

## **Project Background and Basic Description of the Works**

Project title: Sint Maarten Rule of Law Facilities Phase 1: Sustainable Infrastructure Rule of Law Design

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### **1. Project background**

The Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention -main detention facility in Sint Maarten- was established in 1990; originally intended to function as a detention center. Since the establishment of the various facilities and due to a number of structural challenges, Sint Maarten's correctional infrastructure has reached a critical point.

The challenges include but are not limited to: insufficient space for a complex inmate population; absence of dedicated facilities for rehabilitation and medical care; insufficient training of correctional personnel; insufficient space; and the overall poor state of the infrastructure and poor work environment. One of the main challenges is linked to the outdated design of the current infrastructure as it does not reflect the current prison design tendencies, based on the research and experience that have shown that humane, well-designed prisons that are operationally functional and positive environments, contribute to stimulate rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals in comparison to the more austere containment-driven concepts.

The physical situation of the detention facilities worsened considerably due to the passage of catastrophic Hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017. The buildings, equipment and overall organizational capacity of the justice sector institutions were directly impacted by the hurricanes.

On December 07, 2022, the Government of the Netherlands and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) signed the Agreement for the Sint Maarten Rule of Law Facilities Project (referred to as "the Agreement"). The official start date of this Agreement was April 03, 2023, with the signing of the Host State Agreement between the Government of Sint Maarten and UNOPS.

The main objective of the Agreement is defined as the design and procurement of resilient, sustainable and effective facilities contributing to strengthening national infrastructure capacity in the correctional sector enabling adequate, safe and humane detention, which facilitates reintegration of offenders back into society.

The design of the new facilities began in October 2023 and is scheduled to finalize in the first semester of 2024. Currently, the level of detail of the design corresponds to a conceptual design. The main characteristics of this conceptual design are described in Section 3 of this document.

## 2. Basic description of the Works

The project site corresponds to the current location of the Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention, in the district of Upper Prince's Quarter at Point Blanche, Sint Maarten, in approximate coordinates [18° 1'5.01"N, 63° 2'5.98"W].

The existing prison infrastructure currently operates at full capacity. The facility has a perimeter fence that encloses an area of 13,250 m<sup>2</sup> and a perimeter wall that encloses an area of 6,500 m<sup>2</sup> approximately. The facilities display the apparent conditions of intensive usage.

The total project site for the new facilities measures approximately 30 thousand square meters. Inside the existing perimeter fencing, the terrain is relatively flat, with a predominance of slopes in the ranges of 0% to 2.5%, and 2.5% to 5%. Within the project site boundaries and outside the existing perimeter fencing, the maximum slopes are located on the outer edge of the existing exterior fencing, mainly on the East and South sectors with slopes above the range of 60%.

The new facilities will correspond to a cluster type prison and house of detention, with a nominal capacity around 200 inmates that fall within different categories. The security classification of the prison corresponds to a high security facility, as per the definitions provided in the [UNOPS Technical Guidance for Prison Planning](#).

It is important to highlight that the new facilities have to comply with the human rights standards applicable to rule of law infrastructure, including, but not limited to, the standards of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), the Nelson Mandela Rules, the Beijing Rules and the Bangkok Rules. Consequently, sufficient infrastructure related to education, workshops and health will be provided, in order to allow for the implementation of a proper inmate rehabilitation and reintegration programme. The preliminary volumes of work of the new facilities are presented in the following table. These figures and description below are merely illustrative, and are subject to change in the official solicitation documents.

Table No.01. Preliminary quantities.

Description	Quantity	Unit
Earthworks	17500	m <sup>3</sup>
Demolitions	5500	m <sup>2</sup>
Pavements and green areas	5000	m <sup>2</sup>
Security wall and perimeter fence	650	m
Ward buildings	5000	m <sup>2</sup>
Main building	4000	m <sup>2</sup>

The main buildings of the new facilities correspond to ten two-level buildings, and one four-level building. The two-level buildings are located in the central and southern sector of the project site, and correspond to the ten different inmate wards. The main four-level building is located in the northern sector of the project site, and accommodates the security and the administration offices, and the prison support facilities (i.e. visitors' area, inmate intake area, health unit, kitchen, workshops, classrooms and gym). Circulation from the main building to the inmate accommodation sector is provided through sheltered and fenced corridors.

Each ward has its independent dayroom and yard. The design of the wards enables for one security observation point to have visibility over two wards at the same time. Each cell has dimensions of approximately 12 m<sup>2</sup>, including an individual bathroom equipped with shower, lavatory and toilet. One or two inmates will be accommodated per cell. The interior design of the cell enables adequate living conditions for the inmates in terms of natural lighting and natural ventilation.

The four-level building corresponds to the largest individual structure of the new facilities. This main building is the access and egress point for staff, visitors and service vehicles. A brief description is hereby provided.

- Six multi-purpose inmate workshops are included as well as storage rooms, search rooms and security observation points.
- The kitchen includes, among others, a delivery screening and produce unpacking areas, a dry storage area, a cold storage area (refrigerator and freezer), a food washing area, a main food preparation and cooking area, and a dish washing area.
- The health unit includes, among others, a nurses' office, medical interview and examination rooms, medical treatment rooms, a dental consultation room, an inmate observation room, and an inmate waiting area.
- The inmate intake area includes, among others, an inmate processing area, an inmate search room, an inmate holding cell, an interview and examination room, and storage area.
- The gym area additionally includes storage rooms, search rooms and security observation points.
- The classrooms are complemented with inmate toilets and teachers' offices.
- The visits area includes waiting areas, screening areas, a visitors' search room, inmates' search and waiting areas, and visiting areas for regular visits, family visits, virtual visits, official hearings, and official visits.
- The administrative offices include individual and shared offices, a meeting room, a kitchenette and dining room, and lockers and showers for staff. The security offices include, among others, a control room, an IT room, and the security staff offices.

Considering the security classification of the new Point Blanche Prison and House of Detention, the facilities will be enclosed by two layers of perimeter security: a reinforced concrete wall, and a fence. Additionally, containment fences will enclose the general inmate accommodation sector.

In relation to security surveillance, the CCTV system will enable visual monitoring of all the interior, exterior and perimeter cameras of the facilities.

In general, the construction system consists of conventional reinforced concrete structures. The foundation system consists predominantly of shallow foundations, due to the surfacing -or shallow- rock formations in the sector where the four-level building will be located, and to the relative light loads transmitted to the terrain by the two-level inmate wards.

The new facilities have a wastewater treatment plant that will enable the reuse of the wastewater resulting from the prison's operations, for toilet flushing, irrigation and general maintenance of the infrastructure. It is important to note that the connection points to the water and electrical supply of the new facilities, correspond to the same point currently being used by the existing prison.

One of the main constraints during the construction stage of the new facilities relates to the fact that the existing prison must remain fully operational at all times. Therefore, and considering the existing buildings and site restrictions, the new works will necessarily be executed in stages, to ensure the safe operation of the current operations while the construction is taking place. The detailed description of the scope of each stage will be included in the solicitation documents.