

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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# **Port St. Maarten to prepare for New Trends in Cruise Industry**

**September 21, 2016** – Port St. Maarten Management and Supervisory Board representatives were informed about new trends taking place in the cruise industry at Seatrade Cruise Med on Wednesday in Tenerife, Canary Islands.

Carnival Cruise Corporation will be adding four XL LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) powered cruise ships to its fleet. In the meantime, Carnival will add 10 new ships to its fleet by 2018, and an additional nine new ships will be added to its fleet between 2019 up to 2022.

Port St. Maarten is represented at the conference by Mark Mingo, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Supervisory Board Member Jason Rogers, Bertrand Peters, General and Governmental Affairs Liaison, and Ichel Moeslikan, Cruise & Yachting Operations Officer.

“One of our strategic partners, Carnival Corporation, will construct four environmentally-friendly ships that will have a capacity of 6,600 passengers. The ships will have full propulsion from LNG, which has been described as the first ever in the history of the cruise industry. LNG is becoming a prominent form of fuel that is being applied across the board. Port St. Maarten is prepared to handle this size vessel which would be similar in size to Royal Caribbean’s Genesis-class vessels launched around 2009 followed by the Quantum class vessels.

“Port St. Maarten’s investments into having the required berthing facilities for the most modern cruise vessels currently on the high seas, was based on our vision and strategic planning more than a decade ago. The investments made then serves us well today, and we continue to look at the trends and developments taking place in the market in order to be able to continue to make those necessary investments to keep us number one,” Mark Mingo, Port St. Maarten’s CEO said on Wednesday.

The biennial cruise event hosted by Port Authority of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, was opened on Wednesday and runs until September 23 at the International Trade Fair and Congress Centre in Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

Another area that Port St. Maarten has to work on with larger vessels being added to the fleet of cruise lines is dealing with bigger volume numbers of passengers who buy shore excursions.

“Port St. Maarten will be working closely with the St. Maarten Economic Cruise Association (SECA) and other stakeholders in developing a strategy where it concerns handling larger volumes of cruise passengers that buy shore excursions. We have to look at quality, and that the cruise passengers go back after having an excellent experience. As a destination, we have to get serious in investing in the product and in the cruise industry. It’s not to be taken lightly, and I have been hammering on this ever so often.

“SECA’s objectives are to promote, establish, communicate, and influence a clear vision with actions in support of the enhancement of the cruise experience for Sint Maarten, and they have a role to play where it relates to the upcoming season and beyond.

“Costa and Aida cruise lines we learned are focusing more on multi-language communication services for their passengers, because the cruise passenger today is a mix-bag from various countries where different languages are spoken. Port St. Maarten is also preparing for this by employing persons who come with these multi-language set skills. I encourage some our youth to study various languages which would benefit them when job opportunities present themselves.

“More people are travelling today than any other time in the travel history of the world, and they speak different languages. We also were briefed during our first day at the conference, that destination Sint Maarten is still undiscovered within the European market, which means that we are under-promoted. This needs to be worked on in order to increase our market share,” Mingo added on Wednesday.

More than 3,500 participants visited the showcase exhibition in 2014 where over 180 exhibitors from all around the globe, including numerous companies new to cruise, showcased their products and demonstrated innovations on the exhibition floor.

The Seatrade Cruise Med 2014 conference also included over 160 cruise line executives; participation from 93 countries who had representation, a 35 per cent increase from 2012.



**PHOTO OUTLINE:** L to R: Ichel Moeslikan, Mark Mingo, and Carnival Corporation representatives Marie McKenzie and Kenneth Joergensen on Wednesday at the Seatrade Cruise Med face-to-face meeting.

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