

**PRESS RELEASE**

St. Maarten, 26.07.2016

## **Minister of Tourism Arrindell and Port Management Welcomes Norwegian Escape on its Inaugural Call**

**July 26, 2016** – Minister of Tourism & Economic Affairs Ingrid Arrindell and Port St. Maarten Management on Tuesday morning welcomed Norwegian Cruise Lines (NCL) vessel Escape on its first visit to the destination. The cruise ship will call at Port St. Maarten every other week and alternate between the Eastern and Western Caribbean up to the beginning of September.

Norwegian Escape is one of NCL biggest ships of the Breakaway Plus class.

Norwegian Escape Captain Giovanni Cutugno, visited St. Maarten six years ago. During his welcome address, he said that St. Maarten is a beautiful destination as always, adding that it is a favorite for the crew and guests, and that everybody on-board were looking forward to enjoying their one-day stay.

Minister Arrindell during her welcome address welcomed Captain Cutugno, his guests and crew to St. Maarten on behalf of the Government, stating that it was an honor and pleasure to have them.

Minister Arrindell said she was grateful to NCL for adding St. Maarten to the itinerary of the Escape. The Minister also thanked Port St. Maarten Management for their endurance in continuing to bring business to the island for guests and crew to enjoy. Minister Arrindell then presented a token of appreciation from the St. Maarten Tourist Office to Captain Cutugno.

Speaking on behalf of Port St. Maarten was Acting Human Resources Manager Hector Peters, who welcomed the Captain, guests and crew to the destination on behalf of the Supervisory Board and Management. He added that he looked forward to seeing many more visits by Escape and other ships from the NCL before exchanging plaques with Captain Cutugno.

The new vessel is now the fifth largest ship at sea after the two Oasis-class and two Quantum-class ships from Royal Caribbean. Escape is also calling at the ports of St. Thomas, Tortola and The Bahamas, and homeports out of Miami, Florida.

Norwegian Escape was built by the Meyer Werft shipyard and is 164,600 tons. The vessel completed sea trials in the North Sea back in August/September 2015 before making its transatlantic trip to Miami on October 29.

The cruise passenger ship carries 4,200 and becomes the NCLs 14th ship in its fleet.

Norwegian Escape was christened by ship godfather Pitbull on November 9th and thereafter sailed seven-night Caribbean itineraries out of Port Miami.

Two more Breakaway Plus ships are expected to be launched in 2018 and 2019.

Attending the plaque exchange ceremony on Tuesday morning on-board the Escape were representatives of the Cabinet of the Minister of Tourism, Economic, Transport and Telecommunications, Port St. Maarten Management, the St. Maarten Tourist Bureau and some other stakeholders.



**PHOTO CUTLINE:**

Photo 1 Minister TEATT: Minister Ingrid Arrindell (4th from left) after presenting a plaque to the Captain of Norwegian Escape.

Photo 2 Port SXM Management: Port St. Maarten Management Team representative Hector Peters (6th from left) presenting the Captain of Norwegian Escape with a plaque.

For further questions, please contact: [comments@portofstmaarten.com](mailto:comments@portofstmaarten.com)