



UPU at the heart of *francophonie* **Philatelic exhibition inaugurated in Berne**

Berne, 20 March 2007

The UPU this evening inaugurated the exhibition "Le timbre au cœur de la francophonie" ("The stamp at the heart of francophonie") in the presence of more than 150 representatives of the Diplomatic Corps in Berne and leading philatelists.

The collection, on loan from the European Philately Academy, was first presented at the 2006 Francophonie Summit in Bucharest. It illustrates the attachment of 50 countries to the French language and francophonie, with a separate frame being devoted to each country.

This 55-frame philatelic exhibition is the largest ever exhibition of its kind hosted at the UPU. It is supplemented by a vintage postcard exhibition covering the period from the early 19th century to 1930, devoted to prominent French writers, including Rousseau, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Balzac, Hugo, Verne, Daudet, Zola, Mallarmé, Rostand, Colette and Mauriac, etc.

"Vivre ensemble différents", the theme of this year's International Francophonie Day, is all about diversity, respect for others and dialogue and communication between peoples – the driving force behind the UPU's actions at the service of its member countries," said Edouard Dayan, the organization's Director General, by way of inaugurating this exhibition that will be held at Universal Postal Union headquarters in Berne from 22 to 30 March.

This year, the UPU has teamed up with several cultural institutions pertaining to Berne, other Swiss towns, the Swiss Confederation and the Embassies, as well as with the International Organization of the Francophonie to celebrate the week that showcases the language of Molière.

The Universal Postal Union is right at the forefront when it comes to promoting the French language, as, apart from the International Organization of the Francophonie, it is the only international organization whose official language is French. Such has been the case for the last 132 years.

When: 22 to 30 March 2007, 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 to 5 p.m.

Where: Universal Postal Union, Weltpoststrasse 4, 3015 Berne (Muri)

About the Universal Postal Union

The UPU, a United Nations specialized agency based in Berne (Switzerland), is the primary forum for cooperation between Posts. In addition to maintaining a genuinely universal network that provides modern products and services, it establishes the rules for international mail exchanges among its 191 members and makes recommendations to stimulate mail volume growth and to improve the quality of service for customers. Each year, more than five million employees process and deliver 431 billion domestic letter-post items, some 5.6 billion international items and 6 billion ordinary parcels.

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