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To: Union member countries

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Berne, 21 August 2020

Reference: 3109(DPRM)1084

Subject: Circular note from Côte d'Ivoire (Rep.) on the postponement of the 27th UPU Congress

Dear Sir/Madam,

Further to circular letters Nos. 2009(DIRCAB)1039 of 20 April 2020 and 2009(DIRCAB)1055 of 14 May 2020, relating to the postponement of the 27th UPU Congress in Abidjan, the International Bureau has now received a circular note (No. 240/PR/ME-SGPR of 14 August 2020), addressed to the Director General, from Mr Patrick Achi, Minister of State and Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

That letter reaffirms the commitment of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to hold the 27th Congress in Abidjan.

In the same letter, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has also requested that the postponement of the 27th UPU Congress in Abidjan be formally recognized as resulting from a force majeure situation due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, and that the matter be discussed at the upcoming exceptional session of the Council of Administration. A copy of the official circular note is attached hereto.

I wish you and your colleagues good health during this global crisis.

Yours faithfully,

Bishar A. Hussein
Director General



[Translation from French of letter No. 240/PR/ME-SGPR/ms from Mr Patrick Achi, Minister of State and Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, to Mr Bishar A. Hussein, Director General of the UPU International Bureau, dated 14 August 2020]

Subject: Firm commitment of Côte d'Ivoire to host the 27th Congress in Abidjan

Dear Mr Hussein,

By means of decision C 30/2016, the 26th UPU Congress, held in Istanbul, Turkey, in October 2016, entrusted the organization of the 27th UPU Congress to Côte d'Ivoire.

The Ivorian authorities have since made every effort to rise to the organizational challenges of hosting this major event. At the outbreak of the current global health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Côte d'Ivoire was on schedule with regard to all of the associated preparations. The arrangements to host the 27th UPU Congress in Abidjan have been compromised only as a result of the current circumstances.

Despite the disruption, Côte d'Ivoire has always remained firm and unequivocal in its commitment to host the 27th Congress, although the evolution of the pandemic to date has made it impossible to set a definitive date and thus finalize the revised schedule of the Abidjan Congress.

Thus, on the eve of this major gathering of the postal community and following the example of other major international organizations, Côte d'Ivoire hereby proposes to postpone the 27th UPU Congress in Abidjan on the grounds of force majeure.

In this regard, and in accordance with article 101.4 of the UPU General Regulations, the date of Congress can always be modified, in particular in view of an exceptional, unforeseeable and unavoidable situation. Furthermore, the selection of a new date is a matter for the host country, with the agreement of the International Bureau.

It is important to note that the postponement of the UPU Congress, as requested by Côte d'Ivoire, would not be a first in the history of our Union. It should also be noted that the Acts of the Union already make provision for the continuation of the organization's activities in such exceptional circumstances.

Notwithstanding the above, Côte d'Ivoire remains mobilized and will continue to work closely with the International Bureau to pursue the necessary preparations, so that the 27th UPU Congress can be held whenever the global health situation permits.

The solidarity of all Union member countries in the face of this worldwide health crisis must serve to strengthen the universal postal community as never before. Thus, Côte d'Ivoire, as host country of the 27th UPU Congress, hopes to continue to enjoy the support of all member countries in order to ensure the success of this important event, in the interests of the world postal community.

With this in mind, we request that the International Bureau:

- Publish and distribute this letter to all Union member countries, for information purposes;
- Record the above request as having been formally submitted by Côte d'Ivoire for information purposes and, as appropriate, for deliberation by the Council of Administration (at the exceptional session scheduled for this year), so that a situation of force majeure may be formally acknowledged and declared on the grounds of the COVID-19 pandemic that has gripped the world since January 2020.

Allow me to close by emphasizing, once again, the firm and unequivocal desire of Côte d'Ivoire to host the 27th UPU Congress.

Yours sincerely,

[Stamp and signature]

Patrick Achi