

**Speech First strike commemorative coin “100th Anniversary
Aruba Aviation”**

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Good evening ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

With protocol already being established for this event, I will proceed with my speech.

1. Today, we celebrate a landmark, or maybe an airmark, of great proportions. Therefore, it is with great pleasure and a sincere privilege that I join you here tonight to celebrate, not one, but two grand achievements in Aruba’s history. These accomplishments mark, first of all, the 100th anniversary of Aviation in Aruba, and, secondly, the first time that a florin commemorative coin will be struck by an Aruban dignitary, Mrs. Xiomara Maduro, Minister of Finance and Culture.

2. To quote the American Aviator and Medal of Honor recipient, Eddy Rickenbacker: *“Aviation is proof that given the will, we have the capacity to achieve the impossible.”* It is on this exact day in 1923, that the two US Navy Curtiss H-16 long-range maritime patrol flying boats landed in Paardenbaai. This major event set the stage for an incredible journey in Aruba’s aviation industry, not only connecting people and cultures across oceans, but also creating the right conditions to spur economic development, create jobs, provide income, and thereby fostering prosperity for the Aruban community. The aviation industry has spanned virtual bridges, connecting a tiny tiny island to the rest of the world, and has been, therefore, a key factor in enabling the needed flow of goods and services, investments, and people, which are fundamental drivers of our economic growth throughout past decades.

3. Earlier this year, I was approached by Mr. Joost Meijs, Director of the Aruba Airport Authority, who enthusiastically shared his vision for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Aviation in Aruba, including the possibility to issue a commemorative coin. Even though the short timeframe to design, produce, and issue a commemorative coin presented a major challenge, at the Central Bank of Aruba we immediately embraced this great idea and put words into action. In recognizing the importance of this milestone in Aruba's history, we seized also the opportunity to add another historical element to this celebration on the occasion of the first official strike of the commemorative coin. Tonight we will have a premier in Aruba's history when the commemorative coin is struck by an Aruban dignitary.

4. Ladies and gentlemen, before we proceed with the first strike of the commemorative coin, allow me to give you a brief description of how this commemorative coin was

created. As a first step for the design, we conducted extensive research to ensure the best possible depiction of the historic flying boat landing. We are, therefore, very grateful for all the information and support provided by the Aruba Airport Authority, Archivo Nacional Aruba, and Stichting Rancho. Once we had sufficient material and insight, for the last four months, our team at the Central Bank of Aruba worked closely together with our partner in the Netherlands, the Koninklijke Nederlandse Munt, to finalize the design and produce a limited number of this commemorative coin, as well. Therefore, I would like to thank the CBA team and the Dutch Mint, which tonight is represented by Mr. Bert van Ravenswaaij and Mrs. Danielle Ranzijn, for the excellent collaboration.

5. As you may already know, the Central Bank of Aruba issues all coins, including commemorative coins, on behalf of the Government of Aruba. In contrast to the florin banknotes you may have in your wallet right now, the value of the

florin coins issued are on the balance sheet of the Government of Aruba. Therefore, the Government of Aruba is an important partner in this celebration, and we also acknowledge the excellent cooperation received from the Minister of Finance and Culture, and the Department of Legislative Affairs, for the timely issuance of the required State Decree for this commemorative coin “100th Anniversary Aruba Aviation”.

6. In closing, I would like to congratulate the Aruba Airport Authority for organizing all the magnificent events celebrating the 100th anniversary of aviation in Aruba over the past few months. Joost, you should be very proud of your team. We thank you for inviting the Central Bank of Aruba to be part of this historic moment in time. We wish you many more anniversaries and great accomplishments in the upcoming years.

7. As you may imagine, at the Central Bank of Aruba we are very proud of the final product that you are about to see for the first time tonight. We hope that you and the Aruban public will feel the same way, and enjoy the unique design. Now I would like to finish my speech with the following quote by Jerry Crawford: *“To most people, the sky is the limit. To those who love aviation, the sky is home.”*

Fly on Aruba!

Masha pabien cu bo 100 aña di aviacion y hopi mas exito den futuro!

Thank you for your attention.