

World Post Day, 9 October 2021

Statement by the Director General of the UPU International Bureau:

“Innovate to recover”

We all owe a debt of gratitude to a small band of individuals whose creativity and innovation is helping the world to escape the clutches of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the start of this crisis, there were concerns that a vaccine to combat the virus would take many years to develop. Instead, the unprecedented collaboration of individuals, companies and organizations produced vaccines within a year. Along with nurses and doctors, who risked their lives daily, the scientists and researchers who developed the COVID-19 vaccine are global heroes.

Their triumph in achieving this medical breakthrough has led to fresh hope of preventing infections, and thus containing the spread of the virus: It will lead hopefully to a better future. The story of how this innovation promoted life-changing solutions is one that global business in general, and the international postal sector in particular, can emulate.

COVID-19 not only halted much of the international postal sector for significant periods, it also undermined business strategies and plans. Against this background, the sector was forced to become creative and develop new ideas and methods to serve customers.

New social and economic postal services have sprung up, creative ways of delivering mail have emerged, and e-commerce has prospered in many parts of the world. In many countries and territories, Posts are also involved in last-mile delivery of the vaccine using complex cold storage methods, offering platforms for booking vaccinations, and even providing space for vaccination centres. These activities are undeniable proof of just how inseparable the Post is from the society and customers it serves.

This agile approach to service and business also offers hope for the future of the postal sector. All too often, we have allowed pessimism to cloud our vision for the postal future, and yet time and again, Posts have proven their capacity to rise to any occasion and continue to offer services with remarkable levels of resilience.

When COVID-19 affected all the countries of the world, including the established supply chain infrastructure, the Post still found a way to continue offering services to communities.

It is this innovativeness of Posts, and their resilience in serving communities, that we are celebrating on the occasion of World Post Day.

The theme of this year's World Post Day is "Innovate to recover"!

Together, let us learn the lessons arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, and understand that innovation is not an accessory; it is the driving force behind recovery, and what makes this sector crucial to billions of people.

I wish you successful World Post Day celebrations.