

World Bank Vice President Reaffirms Commitment to Strengthening Resilience in Sint Maarten and the Caribbean

PHILIPSBURG, October 25, 2018 — World Bank Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean Jorge Familiar concluded a three-day visit to Sint Maarten today where he addressed the Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories Resilience Summit, visited recovery projects and met with government, parliamentarians, and local partners to discuss progress of the recovery and reconstruction after Hurricane Irma.

During his meetings with Prime Minister Leona Romeo-Marlin, ministers of her government and the General Affairs Committee of Sint Maarten's Parliament, Jorge Familiar reaffirmed the Bank's commitment to help Sint Maarten in accelerating its recovery efforts and strengthening resilience after the storm. In six months since the establishment of the Sint Maarten Recovery, Reconstruction and Resilience Trust Fund financed by The Netherlands, of the US\$134 million received so far US\$103 million have been approved for three projects.

These three projects focus on disaster management, housing and shelter repairs; income support and training; and the building of a new resilient hospital. All projects are aligned with the government of Sint Maarten's priorities established by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan.

Advance preparation is underway for four new projects, as well as the procurement in the coming weeks of heavy fire-fighting equipment for putting out fires in the Philipsburg landfill.

During his trip, Jorge Familiar visited the airport and the Philipsburg landfill. He met with the team from the Sint Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) to see firsthand the ongoing construction work and roof repairs at the hospital and recognized the good progress and strong collaboration between the SMMC, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs (VSA) and the World Bank.

Familiar also met with some of the 870 students benefiting from the Emergency Income Support and Training project funded by the Trust Fund and implemented by VSA and the Sint Maarten Training Foundation. The project will provide training and a stipend for up to 1800 people who are unemployed or underemployed following the Hurricane.

Concluding the visit, World Bank Vice President reaffirmed during his keynote address at the Caribbean OCT's Resilience Summit the importance of taking a broad approach that balances environmental, fiscal and social resilience. He emphasized the need to place an even greater priority on building back better while aiming for swift recovery and reconstruction processes.

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