincklaan 1  
2517 JN Den Haag  
The Netherlands  
**T:** +31 (0)70 356 6200  
**E:** [info@arubahuis.nl](mailto:info@arubahuis.nl)  
**W:** [www.arubahuis.nl](http://www.arubahuis.nl)



# Sharing best practices

**By Frank Heemskerk**



*Frank Heemskerk serves as an Executive Director at the World Bank in Washington. He was formerly a member of the House of Representatives, where he represented the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA). As State Secretary for Economic Affairs in the Balkenende government, his responsibilities included foreign trade.*

On 1 June King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima paid their first official visit to Washington DC. This included a round-table discussion at the World Bank on sustainable development, with a special focus on Small Island Developing States. So the Caribbean part of the Kingdom was also represented. The King and Queen were accompanied by the President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim. And as an Executive Director representing the Dutch constituency at the World Bank, I had the honour of hosting the occasion.

Aruba is aiming to become a 100% sustainable island. Close involvement with the World Bank has helped to put this ambition into practice. After all, the World Bank works with many governments and businesses worldwide to promote sustainable and inclusive growth and reduce poverty.

During the round-table discussion led by Jorge Familiar, the Bank's Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean, prime ministers Mike Eman (Aruba), Ivar Asjes (Curaçao) and Marcel Gumbs (St Maarten) jointly presented the challenges and opportunities facing small island states on the road to sustainable development.

The meeting was attended by a select company, including the US Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Roberta Jacobson, and her department staff, Jules Kortenhorst of the Carbon War Room and Rocky Mountain Institute and Carole Baldwin of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

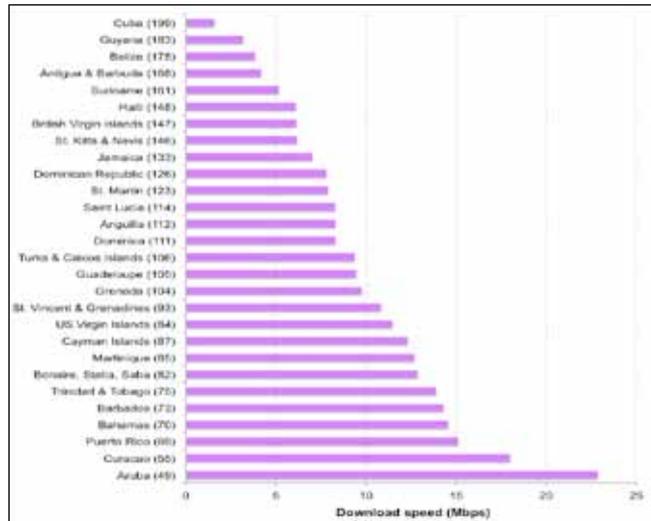
Prime Minister Mike Eman talked about Aruba's experience in sustainable energy and the cooperative partnerships it has forged with international actors to achieve its goal of adopting 100% renewable energy by 2020. He urged for ongoing support for the sustainable energy agenda through regional cooperation and the active involvement of multilateral organisations like the World Bank. The Carbon War Room and the Rocky Mountain Institute are key partners in Aruba's transition to sustainable energy. Aruba is one of the Caribbean islands taking part in the Ten Island Challenge aimed at fostering the blue economy and sustainable oceans strategy, and sustainable and inclusive growth.

The World Bank understands the vulnerability of the islands in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. Jorge Familiar acknowledged the importance of focusing on the resilience of Small Island Developing States. He recommended they should receive greater support, for instance through capacity-building and sharing of best practices and know-how between smaller island states. This was well illustrated by the Memorandum of Understanding between the World Bank and Aruba, signed by Prime Minister Mike Eman and Jorge Familiar on 2 June.

After all, a sustainable future is something that involves us all.

# Almost finished

Good progress is being made on the construction of a new state-of-the-art container and cargo port at Barcadera. The cranes for hoisting containers recently arrived at the construction site. The first ship is expected to berth in late 2015 or early 2016. The new port will be a regional transshipment hub where giant container ships will offload their cargo onto smaller ships for transportation to its final destination. The space vacated in the port of Oranjestad will be used to provide extra moorings for cruise ships.



# Fastest

According to research carried out by news blog ICT Pulse, Aruba has the fastest internet in the Caribbean region. With an average download speed of 22.84 megabits per second the island scores only fractionally below the global average. Last year Aruba achieved just 12.47 Mbps, but considerable investments have been made as part of the island's transformation into a trade hub between Europe and Latin America. Aruba has now climbed to 49th out of the 200 countries assessed.

# Innovative

Reina Beatrix is the world's most innovative airport. According to Airport Business, the Aruban airport's Happy Flow project earned it the number-one position. The magazine hailed Happy Flow as a unique project where public and private passenger processes are aligned, resulting in greater passenger comfort. Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport ranked second on the list, thanks to the ultra-modern security checkpoints it recently introduced.



# Cooperation

Reina Beatrix Airport and the Schiphol Group have decided to extend their successful partnership. To this end, CEO Jos Nijhuis and Minister of Tourism, Transport, Primary Sector and Culture Otmar Oduber have signed a new five-year cooperation agreement. Aruba's airport expects to handle a record number of over three million passengers this year.



# Record

The cruise ship Carnival Breeze made travel history this summer by bringing 4,763 visitors to Aruba in one go. The previous record was 4,758, set by the same ship on 8 August 2013. Every year, the island welcomes 600,000 cruise passengers, in addition to over a million overnight tourists. The new container port due to open later this year at Barcadera will free up extra moorings for cruise ships in Oranjestad harbour, boosting Aruba's capacity to meet the growing demand of the cruise market.

# Fast ferry

Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire are jointly commissioning a feasibility study into a fast ferry service connecting the three islands. A sea link of this kind would considerably improve transportation of people and goods and thus give a major boost to the local economy. It would also make it easier and more affordable for tourists to go island-hopping.





Subscribe  
3 weeks before start

# Bachelor level Logistics, Transport, Maritime & Aviation programs

The University of Aruba is an international university. Staff comes from Europe, the US and other parts of the world, all bringing their own specialties and academic methods.

With its head office in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, the STC-Group Holding B.V. is a worldwide strategic combination of well-established education, training, research, consultancy and implementation service providers for the entire shipping, port, and transport and logistics chain as well as for the port-related oil and chemical industry.

Together we offer programs in a broad range for the Caribbean market.

Logistics & Transport	Duration	Startdate	
International Transport Chain & Parties	1 week	17 August 2015	1 February 2016
Hinterland & Multimodal Transport	1 week	2 November 2015	8 February 2016
Supply Chain Management	2 weeks	9 November 2015	15 February 2016
Warehousing & Inventory Management	1 week	23 November 2015	29 February 2016
Shipbroking & Chartering	1 week		7 March 2016
Maritime & Commercial Logistic Law	1 week		14 March 2016
Port Economics, Finance & Competition	3 weeks		1 February 2016
Port Economics	1 week		1 February 2016
Port Finance	1 week		8 February 2016
Port Competition & Governance	1 week		15 February 2016
Transport Logistic Maritime English	3 weeks	12 October 2015	1 February 2016
Transport English	1 week	12 October 2015	8 February 2016
Logistic English	1 week	19 October 2015	15 February 2016

Maritime	Duration	Startdate	
Port Facility Security Management	1 week	4 October 2015	
Port State Control Management	2 weeks	16 November 2015	
Maritime English	1 week	26 October 2015	22 February 2016

Aviation	Duration	Startdate	
Basic IATA Dangerous Goods	1 week	March 2016	
Flight Dispatcher	6 weeks	To be developed	
Load Controller Aviation	4 weeks	To be developed	

Upon successful completion of a program, a joint UA and STC-Group Holding B.V. certificate will be provided. For each program, a minimum of 10 subscriptions is required for the continuation of that program.

# Working towards a sustainable Aruba



**Mike Eman and his government are halfway through their second term of office. A good opportunity to conduct a mid-term review with the Prime Minister himself.**

***What's been achieved in the past six years and what are your ambitions for the remaining two?***

'Two years? Well, that's how long we've got until the next elections, but the agenda that put us in office in 2009 and for which the electorate gave us an even bigger mandate in 2013 will actually run until 2020. By then, Aruba aims to be the first country in the world to have fully replaced fossil fuels with renewable energy. We've already made substantial progress, but there's still a lot to be done. Whether we get the

chance to complete our task is, of course, up to the voters.'

***What are the most successful projects so far?***

'Aruba is blessed with an abundance of sun, wind and powerful sea currents. We have one of the largest solar parks in the region. You see it as soon as you arrive on the island – close to Reina Beatrix Airport, which we operate jointly with Schiphol. The solar park has a dual function, because the panels form a roof over the car park and provide shade for the cars. Some of our

government buildings and schools already have solar collectors. We began by generating energy from waste and now our preparations for a second wind farm are in full swing. We're also well advanced with a project that uses cold seawater to air condition hotels. Our government vehicle fleet is also gradually converting to electric. We're using tax incentives to encourage the business community and the public to switch to green energy. And there are many more examples I could mention.'

***How does a small country like Aruba (population: 105,000) find the necessary expertise?***

'Our motto is "We can do it ourselves, but not alone." Aruba is shaping its own future – there's no question about that. But we're thankful we can make use of implementing organisations with a proven track record. TNO Nederland is world-renowned for its research into technological innovation. Here on the island, TNO is developing a smart community – a residential area where the latest findings are tested and improved in an authentic user environment. We receive major support from the Carbon War Room (CWR), founded by Sir Richard Branson



One of the biggest solar parks in the Caribbean was inaugurated in Aruba this year.

with the aim of making the world carbon-neutral. Another of our partners is the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) in the United States. And we also work with companies like Philips, with their tremendous expertise in sustainable lighting, who have chosen to showcase their products here.'

***So energy is not the only area you want to make more sustainable?***

'Absolutely right. What we're aiming to create is a fully sustainable society where economic prosperity is shared fairly among all its members. We mustn't get fixated by GDP figures because they say little about quality of life. When the worldwide financial crisis broke out, we deliberately focused on fostering economic growth, not as an end in itself, but in order to safeguard essentials like housing, education, health care, infrastructure and employment. That's the way to raise Aruba to a higher level of sustainability.'

***During your presentation at TEDxBinnenhof you said you wanted to make Aruba a five-star society.***

'Tourists flock to our beautiful island from every corner of the globe in search of sun, sea, beaches, natural beauty and culture. And for the five-star service delivered by hard-working Arubans, who are helping to boost the prosperity of our small island. I believe our people deserve five-star residential areas, five-star schools and five-star facilities. It's a long-term process, I admit. But in the meantime, we've revitalised several disadvantaged areas and renovated a large number of schools. We've also introduced a new streetcar service and restored many heritage buildings in downtown Oranjestad, so the city centre is bustling with life once again.'

***So you're engineering the ideal society?***

'No, not at all! The government creates the right conditions and facilitates change, but it's up to

the Arubans to flesh it out together, with the emphasis on that last word. Individual freedom is a great good, but for a society to function properly, there must be social cohesion. It's obvious that the sense of community has declined all over the world in recent years. We no longer see each other on the bus because we all have a car. TV has taken over the social function of the cinema. That's why the government is doing all it can to promote social cohesion, for instance by consciously creating places where people can meet.'

***It sounds idealistic and expensive at a time when many countries are struggling with deficits.***

'I see it as a necessity rather than as idealistic. It's clear that the 'me' era isn't sustainable. Far-reaching individualisation has led to social impoverishment. Standards and values are being eroded. And now the years of plenty are over. A return to the welfare state is not an option for governments. The answer is a participation society, in which the government's task is to create essential conditions. I believe in a society that encourages personal development but also acts as its own social safety net.'

***Speaking of budget deficits, how is Aruba faring financially?***

'When we came into office in 2009, the situation looked anything but rosy. Our neighbourhoods, schools and infrastructure were in a serious state of neglect. Meanwhile, the world economic crisis had arrived. Our main source of income – tourism – had declined, and our

main source of employment – the oil refinery – had closed down. So we made a conscious choice to boost the economy first. It led to a vigorous economic recovery with positive spin-offs for employment. Through this we built up sufficient resilience to carry out the necessary reforms and make government finances more sustainable. Now we're well on track to systematically balancing our books from 2017 onwards.'

***So Aruba is profiling itself as a trade hub between Europe and Latin America.***

'This is one of our policy priorities. After the refinery closed down, our economy became more dependent on tourism. Fortunately, things are going extremely well and this year our growth rate has reached double figures. But in order to create stability, we need to diversify. For instance, by making better use of our strategic location. We're the ideal springboard for European companies that want to do business in Latin America. And vice versa, too, of course.'

***But do businesses really need Aruba for that?***

'Multinationals usually find their own way, but for small and medium-sized enterprises it can be very attractive to set up a sales or service office in Aruba that deals with several countries in South America. It means you don't need a branch in every country. Aruba has excellent air links and our new state-of-the-art port for cargo and container shipping will soon be in operation. We have a high level of professional services. Our workforce is relatively well-educated, speaks at least four languages and is familiar with Western and Latin American ways of doing business. Another big advantage is that we're part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, so our government services and judiciary have to meet high standards. This is not meant to be a sales pitch for Aruba, but you only have to look at the success of the TNO branch office here.'

***It must be gratifying to have received so much praise from the rest of the world at the recent OAS summit in Panama and also at a summit in Toronto.***

'That's something I can't deny, particularly since in the early years I felt I was a voice crying in the wilderness. But my task is to seek support, not recognition. In 2009 we said to each other "By 2020 we will be 100% green." And then we rolled our sleeves up and got down to business. You don't realise you're doing anything special until you hear it from outsiders. More and more people are coming to see our efforts and I'm getting more and more invitations to speak at international gatherings. As Kingdom countries, we do this together. For instance, together with Prime Minister Mark Rutte we recently showcased the Kingdom at the OAS summit, presenting all the advantages it offers in Europe and Latin America. And more recently we did the same at a gathering of the UN Security Council on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), together with Kare I van Oosterom, our highly active Permanent Representative at the UN. We are happy to share the knowledge and experience we're gained so far on our journey to 100% sustainability. After all, we have a planet worth cherishing.'



At the TEDxBinnenhof event in 2014, Prime Minister Mike Eman of Aruba called for a broader approach to sustainability.



TED ambassador Jim Stolze and director of the Bureau of Innovation Bianca Peters at the announcement of TEDxAruba.

# The world is watching

**On 23 September the first TEDxAruba will take place, entitled 'Island of Sustainable Solutions'. This event offers Aruba a unique chance to showcase its ambitions for innovation and sustainability, because interested viewers all over the world – for instance at Dutch embassies abroad – will be able to watch and listen via live streaming.**

Jim Stolze, one of twelve official ambassadors appointed by TED.com, was present at the announcement of the meeting. The TED conference is an annual event in California where pioneers and visionaries are given the opportunity to share their ideas with the world. In 2009 Stolze brought TED to the Netherlands. Together with his team he has now organised TEDxAmsterdam for the fourth time. The event attracted overwhelming media attention, won a European

Design Award and was nominated for 'event of the year' by the trade journal High Profile.

TED stands for Technology, Entertainment and Design, but at TEDxAruba the 'E' stands for Education. There will be twelve

speakers, including top chef François Geurds, who has three Michelin stars, creative genius and Chief Happiness Officer Arnaud Collery, and Vanessa Benlolo, co-founder of Yeplive. Varelle Croes, who won TEDxOranjestadWomen earlier this year, will also speak at the event. All speakers will give a brief presentation about one of the conference themes: technology, education, design and sustainable solutions.

Stolze says the challenge is to find speakers with ideas that can really bring about change. 'With TED we go out of our way to spread good ideas. Local initiatives for licensed TED events are encouraged. My job is to travel round the world and help organise them.'

The idea of holding a TEDx event in Aruba came from the Bureau of Innovation. According to the Bureau's director, Bianca Peters, 'The aim of the Aruban government is to develop a sustainable society where health, happiness and well-being are key priorities. Those are fine words, but finding practical solutions is a challenge which requires technology, education and creativity. And those are the themes that TED is all about.' TEDxAruba is not just about 'Ideas worth Spreading,' it's about 'Actions worth Doing'. So the organisers are working with each speaker at how they could contribute further – in addition to their TEDx talk – to Aruba's sustainable development, within their own field of expertise. TEDxAruba can count on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' support.

The idea is that all Dutch embassies will facilitate live streaming of events for interested viewers abroad. Concrete plans have already been announced by the embassies and consulates in Washington, Bogotá, Panama, Paramaribo, Miami and San Francisco. In the Netherlands the Aruba House is also hosting a gathering for those wishing to follow the event in Oranjestad live.

In the run-up to TEDxAruba, several 'Inspiring Sessions' are being organised as part of the 'On the Road to TEDxAruba' programme. The first focused on start-ups, entrepreneurs who are just starting out and looking for a scalable and repeatable sustainable business model. 'Start-ups help to diversify the economy, which is essential if Aruba is going to become 100%

sustainable. Start-ups are useful because they combine technology and creativity, and can offer solutions to the challenges faced by existing organisations. They also prevent 'brain drain'. By creating an inspiring, challenging and enterprising society we can ensure that students and graduates no longer feel the need to leave Aruba. We might even be able to tempt high flyers to return. Finally, start-ups also help put Aruba on the map as a 'living lab' and a hub linking Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean region,' says Peters.

The second Inspiring Session was a beach 'hackathon' on the theme of 'happiness'. Frenchman Arnaud Collery and his team came to Aruba specially: 'Happiness is what life is all about. Aruba calls itself One

Happy Island. Why shouldn't we assign our best people and best technology to creating more happiness?' The hackathon was a competition for teams of technical and creative people who had 48 hours to build a prototype of an app or website which increases happiness in some way or other. 'Of course the app should have a purpose; it should make a contribution to society. We created an atmosphere where as many innovative ideas as possible could be generated in two days. An excellent example of how technology can be used to make progress, bring people together and increase and spread happiness. It really is One Happy Island,' says Collery.

For more information, visit [www.tedxaruba.com](http://www.tedxaruba.com)



**Chief Happiness Officer Arnaud Collery and his creative team came to Aruba for an inspiring – and apparently relaxing – hackathon on the beach.**

**Co-founder Vanessa Benlolo:**

# Yeplive makes the world a better place

**'What this world needs is a transnational movement of active citizens who want to make the world a better place. If they can find each other, we can build a better, more sustainable world. And technology can play an important role.'** Yeplive™ co-founder Vanessa Benlolo sees the growing influence of technology on our daily lives as a good thing. **'It enables us to become more aware of others, which automatically leads to more understanding, a better society and world peace.'**

Benlolo, who was born on Aruba and now lives in Toronto, will talk

about her passion at TEDxAruba on 23 September. In 1992, at the



age of nine, she and her family moved from Aruba to New Jersey in the United States. Eight years later they returned. 'Of course I'd learned to speak English, so I attended the International School of Aruba.' When it came to choosing where to go next an American university seemed an obvious choice. 'I'd always been interested in science-related topics like genetics and life sciences.' But the universities that best suited Benlolo's interests were financially out of reach. 'My mother suggested checking out the options in Canada. That was good advice, because the University of Guelph in Ontario offered a course in biological engineering that was perfect for me.' After completing her four-year degree with honours she leapt at the chance to stay in Canada on a postgraduate work permit.

Benlolo started working at a plastics company, dealing primarily with the demand for biodegradable polymers. She then moved to Univar, a global distributor of industrial chemicals, where she created a new role, combining chemical manufacturing and renewable energy. 'I was quickly climbing the career ladder, but after more than four years I'd had enough and I

switched to a company that makes medical equipment and implants. Alongside my work there, I trained as an executive coach and sales trainer.'

Although her career was still going strong, it wasn't giving her the satisfaction she was looking for. 'What drives me is the desire to help others maximise their own abilities, without letting themselves be impeded by their position in life, their background or other circumstances they can't change.' Benlolo has herself experienced the advantages and disadvantages of her Aruban roots. 'I came from a small island where there weren't many opportunities to go to university. From that safe haven I entered this enormous world filled with unfamiliar things. I persevered and overcame the difficulties. Being the cultural melting pot that it is, Aruba gave me the ability to mix with all kinds of different people. Now that I've reached a good place for myself, I want to help others get there too.'

She created that 'good place' herself in 2013, when she co-founded Yeplive™, a platform connecting people from all over the world through social media. 'Basically, via live streaming people can see what's going on in other people's lives. You literally see things from someone else's perspective, which makes people more aware of how the world works and what needs to change to make it better. But Yeplive™ also raises awareness of what's great about our world and of fantastic new developments.'



Benlolo didn't need to think twice about being part of TEDxAruba. 'I was ecstatic when they asked me. It's so special to be invited to speak at TED, and on the island of my birth, too! I have the TED app on my smartphone and I watch a TED talk almost every night. It's always been a dream of mine to speak at TED myself.' She thinks it's a great way to share ideas and inspire one another.

'TEDxAruba can also show the world what's happening in Aruba and how innovative our culture is. On this small island new ideas are embraced and there's the drive to realise them too. In bigger communities people wait to see

what someone else is going to do, but in Aruba there often isn't anyone else, so people rise to the challenge and take matters into their own hands.'

The best way to bring about local and international change, according to Benlolo, is to make sure people are open to others and their ideas. 'TED is a good platform for that. By sharing knowledge and experiences, audiences are encouraged to innovate as well. In my TED talk, I'm going to discuss how the technology I use can contribute to innovative developments in Aruba and elsewhere. I hope my story can inspire others, like others have inspired me.'



For more information, visit [www.yeplive.com](http://www.yeplive.com)



# Rethinking education

**‘Our education system is preparing young people for the past, when it should really be looking to the future.’ That is the message that Glenn Thodé, Rector of the University of Aruba, wants to get across in his talk at TEDxAruba.**

‘Of course the idea that pupils should acquire knowledge and insight remains unchanged, but the structure and mechanisms we use are outdated. They are from a completely different time. Changes can and must be made.’ Thodé sees TEDxAruba as an ideal

platform for presenting his ideas on a fundamental reform of education. In the early years of TED he became familiar with the TED concept and he was instantly hooked. ‘A group of people who all had something special to say and brought it to everyone’s

attention in such a short time. I was so happy that the existence of internet allowed me to watch as people did these amazing things with technology or music and shared ideas that really tickled the mind. TED is an exceedingly captivating and innovative movement which is a perfect fit for Aruba.’

Despite his enthusiasm for TEDxAruba, Thodé isn’t very comfortable with the idea of speaking to a room full of people, with an untold number of others watching via live stream. ‘I’m much more at home in one-to-one conversation or small groups.’ But he didn’t hesitate about taking part. ‘I’ve been offered a unique chance to share my thoughts with a large group of people and I hope to get a great deal of feedback to help me further develop my concept.’

The main point of Thodé’s TED talk will be that the current education system was developed a century ago to prepare people for life in an industrial world. ‘Our society has changed radically. We live in a knowledge society now, but we’re still educating our young people in an old and obsolete system. There have been educational reforms before, but every time it has really just been old wine in new bottles. We need to let go of the old structures and look at future needs. We need to develop talent and break down barriers. More than ever before, new generations will have to work together, look beyond their borders and, above all, be flexible. That requires a different type of education. I will share my ideas on this at TEDxAruba. I hope they will get people thinking. We owe it to our children to offer them good prospects for the future.



# The facts don't lie

**'I want people to hear that climate change really is happening and that human activity is causing it. The data collected by our Earth science satellites makes it clear what's going on. Those are the facts, and that's what I'll be talking about.'** NASA engineer Edward Cheung was gripped by the magic of technology at a young age when he took a radio to bits. Cheung grew up in Aruba's second-largest town San Nicolas and has been working for the US space programme for almost a quarter of a century. On 23 September he will be one of the speakers at TEDxAruba.



Cheung earned a PhD in robotics from Yale University before starting a summer internship at the Kennedy Space Center. In 1996 he joined the team that develops updates for the Hubble Space Telescope and NASA's many satellites with the aim of extending their lifespan for as long as possible. 'NASA tries to make its activities as sustainable as it can. We could send brand new satellites into space every five

years, but we choose to maintain and repair the ones we have, so that they last for years to come. And we do the same for the International Space Station.' Cheung is one of the many Arubans who can boast an

impressive international career but have not abandoned their roots. Cheung's pride in his origins becomes clear when you hear the name he thought up for a crucial replacement part he developed for the Hubble: ACSC/NCS Relay Unit Breaker Assembly – or ARUBA for short. 'The whole of Aruba was watching and cheering when astronaut John Grunsfeld announced from space that the installation of the ARUBA box had been a success.'

In his TED talk Cheung will address various aspects which for him are closely linked. 'Of course I'll speak about growing up in Aruba, but also about the 25 years I've spent at NASA. I'll explain why it has been my personal wish to speak at a TED event and how incredible it is to be given the opportunity to do so on the island where I was born, and with sustainability as the theme. And yes, I'll be talking about the need for change. If you take the time to look at the hard data on deforestation, rising temperatures, melting glaciers, increasing CO2 emissions and many more factors, there can be no doubt about it.'

Cheung regularly returns to Aruba to give guest lectures at schools and at the university. 'Giving a TED talk has been on my bucket list for a long time. I can only hope my contribution will be a credit to the event.' ■

**TED<sup>x</sup>Aruba**

# Why the Dutch flag waves in the Caribbean



*By Gert Oostindie*

**The Kingdom of the Netherlands is a transatlantic state, uniting a middle-sized European country with six small islands in the Caribbean that were colonised in the 1630s. The islands have not been decolonised in the classic sense, in as much as there has been no transfer of sovereignty from the Netherlands to its former colonies. Rather, three of the islands (Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten, with a joint population of just over 300,000) are autonomous countries within the Kingdom, while the less populated ones (Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba, with a total of just over 25,000 inhabitants) recently became overseas public bodies of the Netherlands with a status comparable to municipalities. Some may think of this continuity from a colonial to a post-colonial model, perpetuating the existence of non-sovereign polities in the Antilles, as a new form of colonialism. Clearly, however, the great majority of these islands' inhabitants do not want to break with the Netherlands.**

Why is this? The 'Dutch Caribbean' is a remnant of a once impressive colonial empire, with its centre of gravity in Asia. Indonesia became an independent country after a bloody war of independence and

protracted negotiations between 1945 and 1949. It took the Dutch a long time to accept the loss of their biggest colony, which they saw as indispensable to the Netherlands both economically and geopolitically. Suriname gained its

independence in 1975 under completely different circumstances. By then, the Dutch government had little economic or geopolitical interest in the Caribbean and was eager to transfer sovereignty. Surinamese independence was therefore simply the outcome of negotiations between two governments that both had the same aim in view.

This was not true of the 'Netherlands Antilles', as the six islands were known at the time. While the Dutch government had been insisting since the early 1970s that this six-island entity should become a sovereign state, the mood on the islands was completely opposed. The islanders consistently refused to cut the umbilical cord that tied them to the former colonial power, and felt decreasing enthusiasm for keeping the six islands together. It took the Dutch a long time to accept that independence could not be imposed on the islands, and that the Antilles' centrifugal tendencies could not be held in check. The outcome, sealed in 2010, was nonetheless that the Kingdom would remain transatlantic, and that the six-island 'Netherlands Antilles' would no longer exist. The constitutional arrangements underlying today's transatlantic Kingdom date back to the early days of post-war decolonisation. Adopted in 1954, the Charter (Statuut) for the Kingdom of the Netherlands has remained the key



document for relations between the Netherlands and its former colonies in the Caribbean. The Charter's main formal features can be briefly summarised as follows: the participating states declare that they are voluntary partners in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, exercising their right to self-determination by forming it. The Kingdom is defined as an entity made up of autonomous countries, pledging to promote common interests on the basis of equality and to accord one another aid and assistance where appropriate. The four countries currently constituting the Kingdom – Aruba, Curaçao, St Maarten and the Netherlands – are autonomous in their internal affairs. A number of specific matters are defined as 'Kingdom affairs', the main ones being nationality, foreign affairs, defence and the safeguarding of good governance. The constitutional monarch reigns over

each of the countries of the Kingdom; the governors in the Caribbean countries represent the monarch and thus the Kingdom, while at the same time they head the country's governments, formed by democratically elected parliaments.

Kingdom affairs are decided by the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom, consisting of the Dutch government supplemented by ministers plenipotentiary of the participating Caribbean countries. There is no Kingdom parliament, but as with the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom, other Dutch institutions like the Council of State function as Kingdom institutions with the addition of a representative of each Caribbean country.

No one would claim that this is a perfect post-colonial arrangement. The Kingdom has a 'democratic deficit', since the Dutch dominate

the Kingdom government. The Netherlands' scale (17 million inhabitants) and resources make it the dominant partner in the Kingdom. There are also considerable cultural differences between the European and Caribbean parts of the Kingdom. The structure obviously has drawbacks and leads to tensions. Yet it is manifest over the past few decades, overwhelming majorities on all six islands have consistently voted to prolong the post-colonial ties embodied in the transatlantic Kingdom. The arguments are clear. Antilleans feel that the Kingdom guarantees democracy, human rights and liberties, and territorial integrity. They welcome the development funds it provides and the confidence it gives foreign investors. And then value the right of residence in the Netherlands and in the broader European Union that Dutch citizenship entails. Pragmatism prevails over nationalist ideology. This is not an exceptional situation. All over the world, similar arguments have led citizens of small, non-sovereign territories to refrain from struggling for full independence.

*Gert Oostindie is director of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) in Leiden and Professor of History at Leiden University*



**Kingdom Minister Bert Koenders**

# Partner for sustainable peace, justice and development

**The Kingdom of the Netherlands is campaigning for a seat on the UN Security Council for the 2017-2018 term. To find out why, our editorial team talked to Bert Koenders, the Kingdom's Minister of Foreign Affairs.**

***As Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, you represent four autonomous countries. How do you do this?***

'Our Kingdom is made up of four autonomous countries: the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten. The three latter countries are located in the

Caribbean. The country of the Netherlands consists of a territory in Europe and the islands of Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius in the Caribbean. Only the Kingdom of the Netherlands can be considered a state, and only the Kingdom of the Netherlands has international legal personality. The situation may seem unusual

but it is not unique. I know of a number of countries with comparable arrangements: Denmark, for instance, represents Greenland and the Faroe Islands, and New Zealand represents the Cook Islands and Niue. I could also mention France, the UK and the US. Still, every country is a bit different. Every foreign minister has something to explain to the outside world. And no constitution is identical to any other. All of our countries share the same foreign and defence policy,



besides autonomous responsibilities, so I represent the whole Kingdom. In close coordination we work together. It is my responsibility to take the fullest possible account of the interests of all four countries. I bear this in mind in many aspects of my work: when I attend meetings of international organisations, when I negotiate treaties, and when I establish and deepen contacts with other countries, for example in the interests of economic diplomacy. And I carry out this task with pleasure and conviction. It makes my work more interesting and helps make me aware of a much wider range of foreign policy issues than I would be if I were only representing the European part of the Kingdom.'

***Does the fact that the Kingdom of the Netherlands consists of four countries have an added value in international relations?***

'It certainly does! International influences have been shaping the Kingdom of the Netherlands since the 16th century. We have always looked beyond the borders of northwest Europe. Today the four autonomous countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands make up one UN Member State. And because the Kingdom lies partly in Europe and partly in the Caribbean, we have something extra to offer. Our transatlantic presence connects two continents and the worldviews of two continents.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is united in many ways, not the least by our special connection to water. We have an unusual, characteristic geography: we are surrounded by water on almost all sides. The Netherlands is a low-lying delta



country, with more than half of its population living below sea level. Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten are Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Climate change affects us all, and the SIDS in particular face unique vulnerabilities. At the same time, they are frontrunners in finding innovative pathways to sustainable development. As the Kingdom of the Netherlands, we recognise the need to strengthen vulnerable countries' resilience to climate fragility and risks. Our tradition of partnership and dialogue with other countries enables us to help find comprehensive solutions to complex problems. We take the interests of all countries to heart, big and small. With our advanced transport infrastructure and over 140 diplomatic and consular missions around the globe, we are truly a gateway to the world.'

***The Kingdom of the Netherlands is a candidate for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for the 2017-2018 term. Why?***

'The four countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands together make up one UN Member State. At the UN we always speak and act collectively as the Kingdom. Our candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the 2017-2018 term is a joint campaign, led by our four Prime Ministers, with a joint motto: 'Kingdom of the Netherlands: One Kingdom, Four Countries, European and Caribbean'. We have launched our candidacy with a view to pursuing an agenda of peace, justice and development. This is in the Kingdom's own interests, and we feel that it serves the interests of the UN as a whole. For the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the UN is and will always remain the main worldwide organisation for peace, justice and development. There is no other international political organisation where so many countries (193 of them) are represented. This gives the UN a unique legitimacy. The UN Security Council has exclusive, far-reaching powers to maintain peace and

# The Kingdom of the Netherlands

## One Kingdom - Four Countries



## European & Caribbean

security. We believe we have a valuable contribution to make to the Security Council as a reliable partner for peace, justice and development.'

### ***What are the ambitions of the Kingdom of the Netherlands if elected to the UN Security Council?***

'Hardly a day goes by without yet another crisis or disaster happening. Not just in Ukraine, the Middle East or North Africa, but also in countries like South Sudan and the Central African Republic. New global threats to our security are emerging. Our standards and values are under constant pressure. These events do not just happen in faraway countries. A disaster like the Ebola outbreak shows just how closely interconnected today's world is, and how events in one

country have immediate repercussions for its neighbours. Our Kingdom is internationally minded and outward-looking. Thanks to its many personal, political, economic and cultural ties with other countries, it is an active member of the international community. We believe that a strong UN is essential to effectively maintain peace and security in the world, to promote peace and justice, and to foster development and economic opportunities. There are no quick fixes for today's crises. We will have to commit to long-term international cooperation to tackle existing flashpoints and to prevent new ones from emerging. Peace can never be taken for granted. So we must renew our commitment to peace every day. More than ever, we have to focus on prevention, early warning and the underlying

causes of conflicts.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands seeks to make a constructive, substantive contribution to the Security Council's work. Our chief ambition is to contribute to reforming the UN. The UN is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year, which is a wonderful thing. But the composition of the UN Security Council is still very much a reflection of the geopolitics of 70 years ago. We want to focus on the interests of small and medium-sized countries and make the Security Council more representative of today's realities. We want to broaden the involvement in the Security Council's discussions and decision-making of countries that are the subject of its debates. Our second focus is on peace and security, the Council's core business. The Kingdom will promote a comprehensive approach to peace operations to maximise their potential for peace, justice and development. The protection of civilians in conflicts must be an integral part of UN peace mission mandates, and missions must have the capacity they need to fulfil their mandate. More participation by women in pursuing peace, reconciliation and reconstruction through political and other processes is essential, as is the use of instruments for the peaceful settlement of disputes, like the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration.'

***There are three candidates for two available seats. Why should UN Member States choose the Kingdom of the Netherlands when they elect new non-permanent UNSC members in June 2016?***

'I can image they would vote for us because they are familiar with the way we work at the UN and recognize our strong track record with the UN. We work in partnership with all nations for peace, justice and development. We make connections and are consensus-driven, including in challenging situations with diverging views.

Let me share some facts. We are a large contributor to UN peacekeeping. We are the host country for international institutions that help sustain the international legal order, including the principal UN judicial organ, the International Court of Justice. And we are one of the top 10 contributors to the UN.

We are a major donor of development aid worldwide with a long tradition. By engaging in genuine partnerships, we contribute to finding long-term solutions to immediate crises and their aftermaths. To name only one recent example, in July 2015 we fielded the first trade mission to West African countries that have been hard hit by Ebola outbreaks, in order to stimulate inclusive and sustainable growth.

We have a multicultural outlook on the world. Both the Kingdom as a whole and the Netherlands as a

country lie partly in Europe and partly in the Caribbean. Our transatlantic location links two continents and several groups of countries. We are a gateway to both Europe and Latin America, with experience and appreciation of the challenges faced by SIDS. The Kingdom of the Netherlands shares immediate and long-term interests with SIDS worldwide in tackling sustainable development challenges linked to climate change, rising sea levels and flooding. If elected, we will make the voice of SIDS heard in the Security Council, because their issues are our issues.

We believe in finding long-term solutions to international challenges and our foreign policy reflects this belief, in both multilateral and bilateral partnerships. As a water partner, for example, we don't just help design and build levees in flood-prone areas and leave. No, we help build resilience, assess water management systems, and work with governments and local partners to find lasting solutions to the threat of flooding.

We are innovative, pragmatic and creative. In tackling the global challenge of climate change for example, the Kingdom of the Netherlands has shown

remarkable powers of innovation. Aruba for example is playing a pioneering role in the field of sustainability and aims to be a completely sustainable society by 2020. Praised for its world-class green energy initiative and overall sustainability efforts, Aruba was named the National Geographic World Legacy Award Winner for 'destination leadership'. Curaçao has joined with international partners to explore the potential for generating electricity with ocean thermal energy conversion, using temperature differences in sea water. The Netherlands works to find creative ways to generate green power: for example, the world's first solar road, an energy-harvesting bike path paved with glass-coated solar panels, has now been built near Amsterdam. This 70-metre test path can power a household for a year. The total length of bike paths in the Netherlands is almost 35,000 kilometres, so the potential of this pilot is enormous. In sum: we help build bridges, we are consensus-oriented and we deliver on our promises. A seat on the Security Council would enable us to make a meaningful contribution to a more secure, just and prosperous world.'



**Foreign Minister Bert Koenders in dialogue with the Kingdom partners: prime ministers Mike Eman of Aruba (right), Marcel Gumbs of St Maarten (left) and Ivar Asjes of Curaçao.**

***Cooperation at its best***

# Dutch Caribbean Coastguard

**A fine example of cooperation between the four countries of the Kingdom is the Dutch Caribbean Coastguard, which in turn works closely with other countries in the region to maintain safety in Caribbean waters. As flag officer of the Dutch forces in the Caribbean, Commander Hans Lodder is also in charge of the Coastguard.**

‘So far I’ve had a textbook naval career. On completing my training at the Royal Netherlands Naval College I started off as a naval officer. This involved a great deal of sailing. I held command of three vessels – a minesweeper, a naval frigate and an air-defence and command frigate. I worked for three years with the Royal Navy in Great Britain, did a three-year stint at NATO headquarters in Brussels, and also spent three years studying at the US Naval War College. In between, I served at the Ministry of Defence in The Hague.’

Lodder was an officer with the Defence Materiel Organisation when he was approached about a posting to the Caribbean. ‘It was at the top of my list. Apart from holidays, I had not spent any time there but it struck me as a job with plenty of challenges, in an invigorating environment. When my admiral phoned me to ask whether I wanted the job, my mind was soon made up. It was an offer I couldn’t refuse! It’s an operational appointment and although you’re based in an office, the work is very

hands-on. I receive daily updates on search and rescue missions and counter-drugs operations. I’m also the deputy commander of the Joint Interagency Task Force South for the United States.’  
The Dutch Caribbean Coastguard

was set up in the early 1990s. ‘In those days, there was a lot of drug-trafficking from that part of the Kingdom to Europe. The individual police forces were working on the problem, but a joint effort always gets better results. So it was decided to set up a joint coastguard service with two core tasks: preserving the rule of law at sea, and carrying out search and rescue missions.’  
The role of the Dutch Caribbean Coastguard is enshrined in law.



**Hans Lodder, flag officer of the Dutch forces in the Caribbean.**



A Coastguard unit in action during an operation.

The costs are shared by the four participants. Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten function as maritime support stations, while Bonaire (which is not a separate country but a special municipality of the country of the Netherlands) serves as a sub support station. The workforce totals almost 250 people. 'We don't have enough staff to be at sea 24/7, but that's a matter of funding. We do have enough equipment, which I'm very pleased about. We have good cutters, our super RHIBs will shortly be replaced, we have Justice boats and vessel traffic radar, and our air units have reconnaissance aircraft and helicopters.'

The Coastguard follows an annual plan, for which the participating countries provide input through the relevant government ministries. After that, the plan is assessed by a council, and then goes on to the Council of Ministers for the Kingdom and parliament. 'So we always know a year in advance what we have to do. And at the end of the year we publish an annual report of everything we've done.'

Initially, the Coastguard focused

on intercepting drugs, and was highly successful. However, in recent years the focus has shifted more towards other illegal activities. 'Shipping drugs brings in a great deal of money, which is used to buy goods like weapons. There's also a link to terrorism. So it's our job to keep a close watch on everything that happens at sea. We're also seeing more refugees trying to get to the US via illegal routes.'

Surveillance of the Caribbean involves international collaboration. 'We have Memorandums of Understanding with several countries, including Venezuela and the Dominican Republic. In the near future we'll

be signing one with Colombia and Jamaica. We also work very closely with the Coastguards of France (after all, we share the island of St Maarten/St Martin), Great Britain and the US. We have divided up the Caribbean basin so that we each have an area to patrol. We carry out regular counter-drugs operations with one of the other Coastguards. I have to say that our cooperation with other countries is excellent. We've made some impressive drugs hauls over the years, but the Coastguard has also mounted life-saving operations in the aftermath of shipping accidents and air crashes. 'One of my aims was to make the Coastguard more visible so that everyone, including criminals, knows where we are, that we're watching, and that we can intervene at any time in what's going on at sea. So the focus has shifted much more to prevention. Is the Coastguard a useful presence? There's no doubt in my mind whatsoever!' says Lodder. 'Over the years we've made our organisation much more professional. And we're well equipped to carry out our tasks. But of course, criminal organisations are becoming smarter, too. So keeping ahead of them is vital.'



## Call for cooperation

# On the road to the Climate Summit

**The aim of the upcoming UN Climate Summit COP21 – to be held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December – is to reach a new climate agreement to replace the current agreement which ends in 2020. To emphasise the importance of this summit the Kingdom of the Netherlands will be represented by all four of its prime ministers. In the run up to COP21, Prime Minister Mike Eman of Aruba recently led the Kingdom delegation at a meeting of the United Nations Security Council on the challenges relating to peace and security which Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face.**

‘This is a topic of particular interest to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, since three of the four autonomous countries within

the Kingdom – Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten – are in fact SIDS. I’m very pleased and proud to be here as the voice of small island

states. The first image that comes to mind might be the tropical paradise picture of a small island with palm trees surrounded by a placid, turquoise sea. And yes, this image is entirely correct when it comes to Aruba, Curaçao, St Maarten and many other SIDS,’ Eman said in the opening words of his statement.

But the prime minister went on to outline the great challenges that SIDS are facing, including increasingly extreme weather events. ‘Climate change affects us all, but those facing the most extreme risks are the developing and fragile states with fewest resources and the least capacity to cope. It may sound dramatic, but some island states know for a fact that within six to eight decades they will no longer exist as an island. This is one of the reasons why the Kingdom of the Netherlands is working hard for the adoption of an ambitious, global agreement in Paris. Some may believe that only large nations can effectively fight climate change. But each country, no matter how small, can contribute. In Aruba – a small country – we are seeking to transition off fossil fuels by 2020 and to share the lessons we learn with other countries, especially with other SIDS. We believe that small island nations can be ‘living



**In his statement to the UN Security Council, Prime Minister Mike Eman called on larger countries to step up their cooperation with Small Island Developing States.**



**Increased international cooperation on sustainability was also the topic of Prime Minister Eman's contribution to the Toronto Global Forum, at which he was a keynote speaker.**

labs', to demonstrate how this transition can be realised in all countries. In Aruba, we view the move to renewable energy as part of a broader vision of shared and sustainable prosperity in which we not only take strong steps to preserve our physical environment for future generations, but we also ensure that our social, economic and cultural environments prosper. Another challenge for small island states is combating transnational crime. 'Many SIDS lack the capacity to patrol the immense waters surrounding our islands. The threat posed by criminal networks dealing in drugs and arms can have destabilising effects. In Aruba and the other parts of our Kingdom we combat these threats with a joint coast guard, which patrols a large part of the Caribbean waters. Regional and international cooperation needs to be further strengthened in order to be more effective. Such collaboration helps expand the

scope for countering transnational crime. The Kingdom of the Netherlands therefore underscores the importance of the Security Council for SIDS. Stronger regional and international collaboration is necessary in order to face the security challenges we encounter in the Caribbean, and in other regions where SIDS are situated. That is also one of the Kingdom of the Netherlands' motives for its UN Security Council candidacy for the 2017-2018 term. We understand – and care about – the challenges and interests of small and medium-sized countries like no other. We welcome and encourage further discussions on the international challenges affecting SIDS, now and in the future, with a view to strengthening the solidarity between larger and smaller members of the UN family. The Secretary-General called for partnerships with SIDS to address current security challenges. That is what the Kingdom of the

Netherlands, as your partner for peace, justice and development, aims to do. Aruba grew up in a nest of six SIDS and when we think of the smaller members of our family – Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius – we do so with a sense of solidarity and responsibility towards them. Larger countries, world institutions and large corporations should think of Small Island Developing States in the same way: I am my brother's keeper.' Prime Minister Eman took this opportunity to announce that the Kingdom of the Netherlands has initiated an annual international conference on 'Planetary Security: Peace and Cooperation in Times of Climate Change and Global Environmental Challenges'. The first conference will be held on 2 and 3 November at the Peace Palace in The Hague. Prime Minister Eman's statement can be viewed on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/sfKO97CXDQo> ■



# One Kingdom, four

The Kingdom of the Netherlands has announced its candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the 2017-2018 term. We put the same question to each of the prime ministers of the four



## ***Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands:***

'International cooperation is vitally important, because many threats know no borders. For the Netherlands, the MH17 disaster was a painful reminder of this. But there are more examples, such as tackling climate change, combating terrorism and reducing poverty. No one country is able to solve these problems on its own. Everything is interconnected. We need the UN to be strong and effective, and to adopt a more integrated approach. That is in all our interests.

But the UN is made up of us, its member states. The Netherlands fulfils its international responsibilities. For instance with our military contribution to the UN mission in Mali, in the fight against Ebola and by providing Dutch water expertise. And we continue to play an active and constructive role in making the UN stronger. That is why we are campaigning for a seat on the Security Council for the 2017-2018 period. It is in the common interest of the four countries that constitute the Kingdom.

The Netherlands has long been a reliable UN partner. Not only are we one of the founding members of the UN, but we are also home to the only principal UN organ located outside New York: the International Court of Justice in The Hague. What's more, the Netherlands has participated in 63 UN and UN-mandated peace missions, and we are the tenth-largest donor to the UN. So we can justly claim that the Kingdom of the Netherlands is your partner for peace, justice and development.'



## ***Prime Minister Ivar Asjes of Curaçao:***

'The Kingdom of the Netherlands' membership of the UN Security Council will provide opportunities for every country in the Kingdom. Each will be able to contribute in its own way to the promotion of international peace and security. For Curaçao, a seat on the Security Council will improve the scope for promoting sustainable economic development at international level and so safeguard trade and international peace and security. This year, Curaçao is chairing the Association of the Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union (OCTA) and in this capacity it has put the economic, development-related and commercial interests of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on the EU agenda. Membership of the Security Council would offer Curaçao the chance to fulfil its responsibilities and to do so on a global scale.'

# prime ministers



**countries which together constitute the Kingdom: Why is it in the interest of your country that the Kingdom of the Netherlands takes a seat on the Security Council, and why should other member states vote for the Kingdom?**



## ***Prime Minister Mike Eman of Aruba:***

'A small country in a big world often has to rely on cooperation. It's not that we have a dependent attitude, but working together is definitely in our genes. We do so within the Kingdom, but also outside it, through Caricom, SIDS, the European Union, the World Bank and of course the United Nations. We have committed fully to all those treaties which contribute to the development of our people in terms of peace and security, climate change, human rights and trade. Those international contacts have taught us a lot. In the same way, other countries may be able to learn from our ambition to turn our beautiful island into a five-star society, with five-star residential neighbourhoods, five-star schools and five-star hospitals, where prosperity is not an end in itself, but a means to improve everyone's well-being. Our ambition is to make our economy 100% green by 2020 at the latest, by only using renewable energy. We would like to share our experiences with other countries. I support the Kingdom's candidacy for the UN Security Council wholeheartedly,

because it is important that the voice of Small Island Developing States and countries in the Caribbean region is heard. Across the globe, the Netherlands has a solid reputation. Add to that a regional dimension and a sense of solidarity with the smaller countries of the world, and you have something very special. We see these factors as the key strengths of our candidacy for the Security Council.'



## ***Prime Minister Marcel Gumbs of St Maarten:***

'As a non-independent Small Island Developing State (SIDS), representation at the level of the UN Security Council would not only give a voice to the issues we are wrestling with, but also lend credibility to the initiatives we've launched in St Maarten to overcome the daily challenges we face. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is composed of seven economically, geographically and socially very diverse countries and territories, and so it offers a rich array of experiences and ideas. A seat on the UN Security Council would enable us not only to put the problems of SIDS on the international agenda, but also to share solutions with other countries.'

# Aruba signs MoU with World Bank



Prime Minister Mike Eman presents Aruba's green agenda in the presence of King Willem-Alexander, Queen Máxima and Minister of Foreign Affairs Bert Koenders (far left).

**At the beginning of June, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in Washington, in which the World Bank agreed to make its knowledge and expertise available to Aruba to promote sustainable development. In return the World Bank will be able to use Aruban best practices as examples to help other countries.**

As part of King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima's official visit to the United States, Aruban Prime Minister Mike Eman was given the opportunity to present his cabinet's ambitious green agenda to the World Bank. World Bank president Jim Yong Kim also attended this round-table

discussion on sustainable development from a small-island perspective. Eman was pleased to sign the MoU. 'Over the past few years, we've intensified our relations with the World Bank. They are aware of our vision of using economic growth to improve the quality of

life of our citizens. To do this we will work together to develop models for social mobility and other processes'. Social mobility is one of the World Bank's priorities. It means ensuring better access to the job market for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. 'A fair chance for everyone. But also a system in which people never stop learning. What we're aiming for is a learning society in continuous development,' the Prime Minister said. As Executive Director, Dutchman Frank Heemskerk represents twelve countries on the board of the World Bank Group. 'This MoU will give Aruba access to the World Bank's knowledge about promoting sustainability. Specifically knowledge about strengthening government finances, attracting foreign investment, creating jobs and fighting poverty. The World Bank also benefits, as we gain access to the best practices Aruba develops.'



Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean Jorge Familiar signs the MoU on behalf of the World Bank. On the left, Executive Director Frank Heemskerk.

# Parlatino – truly inspiring



**As autonomous countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten are subject to the laws of the Kingdom, but this does not prevent them from playing an active role in the Latin American parliament, Parlatino.**

‘Yes, although we’re bound by legislation and regulations that originate in Europe, we are – and always will be – a country with a predominantly Latino culture,’ says the President of Aruba’s parliament, Marisol Lopez-Tromp. Not surprisingly, she is strongly in favour of Aruba’s membership of Parlatino. ‘Their debates address issues that we can really relate to. The reality described by MPs from the other countries closely resembles our own. We find Parlatino truly inspiring.’ Parlatino is a formal partnership involving all the elected representatives of Latin American

countries. ‘It has committees, just as national parliaments do, and eleven of them have Aruban members. All the Aruban MPs are active members of one of the committees,’ says Ms Lopez-Tromp. She was recently appointed to the supervisory board which analyses and comments on proposals before they are presented to the Parlatino board, whose Vice President is Aruban MP Marlon Sneek. Parlatino’s brief is to draft framework legislation on issues currently affecting its member countries. ‘I started off in 1997 in the committee responsible for

youth affairs. That’s how I discovered that many countries have a youth parliament and also a youth policy. At the time, Aruba had neither, but I was so inspired by what I heard that I decided to team up with a colleague and tackle the issue. Eventually, a youth parliament was founded in Aruba. That’s one of the spin-offs of Parlatino: you learn from one another how to address issues and solve problems.’ Once the framework legislation has been drafted, Parlatino monitors whether the individual countries follow it up with their own laws and policy. ‘Aruba can’t sign these framework bills because we are bound to the agreements made within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. So from a legislative point of view, we may be the odd one out, but culturally, we’re very much in tune with Parlatino.’ Three Parlatino committees are scheduled to meet in Oranjestad, Aruba, at the end of October. About 45 foreign MPs will attend. Their task will be to consider various agenda points based on presentations, by various organisations, including the World Bank and the United Nations. Ms Lopez-Tromp has the honour of presiding at the opening session. Since the delegates are already on the island, they will also take the opportunity to attend the Green Aruba Conference on 27 and 28 October.



# ARUBA<sup>★</sup>

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK  
OCTOBER 26-31, 2015

“ Be part of the change,  
Share Sustainability,  
and let us continue moving  
forward together. ”



OCTOBER 27 AND 28  
at Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino

For more information please visit our website [www.greenaruba.org](http://www.greenaruba.org) or contact us at [info@greenaruba.com](mailto:info@greenaruba.com)



Government of Aruba



UTILITIES ARUBA™



# Sustainability Week



Managing Director Frank Hoevertsz of Utilities Aruba:  
'Learning from each other's experience of sustainability.'

**Earlier this year, US Vice President Joe Biden called on Caribbean leaders to devote more attention to developing sustainable energy. He cited Aruba as a notable example: 'Aruba is a country showing demonstrable progress that has been achieved by uniting government, utilities and businesses behind a common strategy and action plan.' Mr Biden said that many countries could learn from Aruba. They will have an opportunity this October, during the island's Sustainability Week.**

The week will feature four events on the theme of sustainability, starting with the Aruba Learning Event. The organisers have invited 10 Caribbean energy ministers and 20 leading entrepreneurs from the international energy sector. 'Mr Biden was very clear. He believes that as a region, we'll achieve most by learning from one another,' said Frank Hoevertsz, Managing Director of Utilities Aruba, which is organising the event. He continued, 'Now we want to take practical steps. We've come up with an

innovative concept by inviting major players to share experiences with each other about successful developments. We'll be talking about these in small working groups and then drawing up concrete objectives. To get some inspiration, we'll be visiting a range of innovative projects on Aruba.' The Aruba Learning Event will blend seamlessly into the sixth Green Aruba Conference, to be held on 27 and 28 October on the theme of 'Sharing Sustainability'. National and international speakers

will present the latest developments in the field of sustainability, and innovative products will be on display in the exhibition area. 'So we'll be featuring "afterglow" solar panels, which go on generating energy several hours after sundown,' Mr Hoevertsz explained. Over the years, Green Aruba has built up a reputation for connecting thinkers from the world of science and doers from the business community with a colourful array of visionary speakers, including Al Gore and José María Figueres, president of the Carbon War Room. The two other events scheduled for that week are; the conference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and an assembly of Parlatino, the Latin-American parliament. 'It's a coincidence that they were both arranged to take place on Aruba on the same dates,' Mr Hoevertsz pointed out. 'Sustainability is an important issue for both organisations. We very much hope, of course, that the delegates will make the most of the opportunity to brainstorm with our region on what a sustainable future might entail. Together we can take a major step towards greater international cooperation. It's in everyone's interest,' Mr Hoevertsz stressed .

For more information see [www.greenaruba.org](http://www.greenaruba.org)

# Carbon-neutral

The multi functional accommodation (MFA) in Noord is the first government building in Aruba to generate at least as much energy as it uses. Thanks to its energy-efficient design, the solar panels generate enough power to meet electricity demand. On sunny days the building will produce more electricity than needed and the surplus will be added to the grid. Other government buildings, including schools, will soon be following this example, as Aruba heads toward a carbon-neutral economy in 2020.



# Restored

The Monument Fund has recently acquired Residencia Veneranda, one of the most eye-catching dwellings in Oranjestad's historic centre. The heritage property was badly damaged by fire but is now undergoing repair thanks to donations from the public as well as official funding. The Fund will find a suitable use for the building once it has been restored to its former glory.

# Streetcar

Aruba has just acquired its third streetcar. This much-needed service will help to transport the growing numbers of tourists and shoppers to the beautifully renovated centre of Oranjestad. The streetcar, which was built in California, recently made the long journey across the United States to Miami, before being shipped down to Aruba. Appropriately, this newcomer has been painted in vibrant orange, the colour of the Kingdom.



**TNO – creating a smart community**

# A test-bed for innovation



**Mart van Bracht, Managing Director of TNO Energy.**

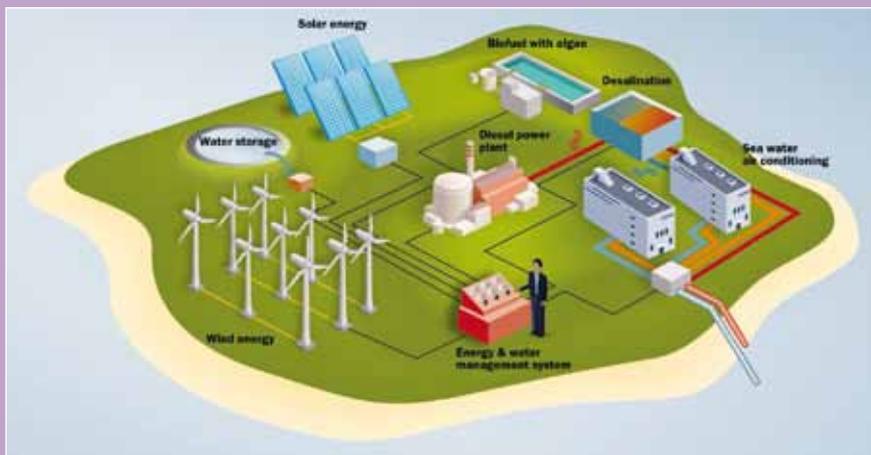
**‘The sustainable and innovative solutions being developed in Aruba can benefit the entire world,’ argues managing director at TNO Energy, Mart van Bracht.**

The internationally renowned institute, known in full as the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, first set foot on Aruban soil five years

ago. Things have moved fast since then. Surprisingly fast, in fact, says Van Bracht. ‘At TNO we’re always on the look-out for locations and partners who share

our ambition to innovate. In 2010 someone said to me “You should talk to the Arubans, they want to green their island.” I was sceptical at first. I have someone with sustainable plans on the phone almost every week. Usually they’re only interested because sustainability is “hot”, or their plans are so naive that there’s little chance of success. I thought that might be the case with Aruba as well. So I started outlining the complexities of sustainability, assuming they’d quickly lose interest. But they just got more and more enthusiastic. So I travelled to Aruba to speak to Prime Minister Mike Eman. I discovered that this was someone who really had the vision and the determination to make his island sustainable, and who’d already given it a lot of thought. It was also clear that his ideas were widely supported on the island. We each decided we were interested in working together.’

Less than a year later Andris Piebalgs, European Commissioner at the time, opened TNO’s Caribbean Branch Office. ‘If, like Aruba, you want to achieve 100% sustainability by 2020, you need a methodical approach. The first thing we did was draw up a road map, a step-by-step plan for our chosen course and preferred



The Smart Sustainable Island Solutions concept developed by TNO in Aruba.

partners for achieving each milestone. We have a very broad take on energy, and try to find smart solutions that combine energy issues with water, waste or raw materials. Like all islands, Aruba has a big waste problem. Given that we were working to develop a circular economy, could waste be used as a source of energy or as a raw material for other products? Could sunlight facilitate fresh water production?

It goes without saying that we also involve consumers, both individuals and businesses. Without their support this can never work. To achieve 100% sustainability, we have to reduce energy consumption. That's easy enough from a technical point of view, but convincing consumers is much harder. So in Aruba we did things the other way around. We started by setting up two very visible energy-generating projects. First the Vader Piet wind farm and then the solar park at the airport. We wanted to show people that this really works. Once the second wind farm is up and running, we'll have just about reached the limit of what we can generate, unless we find a solution for energy storage. After that the efficiency gains will have to come from

reducing energy consumption. We made a start with that recently. We carried out a study of government buildings, asking how they could be made more energy efficient. It turned out there were a lot of quick wins, small changes that can get you a long way. The investment costs are relatively low and can be recovered within a year, making it attractive from an economic point of view too. We've been talking to hotels on the island. They're some of the biggest energy consumers, because, naturally, they want to offer their guests the highest level of comfort. But there are plenty of benefits: reducing energy consumption not only saves money; an increasing number of

guests now prefer green hotels. Using sea water for cooling is a technical possibility, but the solutions we're looking at are simpler. For instance, it might only be necessary to cool the space above the bed instead of the whole room. Or take building methods. Older houses in Aruba, which were built using traditional methods, are always cool inside. We can learn from those techniques.

We're a partner in Smart Community Aruba, a residential neighbourhood where solutions to energy, water and waste issues can be tested and demonstrated in a real-life setting, allowing businesses to try out and showcase new technologies. This is an extremely important project. Not just for us but for many other parties, both in Aruba and elsewhere. This island is a good location for businesses interested in the Latin American and US markets. There are plans to open a visitors' centre where they can develop business contacts. We've had a lot of interest from Dutch and American businesses. I'm expecting a lot of economic activity in this area. It's a testbed for innovation.



Smart Community Aruba: a testbed for innovation.



**Energy-generating Solarroads set for the Smart Community Aruba.**

The concept is entirely in keeping with Aruba's plans to become a trade hub between Europe and the Americas. Multinational corporations that see opportunities in Panama or Argentina can just head straight there. But for small and medium-sized enterprises, that's a big risk. Aruba is a great place for them to try out new ideas and showcase products to new markets. Using the island as a springboard, they can increase their market reach with relatively little effort. And because Aruba is part of the Kingdom the rules are basically the same as in the Netherlands and the rest of Europe, and you can communicate easily in Dutch. We're also going to provide office space, to make the concept even more attractive to smaller businesses. This set-up will give them great market reach without requiring a major investment. It will enable them to achieve things that would have been impossible without Aruba.'

The success of TNO's Aruban office proves that this model works. 'In 2010 we were doing nothing at all in this area. Now we have projects in Brazil, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Suriname, Costa Rica, Belize, Mexico, Cuba, Jamaica, St Maarten, St Eustatius, Saba, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Curaçao and Bonaire. At the "Europe meets the Americas"

conference Cuba saw what we were doing in Aruba. Our "Smart Sustainable Island Solutions" concept, based on maximising local opportunities, appealed greatly to them. They want to adopt the Aruban model. I expect talks to be concluded within the next few months and a pilot to start at the beginning of next year.'

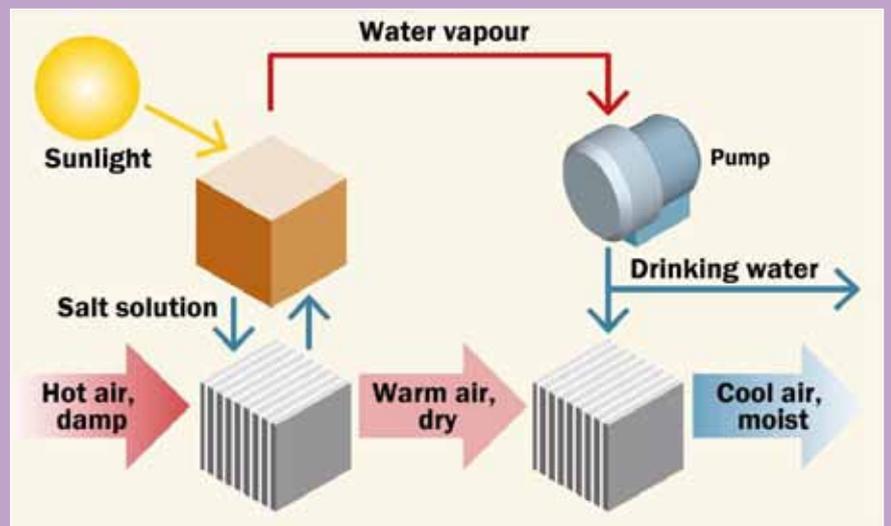
Van Bracht can spend hours talking about the ground-breaking innovations being developed and tested in Aruba for global applications. A good example is the pumped-storage power plant. 'There's an old quarry near the wind farm which we want to use as a reservoir. Any surplus of wind or solar energy that can't be stored will be used to pump water into the reservoir. Then, as soon as there's a shortage of energy, water is released from the reservoir, generating energy. There are many places in the world where this kind of hydroelectric power station could provide a solution. And we need solutions like this here in Aruba if we want to be 100% sustainable. It will be a tough job to achieve that by 2020, but it's good to set the bar high.'



**Aruba: an ideal springboard for TNO.**

Van Bracht emphasises that what TNO is doing in Aruba and the Caribbean region is not a form of development aid. 'Not a single euro comes from a Dutch grant. I'm often asked, "Is this Dutch taxpayers' money?" No, it's all paid for by our clients. Part is financed externally, for instance by the Inter-American Development Bank. We're making plans for the next four years and we expect our activities to double in that period. It's a business operation, but one that will benefit everyone involved.'

For more information, visit [www.tno.nl](http://www.tno.nl)



**Diagram: how TNO plans to use sunlight to produce drinking water for Aruba.**

# Seaway Heavy Lifting chooses Aruba as its hub

**Once again, a leading global company has chosen Aruba as its hub. Seaway Heavy Lifting has opened an operational office in Oranjestad in preparation for a major operation off the coast of Venezuela. Although the company had never worked in Aruba before, the island was an obvious choice, according to Senior Vice President Koen van der Perk.**

‘Seaway Heavy Lifting was established almost 25 years ago as an offshore installation contractor. We can do anything concerned with offshore energy capture that has to be installed by crane. That includes oil and gas rigs, foundations for offshore wind parks, and underwater structures such as templates and pipelines. Another part of our work is decommissioning – dismantling offshore structures after many years of operation. One of our specialities is deepwater engineering. We can install structures down to a depth of three kilometres. We have two crane vessels, the Oleg Strashnov and the Stanislav Yudin.

‘We’re using the Yudin for the project in Venezuela. At the end of 2014, Seaway Heavy Lifting was approached for a commission by Cardon IV, a joint venture between the Italian oil producer Eni and the Spanish company Repsol. The contract was signed in February and in March the Yudin was in Venezuela and we opened our office in Oranjestad. Our ‘Perla’ project involves three gas rigs off the coast of Punto Fijo, which have to be connected to an existing pipeline that leads onshore. Seaway Heavy Lifting has to transport the rings safely from the Gulf of Mexico to their

destination and install them in 70 metres of water, with the right

connections to the pipeline.’ Project Manager Hans van Maris elaborates: ‘This project will take around nine months. On the crane vessel we have about 160 people working in shifts on-site and another 40 on the tugs and pontoons we deploy. On average, we fly about 40 people in and out



Senior Vice President Koen van der Perk (right) and project director Hans van Maris.

every week. Plus all kinds of materials that need to be transported to the site. For logistics you really need a site office. So for us as a Dutch company, Aruba is a logical choice: as a hub, it's very convenient indeed. Aruba has excellent air links, sufficient hotel capacity and the right port facilities. Our incoming shift workers arrive in Aruba, get a good night's sleep and then set off for work in the morning by boat. Aruba has the advantage of being closer to the project site than the nearest port in Venezuela. On top of that, all the necessary arrangements can be made in Aruba at fairly short notice.'

Van der Perk and Van Maris made grateful use of the services provided by Aruba House in The Hague. 'On several occasions they've given us useful tips about how to do business in Aruba. Wherever possible, they've helped us get in touch with the right people. If we run into any problems we know we can always contact Aruba House.'

Seaway Heavy Lifting, an exponent of Dutch maritime tradition, has its head office in Zoetermeer and offices in Aberdeen, Paris, Hamburg, Cyprus, Glasgow and Houston. It has around 275 office staff, and between 150 and 200 staff on each of the crane vessels. Worldwide, only a handful of companies are equipped to do heavy operations of this kind. Van der Perk comments, 'The Yudin has a 2500- tonne crane. So it can hoist the equivalent of about 2,000 average-sized cars in one go. Our newest ship the Oleg Strashnov has an even bigger crane. It can shift 5,000 tonnes – twice as much as the Yudin. In principle we work all over the world, but in practice



The crane vessel Stanislav Yudin in action.

rarely in the Far East. It takes too long to sail there and that costs us money. We mainly operate between the Suez Canal and the Americas. We also do a lot in Europe and the Middle East. And now we have this project in Venezuela and we've also worked in Mexico. In view of the recent developments in Latin America, we could well be getting more commissions there. We already have a project planned in Trinidad.' The site office in Aruba is directly linked to the company's activities

in Venezuela. 'Once we've finished the job, the Oranjestad office can close, in theory. Whether we keep it open will depend very much on getting new contacts in the area. You can't open an office for a five-day project. In any event, the Aruba experience has been positive and we've agreed with Alfonso Boekhoudt, the Minister Plenipotentiary, that later this year we'll do an evaluation and see how we can help one another in the long term. So far, so good, from our point of view.'



Vice-President of KLM Security Services Ben Swagerman, CEO and President of Schiphol Group Jos Nijhuis, Minister of Justice Arthur Dowers, CEO of Aruba Airport Authority James Fazio, Senior Vice-President of Vision-Box Miguel Leitmann, Prime Minister Mike Eman and Ronald Harmsma (Royal Military and Border Police) at the launch of Happy Flow.

# Happy Flow ready for take-off

**Airports all over the world have been looking with interest at Reina Beatrix Airport, where a unique pilot project has been launched featuring an innovative system that makes passenger checks faster, more customer-friendly and more secure: Happy Flow.**

At the Aruban airport, alongside the familiar desks where immigration officers check departing passengers' travel documents, there is now a futuristic-looking expanse of gates and screens designed for fully-automatic passport checks. Human hands and eyes will no longer be involved.

Once a passenger's passport and facial image have been linked at the initial check-in stage, facial recognition technology is used to identify passengers at check-in, bag drop, border control and aircraft boarding. They will not have to show their passport or boarding pass again before boarding the

aircraft. Uniquely, Happy Flow combines the public process of border control with the private passenger process at the airport. Happy Flow is the result of a partnership between the governments of Aruba and the Netherlands, Aruba Airport, Schiphol Group and KLM. The tender for the implementation of the project has been awarded to Vision-Box, which has its headquarters in Portugal. Prime Minister Mike Eman of

Aruba: 'Happy Flow is an extremely innovative and important step in passenger transportation, not only for Aruba, but globally. Aruba is very proud of this unique concept that brings together public and private parties. Happy Flow is a new milestone on the way to creating a sustainable knowledge economy in Aruba and reinforcing Aruba's development into a hub between Europe and Latin America.'

CEO and President of Schiphol Group, Jos Nijhuis: 'With the launch of Aruba Happy Flow, we have taken an innovative step to further improve passenger comfort. This unique project combines public and private passenger processes. I have high expectations for the outcome. If our experiences and the test results are positive, we will develop this system further.'

Vice-President of KLM Security Services, Ben Swagerman: 'KLM is always looking for ways to enhance passenger convenience. So we're keen to contribute to this innovative project, which will make the entire process from checking in to

boarding easier and faster, as passengers will only have to present their travel documents once.'

CEO of Aruba Airport Authority, James Fazio: 'As the Happy Island's national airport, we are proud to introduce Aruba Happy Flow. This project demonstrates our commitment to improving passenger comfort, and introducing new technological solutions in order to meet our future growth in passenger traffic while maintaining the highest levels of safety and security. This project is an extraordinary example of how the public and private sectors together can achieve great results.'

Senior Vice-President of Vision-Box, Miguel Leitmann: 'We're making history in Aruba – this is the start of a new era in the aviation sector. Happy Flow is the first completely self-service passenger flow based on the use of biometrics. It's secure, quick and easy. Furthermore it provides the authorities with a powerful end-to-end management platform which allows for the monitoring of the whole passenger process with

greater security and efficiency, while respecting the privacy of passengers at all times.'

The project will run for the next two years. Initially, a limited number of KLM passengers travelling with EU passports will be invited to participate. Over time the project can gradually be extended to include larger groups of passengers. Additional possibilities include integration with the security process and the introduction of Happy Flow at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.

Aruba views the project as a step towards the introduction of 'pre-clearance' flights to Europe, with passengers passing through European border controls before leaving Aruba. This is already the case for flights from Aruba to the United States. Aruba's ambition of a pre-clearance service for flights to Europe is in keeping with the country's further development as a trade hub between Europe and Latin America. For business travellers in particular, bypassing the queues for passport checks after a long flight is a major advantage..





By the time this issue has been printed, there were only a few spots left in the shades under this Divi-Divi tree.

Bonbini in Aruba! Where you can roll out of your hammock and walk straight into the sea. Immerse yourself literally in a world full of colorful sea creatures and ancient shipwrecks. A place where you are just as welcome below the sea as well as above.

Come and find your escape with us. Surf to [www.aruba.com](http://www.aruba.com)



**ARUBA**  
One happy island