

3 januari 2023

Aan de Minister van Transport, Integriteit,
Natuur, Ouderenzaken
De heer U.M. Arends
Bestuurskantoor
L.G. Smith Blvd. 76
Aruba

Onderwerp: **Aanbieding eind (financieel) rapport van Steering Commissie NIS-Aruba**

Excellentie,

Bij ministeriële beschikking van 16 december 2019, no. 1002/19 heeft de voormalige minister belast met integriteit, mevrouw mr. E. Wever-Croes, een Steering Commissie ingesteld ter waarborging van de planning en voortgang van het project “het onderzoeken en opstellen van een National Integrity System Assessment (NIS-A) voor Aruba conform de methodieken van Transparency International”. De resultaten van het onderzoek zijn in de vorm van een rapport op 25 april 2022 aan u aangeboden.

Met de aanbieding van het bijgaande “Executive summary of the development of the NIS-report” met een bijbehorend financieel overzicht is dit project formeel afgerond en is tevens de Steering Commissie van rechtswege ontbonden.

Hoogachtend,



H.M.P. Geerman
Voorzitter Steering Commissie

Cc: Voormalig minister belast met integriteit mevr. mr. E. Wever-Croes

Bijlage:

- Staat van baten en lasten periode 2019-2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIS-REPORT

Introduction

From its inception in 2016 until the end of 2019, the foundation 'Stichting Deugdelijk Bestuur Aruba' (SDBA) analyzed all available documents on the most pressing themes in government, namely personnel policy, financial administration, transparency, the functioning of Parliament, socio-economic policy and integrity. Based on the results of this analysis, exposed in 6 reports, it became clear to SDBA that there was a systemic failure in the functioning of our system of checks & balances. This permitted infraction of integrity which, on its turn, affected seriously the quality of our democratic state of law. This finding required a more scientific analysis which would only be possible with the cooperation of the Government and a third (neutral) party investigative group.

Course of Events

On June 28, 2019 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Government of Aruba (GoA) and SDBA whereby both parties identified "Good Governance" as an important focus area for Aruba and a common area of interest.

The purpose of the MOU was to set forth the understandings and intentions of the partners with regard to the collaboration in the area of "Good Governance". Good governance is an important prerequisite to improve the general condition of each country and the well-being of its population. In order to realize good governance, it is paramount to identify the strengths as well as the shortcomings of the democratic constitutional system. Based on the outcome, recommendations for adaptations and/or improvement will be made that will be executed as much as possible by the GoA.

Therefore, SDBA took the initiative to execute an objective analysis of the actual state of Aruba's integrity system and, in case of shortcomings, to come up with recommendations for improvement. The analysis -at a total cost of approximately Afl. 200,000- would be done by a group of specialists on the field of good governance, corruption, money laundering, fraud and compliance from Saxion University. This was done under the guidance of dr. Willeke Slingerland who also directed the National Integrity System Assessment project (NIS-A) for the Netherlands after having followed the required training by Transparency International.

In order to finance the project, the following institutions/banks were approached:

- Centrale Bank van Aruba (CBA) (Afl. 30,000);
- Vertegenwoordiging van Nederland op Aruba (VNO) (Afl. 25,000);
- Aruba Bank N.V. (AB) (Afl. 25,000);
- Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V. (CMB) (Afl. 20,000);

Ultimately SDBA approached the GoA who contributed with Afl. 100,000. This was financed through the Dutch 'Remaining Funds' of Fondo Desaroyo Aruba.

SDBA also approached AIB BANK N.V. (AIB) to guide the foundation on the financial part of the entire process as a contribution to the project and as proof of the bank's commitment to good governance. On October 25, 2019 a MOU was signed between AIB and SDBA for the duration of the project.

Through a Ministerial Decree, signed on December 16, 2019, the GoA decided the following:

1. to refrain from holding a public or private tender;
2. to outsource the project to SDBA through a service agreement;
3. that the costs of Afl. 100,000 will be charged to budget item 16016001-4362 of the Ministry of General Affairs.

A Steering Committee was formed with representatives of CBA (1), Government of Aruba (2), SDBA (1) and AIB (1).

The tasks of the Steering Committee were as follows:

- the monitoring of the development of the research;
- the solving of bottlenecks;
- the administering of the payments. (For a detailed Financial Report, see Annex I. As noted in the aforementioned report a credit amount of Afl. 18,704 remains. SDBA will approach the sponsors on how to proceed with the remaining amount.)

Initially, the duration of the project NIS-A was for one year from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. However, due especially to the pandemic and the lockdown, the original work plan/days had to be adjusted. There was also a considerable delay in sending out the letter from the Minister of General Affairs to all department heads informing/explaining the NIS-A project and requesting the cooperation of the department heads and their executive officials with the interviews, which had to be done mainly online. This letter was sent out on October 26, 2020. Without this 'permission', almost all people approached, refused their cooperation.

As a consequence, the physical interviews, which were planned to take place in the 2nd quarter of 2020, had to be postponed until the next year. Additionally, due to Parliamentary election, the interviews with several parties, that were crucial to finalize the report, were delayed.

In September 2021, a new Minister for Integrity, Mr. U. Arends, was appointed. The first version of the final report was sent to the Minister of Integrity on February 11, 2022 for his review prior to the report being distributed to the participating institutions/banks. Finally, on March 30th, 2022 the Minister's acknowledgement of the content was sent to Saxion Group for the finalization of the report.

On April 25th, 2022, the report was presented officially to the Governor of Aruba. At a ceremony at the University of Aruba, the Prime Minister of Aruba, the Minister of Integrity and the sponsors also received a copy of the report.

Steering Committee for the NIS project:

A.L.A.C. Flanegin (CBA) - I. Wernet (GoA) - O. Senchi (GoA) – H.M.P. Geerman (AIB) - A. Hessels (SDBA)

Attachment:

- Annex I: Staat van Baten en Lasten

Bijlage I

Staat van baten en lasten periode 2019-2022

(in Afl.) *	2022	2021	2020	2019
Baten				
Ontvangen vergoeding	50,000	25,000	25,000	100,000
	50,000	25,000	25,000	100,000
Lasten				
Projectkosten	(37,529)	(107,939)	(24,314)	-
Algemene kosten	(8,286)	-	(3,980)	-
	(45,816)	(107,939)	(28,294)	-
Financiële baten/(lasten)	278	853	(447)	67
Exploitatiesaldo	4,463	(82,086)	(3,741)	100,067
Cumulatief	18,704			

***Notitie:**

In 2019 hadden de volgende sponsors deze bedragen gestort:

VNO: Afl. 25,000; CMB: Afl. 20,000; AB: Afl. 25,000; CBA: Afl. 30,000

In 2020, 2021 en 2022 was Land Aruba de enige sponsor.