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6 FOREWORD A note of thanks

7 EDITOR'S NOTE Tides of change

IN BRIEF

9 UPU announces International Letter- Writing Competition and World Post Day themes for 2022

10 UPU talks sustainability at Parcel+Post Expo

12 Who's who at the UPU Abdellatif Meskine, Coordinator, Cabinet and Council Affairs

38 POST FROM THE PAST Holding the reins of the Union

40 SOLUTION SPOTLIGHT Postal services in the palm of your hand

46 DIGEST



8

IN BRIEF

Councils launch work on new Abidjan Postal Strategy

The Postal Operations Council and Council of Administration held their first sessions following the Abidjan Congress, launching work on the organization's new strategy for 2021-2025.

15

IN BRIEF

UPU releases new remuneration report celebrating 50 years of terminal dues

In mid-November 2021, the UPU's remuneration team published a new report looking at the evolution of the terminal dues system over the past 50 years. The report, entitled, "Terminal Dues – New Frontiers for a Changing World", analyzes the major policy and market factors that have shaped, and will continue to shape, the remuneration system.



30

INTERVIEW

Changing the latitude of the postal business

Post Fiji CEO Dr Anirudha Bansod tells Union Postale what's new and next for the small island postal operator, which celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2021.

CONTENTS

16

COVER STORY

A FOND FAREWELL

The UPU's 27th Universal Postal Congress in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, saw the approval of not only a new World Postal Strategy, but also a series of decisions paving the way for a modern UPU.

32

FEATURE

Posts reflect on COVID-19's impact during World Post Day 2021

On October 8, 2021, the UPU celebrated World Post Day with a hybrid ceremony, which featured presentations from ministers responsible for the post and postal CEOs from around the world.

36

Modernized posts faring better in pandemic recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic brought a massive disruption to global supply chains and accelerated long-term postal trends, away from mail and toward parcels and logistics.

42

MARKET FOCUS

Canada Post eyes green future

Canada Post launched an ambitious environmental plan to help create a more sustainable operation over the coming decades.

44

MARKET FOCUS

SAPO invests in the future of South Africa through literacy programme

For many years the South African Post Office (SAPO) has played an important role in helping to eradicate poverty in the country.

UNION POSTALE

UNION POSTALE is the Universal Postal Union's flagship magazine, founded in 1875. It is published quarterly in four languages and takes a closer look at UPU activities, featuring international news and developments from the postal sector.

The magazine regularly publishes well researched articles on topical issues facing the industry, as well as interviews with the sector's leading individuals. It is distributed widely to the UPU's 192 member countries, including thousands of decision-makers from governments and Posts, as well as other postal stakeholders. All regard it as an important source of information about the UPU and the postal sector at large.

UNION POSTALE is also published in French, Arabic, and Chinese.

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A NOTE OF THANKS

Readers, colleagues and friends, the time has come to say goodbye to you in my capacity as the Director General of the Universal Postal Union.

I have poured my passion for the postal sector into all my work as the head of this organization. These past nine years have been some of the most rewarding in my long career in the Post. I am eternally grateful to the UPU's members, who entrusted the highest office in the sector to myself and the Deputy Director General, Pascal Clivaz, in Doha and reaffirmed that trust again in Istanbul.

As we know from our early audits of the organization, the biggest risk facing us was to the UPU's role and relevance. Our goal from the outset was to take concrete actions to transform and reform the UPU into a fit-for-purpose pillar of the postal industry.

"The UPU is stronger and more resilient than it was when we took the helm in 2013 with great thanks to the solidarity and perseverance shown by our membership."

Nothing worth having ever comes easily. Transformation is always a difficult process and we faced many challenges along the way. But while we may have had different opinions on our journey, our sights were set on the same destination. I am proud and honoured to say we reached it successfully. The UPU is stronger and more resilient than

it was when we took the helm in 2013 with great thanks to the solidarity and perseverance shown by our membership.

Through the shared commitment of our member countries, we were able to change the way this Union works. We have made it more efficient through changes to our operations, but also more inclusive of all regions and levels of development. These improvements paid dividends as we navigated the tricky issue of terminal dues, as well as the set-backs of a global pandemic, together.

As I hand over the keys of this organization to your new Director General, the very capable Mr Masahiko Metoki, I have but one message for all of you: remember that with a common goal, the UPU is capable of whatever it puts its collective mind to. I bid you bear this in mind as you work towards the opening of the Union to wider postal sector players at the 2023 Extraordinary Congress.

You are in safe hands with Mr Metoki and incoming Deputy Director General Mr Marjan Osvald. I have no doubt that they will continue the transformation of our great Union. I wish them all the very best as they endeavour to do so.

To the UPU members, I would like to say one last thank-you for your engagement, your trust and your friendship. To my staff at the International Bureau, I say thank you for your support and your unwavering dedication to this Union.

I have many fond memories to take with me as I say farewell to my treasured second home, Berne, and return to Kenya.

Yours sincerely,

Bishar A. Hussein
Director General, UPU



EDITOR'S NOTE

TIDES OF CHANGE

As 2021 comes to a close, change is abound at the UPU.

This edition of UNION POSTALE features the reflections of UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein and Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz as they prepare to hand the organization over to its newly elected leadership team in January 2022. We had the chance to sit down with the pair to gain their insight on the achievements made in their nine years at the helm of the UN specialized agency for the postal sector, as well as what they view as the pressing issues still facing the organization as they pass the torch to Mr Masahiko Metoki and Mr Marjan Osvald.

The shift from 2021 to 2022 also marks the end of the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has placed additional pressures on a sector in the midst of transforming itself. Readers will also enjoy a macro view of the sector's performance this year, as UPU economist Mauro Boffa breaks down the results of the UPU's 2021 Postal Economic Outlook.

In a special interview with UNION POSTALE, Post Fiji CEO Anirudha Bansod provides a micro view into the particular challenges facing small island developing states, providing his advice on overcoming them.

Canada Post and South African Post Office share insights on two sustainable development initiatives – one focused on increasing environmental sustainability and the other having the Post play a central role in inclusive access to education.

Happy reading.

Kayla Redstone, Editor-in-chief

Councils launch work on new Abidjan Postal Strategy

The Postal Operations Council and Council of Administration held their first sessions following the Abidjan Congress, launching work on the organization's new strategy for 2021-2025.

TEXT: Kayla Redstone



Opening the November meeting of the Council of Administration (CA), the Union's supervisory body, Director General Bishar A. Hussein noted the "tumultuous period" facing the organization, encouraging CA members to work swiftly on making the Union's work more efficient and effective.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has forced posts to be creative, adaptive, and innovative. It is against this background that the CA plays a key role by addressing challenging questions of the UPU," he said.

The session was the first for incoming CA Chair, Côte d'Ivoire, represented by La Poste Côte d'Ivoire CEO Isaac Gnamba-Yao, and POC Chair, France, represented by La Poste France Director of European/International Relations, Jean-Paul Forceville.

On the CA's focus for the cycle, Mr Gnamba-Yao said sectoral transformation and the opening of the UPU to wider postal sector players would be key topics.

"These are areas in which major decisions will need to be made. They are subjects that will cause some friction, but that we must address in order for the industry to recover," he said.

For his part, Mr Forceville added, "It's vital that work get started quickly because the sector is changing so quickly ... and UPU needs to be in a position to keep pace with those changes. The stakes are indeed very high," he said.

A new round of countries were elected to the two decision-making bodies during the Abidjan Congress this past August. The new composition also reflected, for the first time, reforms decided during the 2018 Extraordinary Congress to ensure equitable representation of each region in the POC. To bring this to fruition, UPU members elected 48 new members to the Council compared to the previous cycle's 40 members.

Moving forward

The Council of Administration addressed the opening of the organization to wider postal sector players during its first session, with members agreeing to establish a task force that will study the matter in 2022. A 2023 Extraordinary Congress will take decisions on concrete plans for the opening.

The POC set forward a plan to tackle a number of matters aimed at modernizing technical and operational aspects of the business, including the exchange of electronic advance data (EAD) to meet security and customs regulatory requirements.

This cycle will see the POC the continuation of work on advancing the quality and compliance of EAD exchanges to improve global postal security, tackling any remaining issues hindering global uptake of the technology – namely, disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, continuing regulatory changes, and operational disparities between regions.

The POC met 22 to 24 November, while countries gathered for the CA on 25 and 26 November. The next sessions will be held 9 through 20 May 2022. **KR**

UPU announces International Letter-Writing Competition and World Post Day themes for 2022

The UPU has revealed that “Post for Planet” will be the theme for next year’s World Post Day. The theme highlights the role postal operators play in supporting activities that help address climate change.

TEXT: Helen Norman



Nubaysha Islam from Bangladesh won the UPU’s 50th International Letter-Writing Competition in 2021.

In line with the World Post Day theme, the UPU has also revealed the theme of the 2022 International Letter-Writing Competition for Young People. This year participants will be asked to, “Write a letter to someone influential explaining why and how they should take action on the climate crisis.” According to the UPU, the theme will help give young people, who often feel excluded from climate crisis discussions, the chance to call for changes.

Speaking on Children’s Day on November 20, UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein highlighted the importance of the letter-writing competition which in 2021 celebrated its 50th anniversary: “For more than 50 years, the UPU’s International Letter-Writing Competition has challenged children and young people to write passionately about the world around them. Together, their

views and ideas have increased our understanding of this planet.”

The International Letter-Writing Competition was launched in 1971 and for the past 50 years has encouraged young writers aged 9-15 to write letters on a given theme. The competition was launched to both help make young people aware of the important role postal operators play in society and to develop their literacy skills. It is tied to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education.

The UPU chooses the theme and then participating countries organize a competition at the national level through the post. Entries are submitted through the national postal operator, with each country choosing a winner and then submitting it to the UPU by May 5. The winner is chosen by an international jury and then announced on World Post Day.

In 2021, 39 countries participated in the competition and more than two million letters were written. In Viet Nam more than one million students participated. Algeria, China, Kyrgyzstan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe also saw high numbers of entrants. Last year’s winner was 14-year-old girl Nubaysha Islam from Bangladesh who wrote a letter to her baby sister Amal following the 2021 theme to, “Write a letter to a family member about your experience with COVID-19.”

When asked what advice she would give to young people entering the competition in 2022, Nubaysha told UPU News: “I would say: stay true to your words. Write what you believe in. If you really believe in something, try to emphasize on that, let others know, create an impact on it.” **HN**



UPU Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz participated in a discussion on digital transformation at the Parcel and Parcel Expo 2021

UPU talks sustainability at Parcel+Post Expo

The UPU held its World Leaders Forum ahead of the annual exhibition, having postal leaders from around the globe convene to discuss facilitating sustainable global trade.

TEXT: Tara Giroud

Posts are adapting to a world in which COVID-19 still affects daily life, e-commerce trends continue to surge, and climate change alters how the world communicates and thus how posts must operate.

The Universal Postal Union stands ready to serve the sector, said Pascal Clivaz, the Deputy Director General of the UPU, at the 2021 Parcel and Post Expo in Vienna, Austria, in October. The UPU can help adapt postal services to new technologies, modernize the

Post's image, and facilitate social and financial inclusion.

"We have the tools, but there is a need for financing," Clivaz said.

Postal leaders shared their experiences and strategies in the World Leaders Forum, which took place online ahead of the Expo. They discussed the effects of the pandemic, efforts to modernize and goals for sustainable operations.

Iceland Post saw, for the first time, revenues for parcels exceeded that of letters, said Þórhildur Ólöf Helgadóttir, CEO.

The trend is expected to continue. Many Icelandic companies and governmental authorities have pledged to stop sending letters after 2025, she said, adding that climate policy has led companies to send electronic invoices.

To that end, Iceland Post invested in solutions to help strengthen ties with customers and lower costs.

Staffing was reduced from 822 to 556, a parcel tracking app was developed, parcel lockers were expanded from eight locations to 50, a new parcel sorter will handle 4,000 packages per hour compared with 800, and the service desk will include a chatbot.

"Our purpose has not changed through the years," she said. "Our purpose is to connect people, companies, and communities with our service, and we will continue to do that."

Additionally, Helgadóttir said electronic advance data requirements will help posts achieve their goals by increasing speeds while reducing costs and errors.

"I believe this is a win-win situation," she said.

For Correos de Mexico, the pandemic provided an opportunity to rethink the post's commercial strategy, said Rocío Bárcena, Director General.

E-commerce grew by 81%, and MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) migrated to digital channels to promote their products throughout the country, Bárcena said, making logistics services indispensable.

"More than an obstacle, increase in logistics demand has been the best opportunity to transform our services by initiating a process of technological renovation and modernization that allows us to provide consumers with certainty about the real location of their parcels through online traceability from our commercial website," said Bárcena.

PostNord would like to lead the industry into the low-carbon economy, said Annemarie Gardshol, CEO of PostNord.



The World Leaders Forum took place online.

In 2020, PostNord reached its target to reduce carbon emissions by 40% compared to 2009. A third of its vehicles are electric, and heavy transports will use as much biofuels as possible.

"This success has encouraged us to step up our efforts even further," Gardshol said.

PostNord aims to be fossil fuel-free by 2030 with another 40% reduction in carbon emissions by 2025, and zero-emission last mile by 2027.

The post has formed a coalition of influential industry players who work together to achieve fossil fuel-free commercial heavy vehicles by 2050, she said. **TG**

Posts are adapting to a world in which COVID-19 still affects daily life, e-commerce trends continue to surge, and climate change alters how the world communicates and thus how posts must operate.



Derek Osborn moderated the 2021 World Leaders Forum.



Name
Abdellatif Meskine

Directorate
**Executive Office
Directorate (DIRCAB)**

Position
**Coordinator, Cabinet
and Council Affairs
(Chef de Cabinet)**

Nationality
Moroccan

Languages
Arabic, French, English

There's never a dull day in the Cabinet of the International Bureau, says the office's coordinator, Abdellatif Meskine.

According to Meskine, each day his desk sees hundreds of pages of requests destined for the UPU's General Management. It's a task that requires multidimensional coordination and agility when it comes to prioritization, as many requests reach the office at the same time and most require an immediate response. His team is also responsible for preparing the Council of Administration and Postal Operations Council sessions, as well as Congresses.

"Chef de Cabinet isn't a high-profile position, but it is one that calls for a high degree of credibility," says Meskine. "Between handling incoming files, keeping the directorates informed, facilitating General Management decisions, organizing and running committees, preparing reports and following up on activities, you must always remain calm and helpful."

On top of managing coordination with all corners of the International Bureau, the head of the Cabinet must satisfy the needs of three bosses: the Director of the Executive Office, the Deputy Director General and, of course, the Director General himself.

He credits his team for managing the immense workload. "The vigilance, patience and professionalism of the Cabinet team mean that, at the end of the day, all actions are implemented or scheduled."

His well-rounded career in the Post has also readied him to take up the challenging duty.

"I can say that working for the Post gave me a good grounding in the business from a commercial and operational point of view, but also in terms of project management and, above all, team management," he explains.

Meskine spent 20 years working with Poste Maroc in various capacities, including coordinating the internal operations of post offices, managing an

entire region, and overseeing the commercial and operational aspects of mail and parcels at the organization's headquarters. One of his main accomplishments there was helping the post achieve B-level and then A-level UPU quality certification. He also contributed to UPU working groups on behalf of Morocco.

"Before coming to the UPU, I had led the Arab region's work on terminal dues and led the group charged with markets development. I also travelled to a number of countries to provide consultancy in my areas of expertise. This is what prompted me to join the UPU and make a bigger contribution to the region's development under the UPU's strategy," he explains.

Upon joining the UPU in 2012, Meskine coordinated the programme responsible for the Arab region and training in the UPU's Development Cooperation Directorate (DCDEV). He later went on to serve the same function for the Africa region, before joining the Cabinet in 2017.

When asked about his favourite part of the job, he answers, "I take great pleasure seeing the Director General and Deputy Director General's programme carried out in the best possible way in terms of time and results. Each day has its own story. Each year its own Congress."

"It has been a pleasure and an honour to have this unique experience, despite the challenges you can imagine," he says.

Although Cabinet work keeps him occupied, Meskine ensures he dedicates time to the education of his two children, checking that his parents are keeping well and exploring Switzerland and its culture.

His interest in understanding the intricate details of how things work also extends into his personal life. He devotes a portion of his spare time to learning what makes Swiss watches tick.

"As a bit of a tinkerer, I have gradually moved on to external maintenance, cleaning, changing of straps, batteries and polishing... to help me wind down from the daily workload at the office," he says. **KR**

Fresh from the Cabinet: New LAHSO tool helps countries make connections

In November, the International Bureau launched a new and modern application for the list of addresses, heads and senior officials of postal entities (LAHSO).

This upgrade was coordinated by the Cabinet team – including coordinator Abdellatif Meskine, and programme assistant, Laetitia Biolley. The project has taken place over the last two years with internal development work conducted by the Postal Technology Centre (PTC).

LAHSO is more dynamic and easier to use, allowing data entry and retrieval by those individuals designated by their authorities. It is intended for use by UPU member countries, restricted unions and the staff of the UPU International Bureau.

Individuals with access to the address list can now:

View contacts for member countries, restricted unions and the International Bureau;

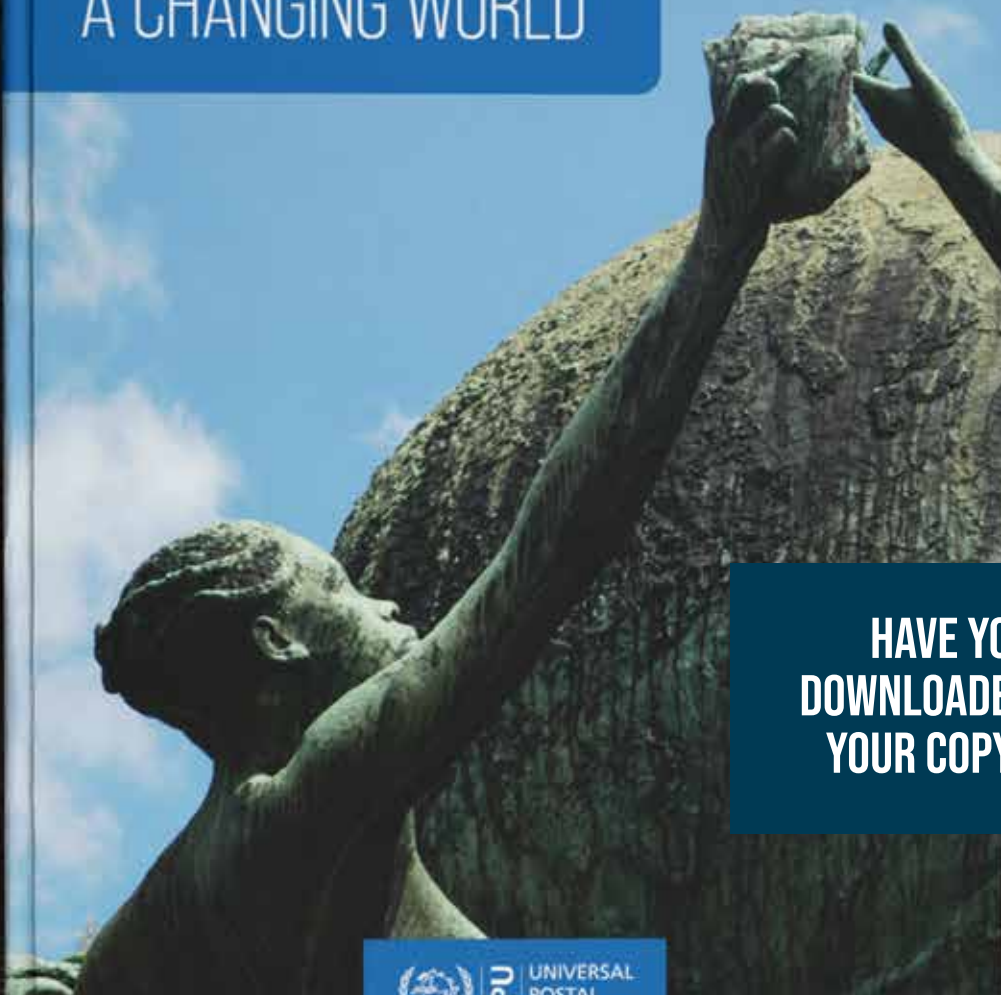
Access information pertaining to United Nations organizations, the permanent missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva, and the directory of the diplomatic and consular corps in Switzerland, through the links provided;

Extract member country data.

The new system's launch also marks the successful implementation of recommendations arising from both the IB's the internal audit and the audit by the Swiss Federal Audit Office.

TERMINAL DUES

NEW FRONTIERS FOR A CHANGING WORLD



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UPU releases new remuneration report celebrating 50 years of terminal dues

In mid-November 2021, the UPU's remuneration team published a new report looking at the evolution of the terminal dues system over the past 50 years. The report, entitled, "Terminal Dues – New Frontiers for a Changing World," analyzes the major policy and market factors that have shaped, and will continue to shape, the remuneration system.

TEXT: Helen Norman

Through the terminal dues system, each designated operator that receives mail from a designated operator in another country has the right to collect payment from the originating designated operator to compensate for costs incurred in delivering that mail.

Paul Schoorl, Remuneration Expert at the UPU, says, "The terminal dues system celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Through this publication, we take a moment to recognize this historic accomplishment. We also use the publication to examine the profound changes that the terminal dues system has undergone over the past 50 years, such as how it has been constantly updated and reviewed in line with market conditions and policy objectives."

According to Schoorl, the new study will be an important reference for the UPU's Postal Operations Council (POC) and the Council of Administration (CA), and other stakeholders, involved in the work on the development of the proposals for a future Integrated Remuneration System (IRS),

which includes terminal dues. Following the Abidjan Congress, this work is guided by the Integrated Remuneration Plan (IRP), which provides the roadmap that should lead to the full integration of the UPU remuneration systems by 2026.

"Sections I and II of the new report analyze the main policy issues and drivers behind the evolution of terminal dues and provide an extensive chronology of the system," Schoorl says. "In section III, the publication focuses on the next steps. These next steps are already in progress and will lead toward the further development of the future terminal dues system that is part of an IRS, linking letters, parcels, and EMS rates in a transparent, logical, customer and market-focused manner."

Schoorl notes that the new publication "helps to ensure a level playing field of knowledge for governments, policymakers, designated operators and other stakeholders" on the key policy issues and drivers behind the terminal dues system, which is often considered a difficult subject to analyze.

"The publication also informs readers of how terminal dues remuneration is reviewed, negotiated, decided and implemented," Schoorl continues. "In total, eight policy areas are analyzed in the study, which demonstrate the scale of complexity in finding a remuneration solution that meets the needs of 192 members. Each policy area presents a profusion of competing pressures that make contrary demands on the terminal dues system."

The terminal dues system has a key role to play in strengthening the global postal network by facilitating interoperability and contributing to global development, including supporting posts to benefit from the growth in e-commerce.

"The continued work on the integration and modernization of the remuneration system, through the IRP, represents an important opportunity for designated operators to achieve competitive and viable remuneration for the longer-term sustainability of the universal postal service. More specifically, the IRP lays out the framework through which the terminal dues system will be remodeled into a remuneration system reflective of a new reality in which designated operators are increasingly handling and delivering e-commerce-generated small packet items," he concludes. **HN**

Read the Terminal Dues – New Frontiers for a Changing World here:

<https://www.upu.int/en/Publications/Remuneration/Terminal-Dues---New-Frontiers-for-a-Changing-World>



A FOND



FAREWELL

When UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein and Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz were elected to the UPU in 2012, they promised to take the organization to the next level. Nine years later, they reflect on their progress and the current state of the Union.

TEXT: Kayla Redstone

The Kenyan-Swiss team were first elected during the 2012 Universal Postal Congress in Doha, taking up a second mandate after their re-election during 2016 Congress in Istanbul.

"This is a very reflective moment for me, looking back nine years to when I was elected the first Director General from sub-Saharan Africa," says the Director General.

Mr Hussein, who hails from a remote pastoralist community in north-eastern

Kenya, enjoyed an enriching career in the Post leading up to his initial election. The Director General first joined the then Kenya Posts and Telecommunications Corporation in 1984, eventually becoming the first Postmaster General of the Postal Corporation of Kenya in 1999. He later went on to represent Kenya as head of the country's delegation to the UPU, serving as Chair of the 2008 Congress and then representing Kenya as Council of Administration Chair from 2008 through his election in 2012.

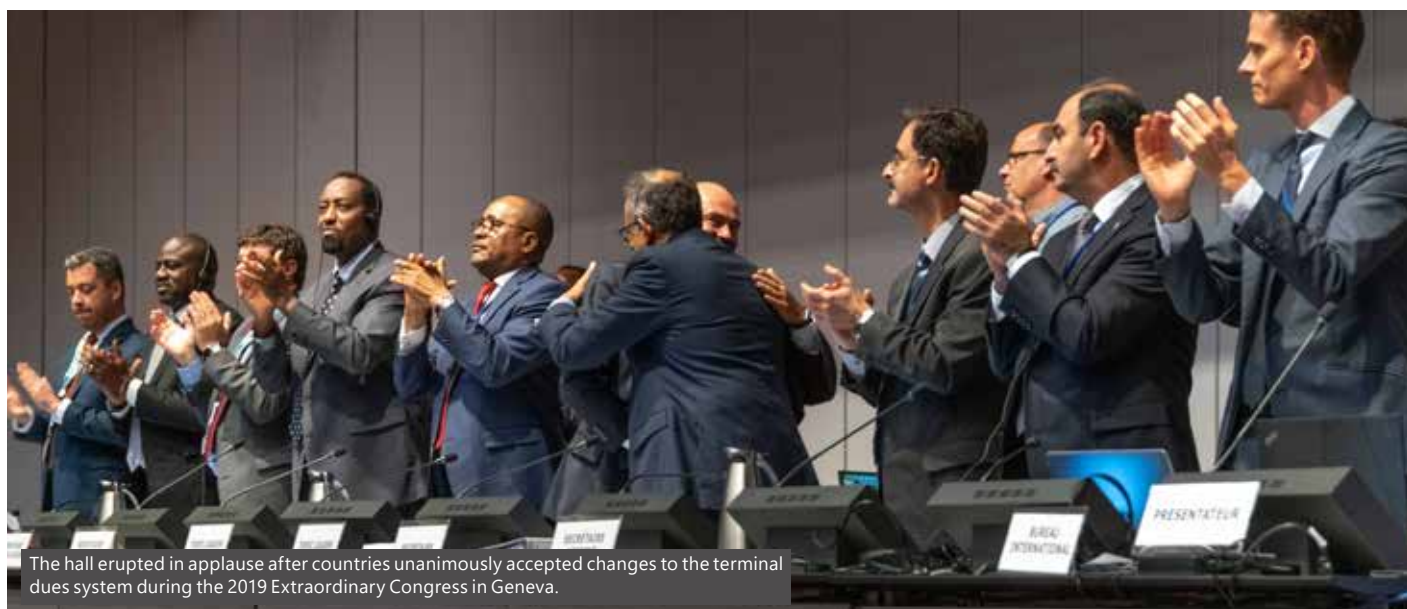
His counterpart, Mr Clivaz, shares a similar legacy in the postal sector. The Deputy Director General joined the Swiss Post in 1995 as an International Affairs Adviser, at a time when the operator had begun its transformation into a liberalized company. He later served as its Director of International and Regulatory Affairs until joining the UPU in 2005 as its Director of Finance.

Speaking about his time as UPU Director of Finance, Mr Clivaz recalls the drive to undertake reforms. He notes new standards he and his team helped implement, including making UPU one of the early adopters of International Public Sector Accounting Standards within the UN system.

"It became clear that one way for me to be more proactive for the UPU was to be in an elected function," Mr Clivaz continues.

With such an intimate knowledge of the sector and the workings of the UN's specialized agency for the postal sector, the pair were ready to hit the ground running upon their election.

"We had two choices. Either to play the usual diplomatic role and give good speeches and travel to exotic destinations, be friendly with member countries and do nothing, practically. Or we could examine the Union critically, find out its challenges and take the bull by the horns to undertake major reforms," Mr Hussein explains. "We took the hard road consciously and deliberately."



The hall erupted in applause after countries unanimously accepted changes to the terminal dues system during the 2019 Extraordinary Congress in Geneva.

For his part, Mr Clivaz adds, “We decided to deliver as one – the two of us together. Nobody could interfere between the two of us. Of course, we were not always together on how to do things, but at the end of the day you need to decide what is best for the UPU and, for this vision, we were always together.”

Eye on the target

On his priorities upon joining the Union, Mr Hussein notes, “I came in on a ticket of reforms.”

Throughout his election campaign, Mr Hussein vowed to manage the Union and its resources more efficiently, transform the organization and the sector to meet rapidly changing consumer expectations, and to uplift developing countries, who he felt had been excluded from the workings of the organization. Likewise, Mr Clivaz had committed himself to an inclusive, efficient and transparent UPU.

Mr Clivaz explains, “What we did from the beginning was we thought ahead to the format of the UPU of the future and we had this Vision 2030. This was the beginning of our mandate.”

“The idea we had was to modernize the UPU in a lot of different areas, starting from the institution up to the final production,” he adds.

With their intentions on reform clear, Mr Hussein and Mr Clivaz were careful to develop a concrete action plan, taking into account the organization’s global situation.

“We decided to deliver as one – the two of us together. Nobody could interfere between the two of us.”

PASCAL CLIVAZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU



“Our first six months in office were about observing,” reflects the Director General.

One of their first steps was to order an audit of the organization to map its greatest risks, which identified its role and relevance and financing as two of the UPU’s top concerns.

The Union’s zero nominal growth budget would end up becoming a persistent challenge to its work over the course of both cycles. To compound this, the Union had also lost 13 contribution units during the 2012 Doha Congress, just ahead of Mr Hussein and Mr Clivaz’s mandates.

“I realized that all the resolutions and decisions and recommendations which came from Congress plus the budget were not matching,” says Mr Hussein. “It was four very difficult years with more demands from member countries, less budget and long Council sessions.”

To cope, their first reforms focused on a restructuring of the organization’s secretariat at the International Bureau (IB) to ensure staff could keep projects moving forward while managing shrinking financial resources. Part of this undertaking included ensuring more balanced and equitable gender and geographical representation among staff, explains the Director General.

“We took the hard road consciously and deliberately.”

BISHAR A. HUSSEIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU

“Today, we have fairly equitable distribution of our senior professional staff in the five regions of the Union and, of course, with more women now taking senior responsibilities,” he says.

According to IB recruitment figures, gender balance has been close to parity since 2016, eventually reaching parity in 2019. Regional representation has also shown signs of improvement.

Next, they strove to define the necessary reforms to promote faster decision making and greater efficiency; ensure the equitable representation of member countries and regions; secure the effective management of resources; and enhance the role and relevance of UPU.

“The challenges are always the same when you have in mind a vision to change or to reform or to adjust. There’s resistance, conservatism, and some people are afraid about the future.”

PASCAL CLIVAZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU

Mission accomplished

The process inspired intense debates and took a total of six years of hard work between member countries and the International Bureau to complete.

“The challenges are always the same when you have in mind a vision to change or to reform or to adjust. There’s resistance, conservatism, and some people are afraid about the future,” says Mr Clivaz.

To overcome tensions, Mr Clivaz explains, “We held a lot of discussions, a lot of negotiations, a lot of campaigns for our ideas in the regions, but also here in our meeting rooms. We were meeting with governments, high officials, heads of state, prime ministers in some countries, to sell our idea of the future of the UPU.”

“We can be proud of what we achieved,” he adds.

The 2016 Congress in Istanbul decided a first round of reforms, such as adopting a new set of working principles as a basis for the structures and decision-making processes of its governmental and operational pillars, agreeing to shorten Council meetings and place more emphasis on decision-making.

Reflecting on the 2016 meeting, the Director General asserts with pride that the Istanbul Congress was able to make substantial progress on issues he describes as having lasted over decades and that had been had been “scuttled” during previous Congresses.

To find a way forward on the issues it could not decide, that Congress established an ad hoc group to report to the Council of



The Director General and Deputy Director General celebrated their re-election during the 2016 Universal Postal Congress in Istanbul.

Administration and present further changes at the 2018 Extraordinary Congress in Addis Ababa.

Two years of additional consultation ahead of the Extraordinary Congress ultimately led to its success. That Congress was able to push forward additional improvements to the speed and efficiency of decision-making, as well as to the Postal Operations Council electoral process, ensuring all regions would receive equitable representation in the decision-making body.

“We shortened the long sessions of the Councils, we reduced the decision-making cycle – we now have two decision-making sessions every year – and we cut down on all the documents, conferences and meetings. We gained a lot of efficiency in managing the resources of the IB,” says Mr Hussein.

“We gained a lot of efficiency in managing the resources of the IB.”

**BISHAR A. HUSSEIN, DIRECTOR
GENERAL OF THE UPU**

Championing development

The Director General and Deputy Director General had also aimed to stand behind developing countries to ensure they could move ahead as postal advancements accelerated.

“I had to champion many countries,” recalls the Director General.

The pair lent their support for small island developing states (SIDS) at the Addis Ababa meeting, where the countries expressed their dismay over the disproportionate cost of contributions – in some cases exceeding their own yearly budget – and the restrictive sanctions that followed their inability to pay. The decision taken at the Extraordinary Congress created a special contribution class allowing countries with a population of less than 200,000 that are recognized by the UN as small island pacific states to pay only 0.1, or 10 per cent, of a regular UPU contribution unit.



In addition to support for SIDS, Mr Hussein proudly recalls the many technical assistance initiatives put in place during the team’s two mandates. One achievement he proudly recalls was the establishment of postal training colleges in Uruguay, Barbados, Cameroon, Tunisia, Egypt and Russia.

The Integrated Index for Postal Development (2IPD) was also developed under their leadership. The composite index uses postal statistics combined with big data to measure the performance of posts against four indicators – reach, relevance, reliability and resilience –, resulting in an annual global ranking. This ranking is then used to identify any areas within or between regions where development gaps may be growing.

Rapid transformation

Over the course of their two mandates, Mr Hussein and Mr Clivaz also faced two of the greatest challenges in the Union’s history: the potential fracturing of the Union as one member threatened to withdraw, and a global pandemic that shook not only the postal sector, but the world economy.

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On October 17, 2018, the UPU Director General received a letter from the United States government notifying the UPU of its intent to withdraw from the Union's treaties in one year's time. The country cited the remuneration of small packets as its main concern. Other countries soon began to come forward with similar concerns, causing worry that the Union's 192-member family would begin to split if a solution was not found quickly.

"We had just one year, a couple of months, even, to find a solution and bring the Union back together as one," says Clivaz.

The Council of Administration fast-tracked discussions on remuneration, with the Union quickly deciding to call an Extraordinary Congress in Geneva in September 2019 to find a solution ahead of the withdrawal date.

With the support of the Director General, Deputy Director General and the secretariat, members were able to devise and unanimously approve "Option V," which

"We had just one year, a couple of months, even, to find a solution and bring the Union back together as one."

PASCAL CLIVAZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU

would allow interested countries to begin self-declaring their rates, while providing protections for low-volume and developing countries.

But the Union did not have much time to revel in the accomplishment before the next major challenge presented itself. The COVID-19 pandemic took hold of the world in early 2020, with international travel coming to a near halt in the Spring and

countries scrambling to figure out how to obtain and deliver vital sanitary and medical equipment to stave off the virus.

In Berne, the International Bureau was working to help keep the supply chain moving to ensure essential items continued to be delivered the world around. At the same time, preparations for the 27th Universal Postal Congress came to a halt as the pandemic made it impossible to meet. It was decided to try again in 2021.

It was the third time in UPU's 146-year history a Congress had to be postponed. The Madrid Congress was postponed from 1912 to 1920 due to the developments leading up to the First World War. Similarly, the Second World War led the Paris Congress to be moved from 1944 to 1947.

With the pandemic extending into 2021, the Council of Administration decided to go ahead with the Abidjan Congress. Not only was it the first-ever regular Congress held in sub-Saharan Africa, it was the first to take place in a hybrid format. It's an achievement both Mr Hussein and Mr Clivaz use as yet another example of how quickly the UPU can change when circumstances require.

"I was happy to note that we delivered the first-ever UPU hybrid Congress in history," says Mr Hussein.

"Now, after the 27th UPU Congress, we have proven that we have done the necessary reforms and that we were able to digitalize," says Mr Clivaz. "Looking back, to the nine years in office as a Deputy Director General, the main achievements were to rethink the UPU, to modernize the UPU, and, of course, towards the end, to digitalize the processes of the UPU."

"I was happy to note that we delivered the first-ever UN and UPU hybrid Congress in history."

BISHAR A. HUSSEIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU



The Director General and Deputy Director General posed with Peter Navarro, then Assistant to the U.S. President and Director of the Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy, following the adoption of "Option V."



The Director General and Deputy Director General celebrated staff with a special recognition award during the 2021 World Post Day celebration.

Opportunities abound

These rapid transformations hold promise for the opening up of the Union to wider postal sector players, a matter that the pair will hand over to Mr Metoki and Mr Osvald upon their departure. The Abidjan Congress decided to hold a fourth Extraordinary Congress in 2023 to decide on concrete plans for the opening.

Mr Hussein's position on the way forward is clear. Speaking about the matter, he says, "We cannot call ourselves the Universal Postal Union when the whole industry is not with us anymore."

These rapid transformations hold promise for the opening up of the Union to wider postal sector players, a matter that the pair will hand over to Mr Metoki and Mr Osvald upon their departure.

"I think everyone has agreed that we need to open up our Union, but the question of what to open, how to open, when to open – these are things that still need to be sorted out. I do hope that member countries will be able to discuss this seriously in 2023 and resolve this issue," he adds.

As the sector continues to transform and evolve, Mr Clivaz adds that the UPU will have to facilitate these changes through governance.

"I started with a sector in Switzerland that was considered civil servant status, administration, and 26 years later we are here competing with Amazon," says Clivaz. "In 26 years, the sector has completely boomed."

He adds, "After COVID we saw how citizens, the customers, have changed their approach to the way they need to order things on the Internet – the way they use the Internet has boomed – and now we need to think again about the business model for the UPU as well, not only in operations, but also in how to regulate this sector."



“Anybody who aims to be the next Director General or Deputy Director General is coming also with a lot of ideas, so we cannot tell them what’s good or what is wrong. But at the end of the day, we have set up a good basis for them to start with.”

PASCAL CLIVAZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU

Passing the baton

As Mr Hussein and Mr Clivaz prepare to hand over the keys to the International Bureau, their work has come full circle.

The pair recently ordered a last audit of the organization’s risks. Despite the accomplishments made in the past nine years, the top two risks remain the same: the Union’s role and relevance, as well as its financing.

On the handover process, the Deputy Director General explains, “Anybody who aims to be the next Director General or Deputy Director General is coming also with a lot of ideas, so we cannot tell them what’s good or what is wrong. But at the end of the day, we have set up a good basis for them to start with.”

He adds, “We were able to mitigate the risks to a certain extent, but of course, the financial situation of the UPU is not good and they need to continue and find ways forward.”

The Director General also expressed his concerns about the Union’s future finances. “The Pension Fund is in critical condition. I have raised it many times to the attention of member countries that we need to solve this problem, but unfortunately they were not able to address this to my satisfaction ... That is going to be a challenge for the next administration.”

“I’m very proud to say that I’m leaving this Union in a better place than I found it and that was my mission.” To the new management, his principal advice would be: “Please stay the course. Defend the integrity of the International Bureau secretariat.”

New guard

From 1 January 2022, Japan's Masahiko Metoki and Slovenia's Marjan Osvald will be responsible for overseeing the Union's affairs.

The new team was elected during the 27th Universal Postal Congress in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in August. Mr Metoki won the position of Director General in the first voting round with 102 votes, while his counterpart, Mr Osvald, was elected in the second voting round for the position of Deputy Director General with 86 votes.

The UPU will benefit from the pair's extensive experience in the postal sector. Mr Metoki most recently served as the Senior Vice President of International Affairs at Japan Post and represented Japan as Chair of the Postal Operations Council from 2012 until 2021. Mr Osvald served as Director of International Mail at Pošta Slovenije, but has also worked to coordinate developments across the sector through his involvement with PostEurop, the Postal Union for the Mediterranean and the International Post Corporation.

Ahead of his election, Mr Metoki made four principal commitments to the UPU's members: to pioneer new business opportunities for the sector; to help posts contribute towards social responsibility in support of the UN sustainable development goals; to stabilize the management of the UPU over the long-term, particularly with regard to its financing; and to harmonize communication across the UPU network of stakeholders.

In a video released during his campaign, Mr Metoki said, "I am eager to create a bright new future for the UPU together with all the member countries."



Mr Metoki and Mr Osvald following their election at the 27th Universal Postal Congress.



The incoming and outgoing management teams met during the November 2021 Council sessions.

For his part, Mr Osvald focused his sights on reducing gaps in postal development while encouraging innovation; helping members adapt to new information and communication technologies; facilitating a sustainable universal service provision throughout the world; engaging in dialog with responsible postal owners, including private and governmental; strengthening dialogue with consumers and other stakeholders; and providing for a more future-oriented, innovative and cost-efficient operation of the UPU.

In a campaign video, Mr Osvald stated, “I am committed to doing the best job I possibly can to help the postal industry survive and thrive in the digital age.”

Saying farewell

When asked what he will miss most about his time at the UPU, Mr Clivaz answers immediately, “There is zero ambiguity for me – it’s the family spirit. The spirit we have here in the postal sector and the UPU is unique.”

He is sure to also mention his team. “The staff, for me, is the asset of this organization and we need to do everything that is possible to make sure there is a future for them. We need to ensure that we can keep jobs, we can ensure a certain growth of this organization to bring a new potential dimension to the staff in the future and to keep the talent,” he says.

To this, Mr Hussein adds he will miss the intense planning and strategy-building sessions with his management team, as well as the coordination and mobilization of member countries. He adds that he will miss the bonds he made while meeting stakeholders in the region.

“I will take home a lot of good memories. I will miss my staff a lot, I will miss the member countries who have supported me all along and, of course, I’ll miss those who challenged me,” he says.

While his time in the highest office of the postal sector brought with it challenges, Mr Hussein proudly states, “I did it with a passion – I love the post office.”

“I am very grateful for the opportunity I was given, the trust, the respect, the responsibility that was conferred upon me by member states. I am forever grateful to them and I hope I have not let them down. I hope I have delivered on their expectations.”

Though their mandates officially end on 31 December 2021, Mr Hussein and Mr Clivaz will say their final goodbyes to the UPU during a handover ceremony organized at the International Bureau on 5 January 2022. **KR**

“I am very grateful for the opportunity I was given, the trust, the respect, the responsibility that was conferred upon me by member states. I am forever grateful to them and I hope I have not let them down. I hope I have delivered on their expectations.”

BISHAR A. HUSSEIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU



**To watch the handover ceremony,
please tune into tv.upu.int on
5 January from 11:00 a.m. CET.**

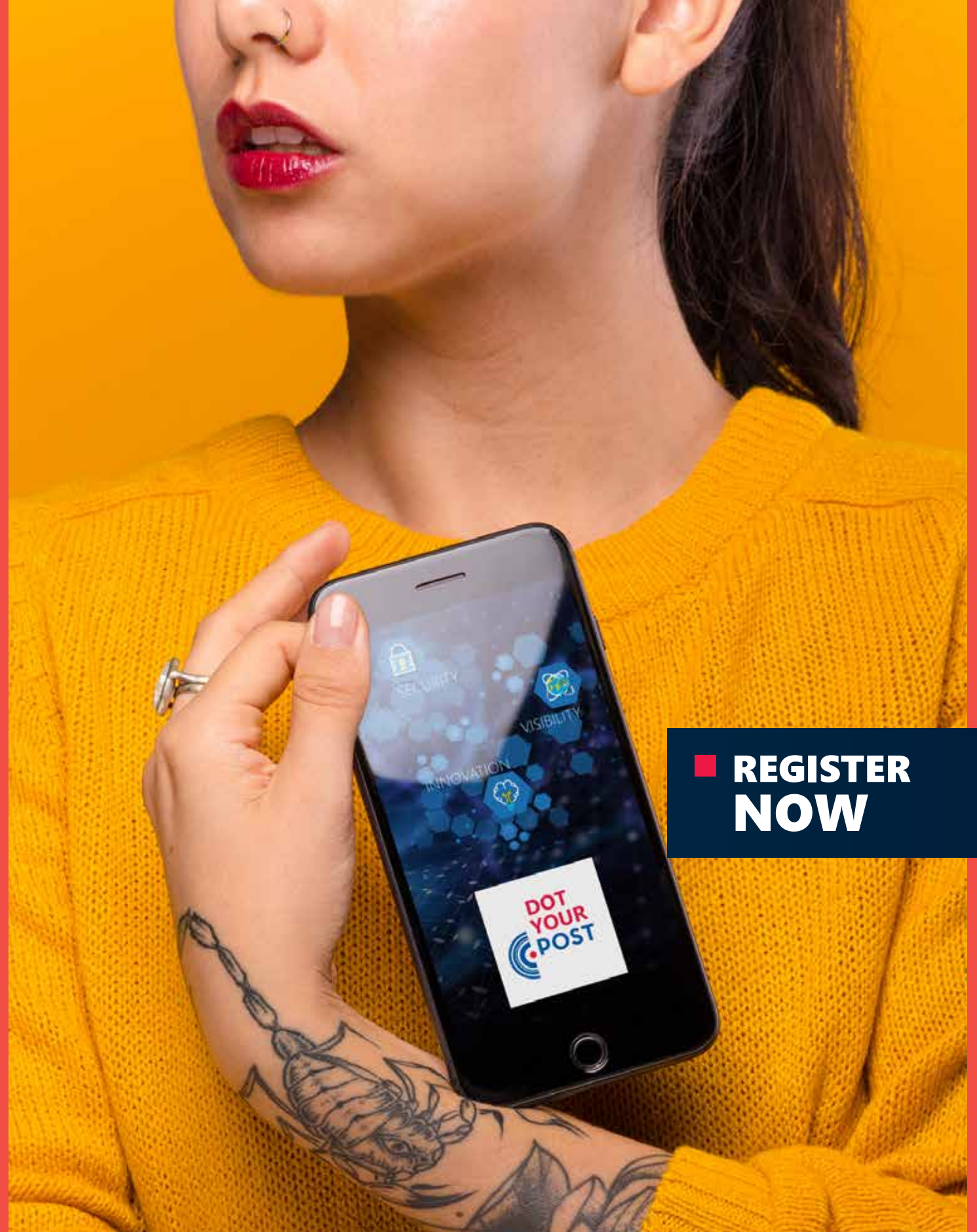


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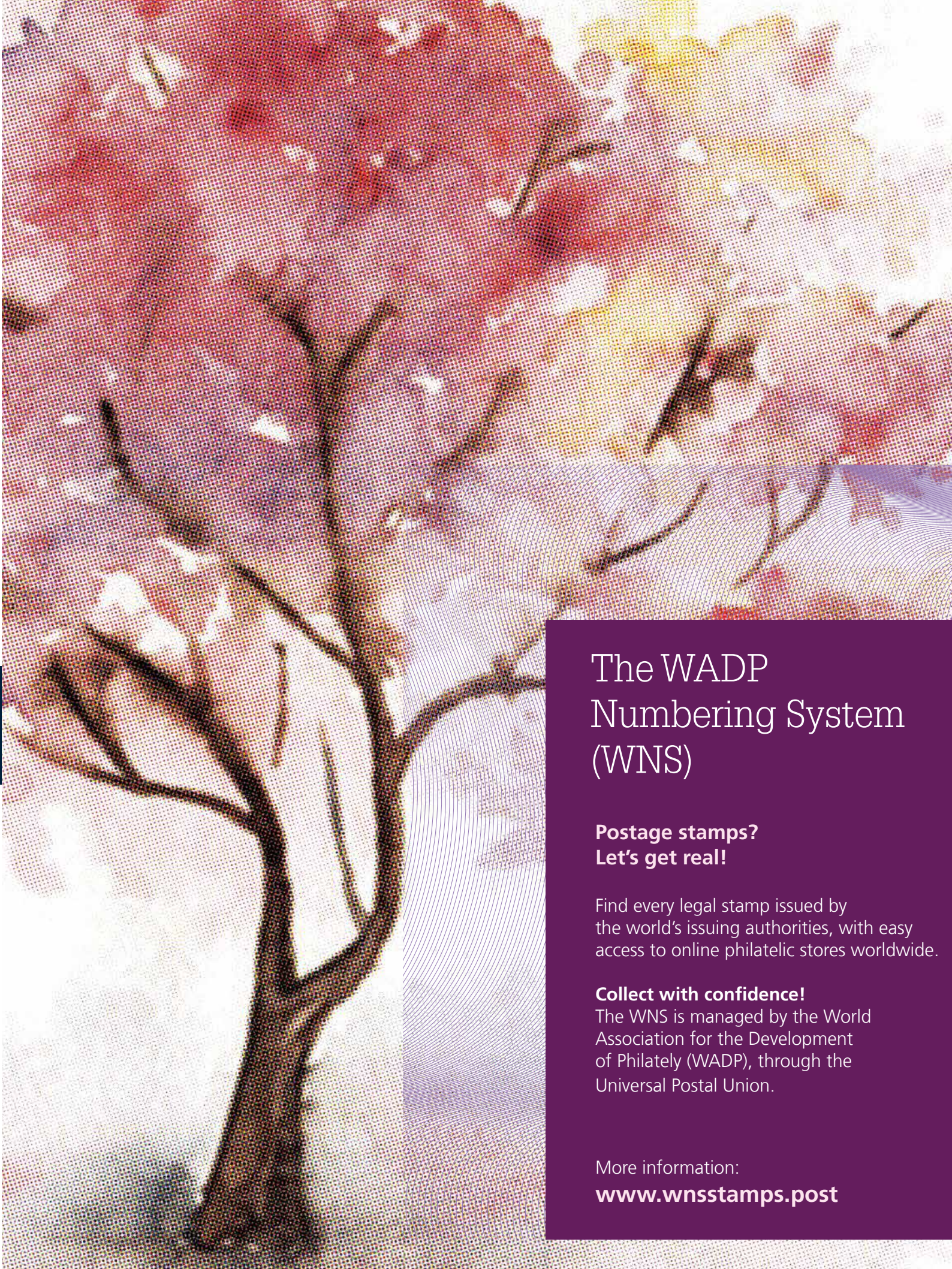


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Changing the latitude of the postal business

Post Fiji CEO Dr Anirudha Bansod tells Union Postale what's new and next for the small island postal operator, which celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2021.

INTERVIEW BY: Tara Giroud

Sometimes, you have to see what's missing in order to envision what could be possible.

That's what happened when Post Fiji's CEO, Dr Anirudha Bansod, walked through a post office and noticed the shelves that normally held stationary were bare. While pandemic shortages played a part, he realized that stationary is a highly seasonal product serving schools and businesses for only a few months out of the year.

Bansod envisioned those shelves stocked year-round with products that would serve the community and protect the future of the Post – products like eggs and bread.

"The postal service is definitely under a lot of strain," Bansod said, citing the double challenge of declining mail and the effects of the pandemic. While these challenges were felt worldwide, Fiji, as a small island developing nation, was particularly susceptible as borders closed and flights to the islands came to a halt.

"I feel strongly that you can transform, you can diversify, you can change the whole latitude of the postal business in such a direction that it can be sustainable, and it can keep on giving the great services to the community," Bansod said.

To address the steep decline in revenue while also providing essential services, Post Fiji implemented a diversification strategy that so far includes offerings in three completely new sectors, the first of which is groceries.

"It is how you rejuvenate your business that is very important, how you think outside the box or utilize the current resources," Bansod said.

Looking to experts

The key to Post Fiji's success in its new ventures is tapping the resources of the experts already operating in those sectors. The Post invited grocery manufacturers and suppliers to help Post Fiji create a sustainable, revenue-generating concept that is essentially a minimart within post shops.

"That really helped us to sustain during the COVID times," Bansod said.

Post Fiji went on to collaborate with insurance providers to launch a new line of insurance products, including life and auto insurance.

"We asked the insurance company to train our people, and then I worked with the staff, worked out the margin Post Fiji would be getting, what sort of paperwork is required," he said. "That really worked well."

And by early 2022, Post Fiji plans to branch out into one more new territory – fuel.

A product of Fiji's colonial past, small post offices sit on large plots of land. Bansod imagined that the Post could utilize the real estate in a way that will once again serve the community and help sustain the Post into the changing future.

In partnership with an oil and gas company, Post Fiji plans to install fuel pumps on post office land. The project is expected to begin in February or March.

"A lot of people think that the post business is almost dying," Bansod said. "I'm not one of them. ... Transformation is not an easy task. If we don't change, if we don't transform, we will be left behind from the world."

Change management

Not all of the staff are on board with the change in direction that Post Fiji has taken. More seasoned staff who have served the

“I feel strongly that you can transform, you can diversify, you can change the whole latitude of the postal business in such a direction that it can be sustainable, and it can keep on giving the great services to the community.”

community for decades may struggle to make the transition. However, Bansod explained that younger staff members who have been faster to take to the changes are leading the way and showing those who are reluctant what can be accomplished.

Bansod's vision for change doesn't end with product offerings. From raising prices to addressing the impact of the rising oceans due to climate change, flexibility and service are all part of Bansod's focus.

He increased prices while facing opposition for the effort by linking any price increase to direct value that the customer experiences.

“Any price increase needs to be justified,” Bansod said, as opposed to arbitrary increases.

Rising sea levels, being a direct threat to the country surrounded by the oceans, also play a part in Post Fiji's operations strategy. The Post is working to reduce its carbon footprint as much as possible.

“This is why in many of the post shops we have put up solar panels and we are trying to use alternative energy resources where we can, especially in the maritime areas,” he added.

The Post's shops are also undergoing physical makeovers. Throughout the island nation, the Post is renovating its offices, modernizing and creating comfortable spaces with lounge areas in which customers may feel welcome. It is also installing computer and video services that will help customers complete their business efficiently without having to wait in line, Bansod said.

Investments needed

Still, for small island developing states, technology is a balancing act. It can streamline business for the customer and for the Post. Yet the investments required for technologies, such as package tracking programs, can be cost-prohibitive.

“On one side, you want to have all the technologies,” Bansod said. “But at the same time, you have to see whether it is worth it for such a small business to adopt such a huge technology implementation.”

Bansod said Post Fiji is in a better position than some developing nations to implement new technologies. Fiji's government has worked hard to invest in resources for the country. This strategy could allow Post Fiji, which has its own e-commerce technology for example, to be a resource for other Pacific island nations. Rather than investing to create their own software solutions or purchase them from larger developed countries, Post Fiji could be their provider.

He would also like to see Post Fiji become the Pacific hub for supply chain and logistics services.

While Post Fiji is focused on the future, for a while this winter, Post Fiji is also celebrating its past. December 2021 marks the Post's 150th anniversary and there are celebrations planned across the islands.

“Each and every person of the organization created part of the foundation to establish this great institute,” he said. “It's a proud moment for the Fiji, as well as the Pacific nations, that we can achieve 150 years.” **TG**



Rising sea levels, being a direct threat to the country surrounded by the oceans, also play a part in Post Fiji's operations strategy. The Post is working to reduce its carbon footprint as much as possible.



POSTS REFLECT ON COVID-19'S IMPACT DURING **WORLD POST DAY 2021**

On October 8, 2021, the UPU celebrated World Post Day with a hybrid ceremony, which featured presentations from ministers responsible for the post and postal CEOs from around the world. Executives looked at the remarkable postal innovations they have put in place in response to the pandemic.

TEXT: Helen Norman



The theme of the event was 'Innovate to Recover' and executives from Argentina, Denmark, Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, India, Malaysia, Mexico, and Viet Nam shared their experiences of the pandemic.

Speaking during one of his last official functions as Director General of the UPU, Bishar A. Hussein, said, "COVID-19 has threatened and challenged the whole world, but once again the postal community has stood up to provide services to citizens. This confirms the role and relevance of the UPU and the Post in general to society."

Argentina's Secretary of State for Public Innovation, Micaela Sánchez Malcolm, was the first to present during the ceremony. She highlighted how Correo Argentino invested heavily in not only ensuring its employees were safe and in keeping communities connected, but also in a huge national COVID-19 vaccination distribution campaign. Speaking during the event, Sánchez Malcolm said, "We have distributed more than 57 million vaccines throughout Argentina. This has really reinforced the importance of the national flag carriers in the pandemic recovery."

Denmark's Minister of Transport, Benny Engelbrecht shared how COVID-19 has changed the postal sector tremendously in Denmark and how parcel volumes have risen significantly – something he believes posts will continue to experience "long into the future," he commented.

Siraz Uddin, Director General of Bangladesh Post, highlighted how the operator distributed PPE and testing kits throughout the country free of charge, and provided financial services to customers, along with working with farmers to deliver their goods free of charge to wholesalers.

Meanwhile, Egypt Post acted as the main pillar of the Egyptian Government to deliver welfare and services to the country's citizens. Sharif Farouk, Chairman of Egypt Post, said, "In March 2020 Egypt Post distributed government financial aid to more than 1.6 million citizens. The pandemic also forced us to rethink our services related to digital empowerment, which led to the launch of the new Yalla Super App." This app will take Egypt Post to the next level of digital financial services, according to the operator.

"COVID-19 has threatened and challenged the whole world, but once again the postal community has stood up to provide services to citizens. This confirms the role and relevance of the UPU and the Post in general to society."

BISHAR A. HUSSEIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UPU



The largest initiative undertaken in India, according to Vineet Pandey, the country's Secretary of the Department of Posts, was the rollout of a new road-based delivery network. "We needed to develop a point-to-point transport network as previously we relied on the railways and domestic flights for the conveyance of mail, but both were heavily impacted by COVID-19," he explained. "Therefore, in April 2020 we launched a nationwide road transport postal network, which included 56 national routes,

"[A nationwide road transport postal network] has now been expanded to 66 national routes, connecting more than 400 cities, and covering 45,000 km per day ... We have plans to improve this network further by using telematics for live monitoring."

**VINEET PANDEY, SECRETARY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF POSTS, INDIA**

266 regional routes, connected 75 major cities and covered more than 25,000 km."

This network has now been expanded to 66 national routes, connecting more than 400 cities, and covering 45,000 km per day. "We have plans to improve this network further by using telematics for live monitoring," said Pandey. "We also improved our financial service offering during the pandemic, including offering biometric authentication-based payment services on people's doorsteps, for any bank account."

Other postal initiatives highlighted during the Innovate to Recover session were Côte d'Ivoire's La Poste's role in delivering COVID-19 PPE kits, products to schools and electoral voting materials, as well as the launch of 'Document.ci' which enables citizens to order and pay for birth and nationality certificates online and have them delivered to their homes; Pos Malaysia's Mel Rakyat – a free service for non-commercial letter delivery within Malaysia; and Vietnam Post's role in supporting more than 80,000 farmers to open e-commerce stores.

All the stories presented during World Post Day highlighted posts' key roles in their countries' socio-economic infrastructure. During the pandemic, posts have kept people connected and financially secure, and supported small businesses in their time

During the pandemic, posts have kept people connected and financially secure, and supported small businesses in their time of need.

of need. Posts have also shown their resilience to shocks – a key factor considered when putting together the UPU's Integrated Index for Postal Development (2IPD).

Using big data and a wealth of statistics, the 2IPD provides an overview of postal development around the globe. In 2021 it covered 168 countries and ranked them in terms of reliability, reach, relevance and resilience. The winners were announced during the World Post Day ceremony.

This year, Switzerland retained the top spot thanks to stellar performance across all dimensions, including improvements in reach and resilience. Germany came second thanks to progress in reach and superior performance in reliability and relevance, and Austria came third thanks to a balanced showing across all the four pillars. There were also encouraging results across the UPU's regions, including Singapore in 10th, Belarus in 14th, Tunisia in 44th, Brazil in 48th and Ghana in 53rd.

The 2IPD report also found that the logistical bottlenecks experienced in 2020 because of COVID-19 severely affected the reliability of postal operations, with average domestic delivery times increasing by 13% in 2020 with respect to 2019, before returning to pre-crisis levels in 2021.

Johannes Cramer, CEO of Swiss Post's Logistics Services Division, said, "Winning this award for the fifth time in a row is a big honour for us. I have spent a lot of time in





Johannes Cramer, CEO of Swiss Post's Logistics Services Division, accepted the 1st place award on behalf of Switzerland.

the field with our people and what I have experienced in the past year is that the key to our success is that people don't see us as a provider of a salary. They feel like they are part of the engine that keeps Switzerland and the economy running, and because of this attitude we also receive a lot of appreciation from our communities which motivates the workforce even more. During the pandemic it was very clear that the postal sector has really impacted the lives of citizens in a very positive way, and I am so grateful to be part of this community."

Also, during World Post Day, Poste Italiane received an award marking its dedication to postal security. In August, postal employees working in a sorting center outside Milan discovered three bullets contained in a letter addressed to Pope Francis.

The UPU also celebrated the 50th anniversary of the International Letter-Writing Competition by selecting the best letter among 50 years of winners. A letter written in 1978 by Mi-kyong Ryu from Korea on the theme, "The postman, my best friend" was given the top prize. **HN**

"During the pandemic it was very clear that the postal sector has really impacted the lives of citizens in a very positive way, and I am so grateful to be part of this community."

JOHANNES CRAMER, CEO OF SWISS POST'S LOGISTICS SERVICES DIVISION





Modernized posts faring better in pandemic recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic brought a massive disruption to global supply chains and accelerated long-term postal trends, away from mail and toward parcels and logistics. This led to higher-than-expected operating revenues, specifically in developed countries, and at the same time increased operating expenditures, according to the UPU's latest Postal Economic Outlook.

TEXT: Tara Giroud

"There has been a demand during the pandemic for some types of postal services, but the transformation is really shifting at a faster speed than before," said Mauro Boffa, an economist in the UPU's Research & Strategy Programme. "We expect that to continue."

With closed borders, disrupted economic activity, labour shortages and cumbersome customs procedures, the disruption in the global supply chain pushed trade costs higher and reduced transport capacity. Airlines offered 50% fewer seats, more postal items were stranded, and international mail saw monthly tonnage of between -16% and -33% following the onset of the pandemic.

Still, economists expect 2021 data will likely show a partial rebound in economic activity. The World Bank indicates the global economy in 2021 will likely grow 5.6%, compared with a growth rate of -3.5% estimated for 2020.

With closed borders, disrupted economic activity, labour shortages and cumbersome customs procedures, the disruption in the global supply chain pushed trade costs higher and reduced transport capacity.

"Obviously, all this is dependent on how the situation will evolve, and there's still some considerable uncertainty," Boffa said.

Letters & parcels

The pandemic hastened the decline of letter post. Over the five-year period from 2015-2020, domestic letter post volumes saw a 4.6% decline. In 2020, they plunged by 13.6%.

"People have switched even more to other means of communication and have demanded less of the service, so there is a deeper collapse of that segment," Boffa said.

The impact on international mail has been even starker, with a decline of 27.6% in 2020 compared with the five-year trend of -4.3%.

At the same time, the parcel post business has grown more than expected, with domestic parcels up by 17.7%. This surpassed the strong five-year trend of 15.2% growth, given the uptick in e-commerce prior to the pandemic.

This has had a mixed impact on operating revenues, which continue to transform as the sector evolves away from letter mail.

For the first time, the strong demand for parcel post compensated for the loss of letter post, Boffa said.

Revenues and expenditures

Operating revenues also increased more than anticipated, surpassing the five-year trend of 3.6% to reach growth of 6.5%, or SDR 292 billion.

A breakdown of revenue for different business models highlights the continued trend away from letter-driven operations and toward parcels. On average in 2020, postal operators received almost as much revenue from their parcels and logistics services as they did from letters, with 32.7% of operating income attributed to letter post, and 30.2% attributed to parcel and logistics services. In 2015, letters accounted for 40.8%, with parcels and logistics services accounting for 20%.

While operating revenues increased, operating expenditures also grew by 7.9% compared with 2019. This was due to the cost of measures taken to combat the pandemic, such as disinfection protocols, protective equipment and staff who were unable to work due to positive tests. Staff often accounts for 70% of production costs. Additionally, parcels are bulkier and costlier to deliver.

"The picture is nuanced," Boffa said.

"Revenues grew at a surprisingly high rate, but expenditure went up even faster, raising questions about the ability of postal operators to grow sustainably."

Additionally, the substantial revenue growth is mainly linked to operators in 14 of the most developed countries. Those operators are large companies that were in an ideal position because they have been modernizing for a few years already, Boffa explained.

"There is a huge part of the world that is lagging far behind," he said. "They didn't modernize before the pandemic, and they're not modernizing yet fast enough."

Postal operators are also facing steep competition in the parcels business. Market share for designated operators (DOs) is 32% based on a sample of 86 operators from 2018-2020. However, half of DOs have less than a 25% parcel post market share.

Postal staff and access to postal services has also taken a hit in 2020. Staff numbers decreased by 3.9%, and the number of postal offices declined by 1.5%. The loss of post offices highlights a continuing problem for populations who have less access to postal services, particularly in the

"There is a huge part of the world that is lagging far behind They didn't modernize before the pandemic, and they're not modernizing yet fast enough."

MAURO BOFFA, ECONOMIST, UPU'S RESEARCH & STRATEGY PROGRAMME

developing world, Boffa said. In Africa, for instance, 43.6% of the population is estimated to be without postal services.

Overall, there are some positives from the data, Boffa said. Postal operators adapted faster to the disruption in logistics supply chains than the rest of the economy. Countries proved that they could develop flexible solutions to allow the mail to keep flowing.

The trend to shift away from traditional postal services is expected to continue. But questions remain, he said. Will postal operators be able to grow profitably in the coming years? Which strategy will they favour? Will they benefit from the expansion of government stimulus? Will regulation and performance follow suit? **TG**

Holding the reins of the Union

As the modern-day UPU awaits the transition of powers from its current to its new general management team in early 2022, reflections on the Union's rich history show how the organization has relied on its Directors General to lead it through the challenges and opportunities facing the postal sector.

TEXT: Sonja Denovski

After a proposal to establish an international office to collect, publish, and distribute information concerning the international postal service was unanimously accepted during the 1874 Congress, the Swiss Confederation was selected to organize and manage what is now known as the International Bureau in Berne.

From that point, the Swiss Government took the responsibility of appointing the Union's Directors General from the highest governmental positions of the Swiss Confederation, making sure that the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union would have the best possible leadership.

The UPU's very first Director General, Eugène Borel, a member of the Swiss Federal Council and the head of the Department of Posts and Telegraph, was a key player in the

founding of the UPU. Mr Borel's successor, Edmund Höhn, led the Swiss Postal Administration before taking on his duties.

Eugène Ruffy and Camille Decoppet, both members of the Swiss Federal Council, presided over the Swiss Confederation in 1898 and 1916, respectively. Evaristo Garbani-Nerini was a Swiss politician and president of the Swiss National Council, while Reinhold Furrer, Alois Muri, Fritz Hess, and Eduard Weber were all Directors General of the Swiss PTT before leading the Union.

Mr Weber is credited with the idea to erect the present International Bureau building, inaugurated in 1970 to solve the need for additional workspace for the organization's growing staff. Although he retired before the construction started, he led negotiations to purchase land in Murifeld quartier and secured its funding during his time in the office.

Going global

The UN-UPU Agreement, which came into force in 1948, brought with it changes to the work of the International Bureau. For the next 20 years, the UPU gradually adopted reforms that aligned it with the UN Common System. This led to the creation of an Executive and Liaison Committee (ELC), now known as the Council of Administration, that would facilitate these adjustments and lead to the eventual appointment of the first international Director General – Michel Rahi, from Egypt, in 1967. By 1969, the Swiss Confederation Supervisory Authority controlled only the financial aspects of the International Bureau.

Mr Rahi's work focused on strengthening the collaboration with the UN family through the preparation of Staff Statutes and Regulations, Financial Regulations, and the UPU Provident Scheme in alignment with



UN policies. However, his main goal was to enable technical assistance to developing countries, so he created the UPU's first technical assistance division.

After the sudden death of Mr Rahi, the position was briefly occupied by the then Deputy Director General Anthony Hubert Ridge. Mr Ridge, from the United Kingdom, held several senior positions within the British Royal Post and was a Director of Clerical Mechanization and Building Department before being elected Deputy Director General. Despite his previous retirement announcement, he accepted to step in and finish up preparations for the 1974 Congress.

Mohamed Ibrahim Sobhi, the second Director General of Egyptian origin who previously held the positions of Chairman of the Administrative Council of the Postal Authority of Egypt and Secretary-General of the African Postal Union, opted for a self-financing system similar to that of the other specialized agencies of the UN. To this end, the 1979 Congress in Rio de Janeiro decided to stop using the Swiss Government's services to maintain the Union's finances.

A further push for international postal collaboration came under the leadership of Adwaldo Cardoso Botto de Barros. Mr Botto de Barros, elected during the 1984 Congress in Hamburg, Germany, was a former president of the Brazilian Telegraph and Post Office Enterprise. During his mandate, the UPU implemented new standards for mail

The UN-UPU Agreement, which came into force in 1948, brought with it changes to the work of the International Bureau.

delivery and formed the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Unit to facilitate the exchange of operational information.

In 1993, it was already quite clear that technology was taking over the world, and the 14th Director General of the UPU, Thomas E. Leavey from the United States of America, expressed his conviction that the Post would take advantage of and adapt to the digital communication revolution. In this pursuit, he created the UPU's Postal Technology Center (PTC), which is responsible for developing new technological tools for the benefit of the UPU member countries.

France's Edouard Dayan took over the reins when UPU started opening itself up to external stakeholders of the postal sector. Realizing that strength lies in partnerships with others, Mr Dayan's main goal was to build tools to facilitate national and international trade through solutions such as Post and GMS, making international relations a central point of the UPU mindset and activities.

The UPU's current Director General, Bishar A. Hussein, has expanded those relationships even more. The efforts taken under his mandate have worked to minimize the environmental footprint and help the sector contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. And while his leadership cycle was shaken with unforeseen challenges, including the potential exit of a founding member and a global pandemic, Mr Hussein brought to fruition transformations to modernize the UPU. Under his leadership, the UPU implemented structural reforms that improved the functioning and efficiency of the Union. But the pièce de résistance was decades long-anticipated reform of remuneration rates through the adoption of self-declared rates during the third Extraordinary Congress in Geneva, avoiding massive disruptions to the global supply chain.

In January 2022, the UPU will welcome Masahiko Metoki as its new Director General. Mr Metoki, who chaired the UPU Postal Operations Council from 2012-2021 and played a crucial role in supporting the development of e-commerce services and quality of service initiatives, is a well-known face. He brings to the UPU his vast experience in international postal cooperation, postal financial services, and governance. **SD**



From left to right
Top: Eugène Borel (1875-1892), Edmund Höhn (1893-1899), Eugène Ruffy (1899-1919), Camille Decoppet (1919-1925) Evaristo Garbani-Nerini (1925-1937), Reinhold Furrer (1938-1944), Alois Muri (1945-1949), Fritz Hess (1950-1960) and Edouard Weber (1961-1966)

Bottom: Michel Rahi (1967-1973), Anthony Hubert Ridge (1973-1974), Mohamed Ibrahim Sobhi (1975-1984), Adwaldo Cardoso Botto de Barros (1985-1994), Thomas E. Leavey (1995-2004), Edouard Dayan (2005-2012), Bishar A. Hussein (2013-2021) and Masahiko Metoki (2022-)



Postal services in the palm of your hand

The UPU is developing mobile apps to help posts reach their customers directly, to help create efficiencies, and to move further into the digital age in a cost-effective way. First up: an app to help facilitate the exchange of electronic advance data (EAD).

TEXT: Tara Giroud

The EAD Mobile App, for electronic advance data, allows customers to complete a customs declaration by entering required data on their phone from anywhere. The data is then sent automatically to the Customs Declaration System.

"So far, we have always provided IT solutions to the Post regarding customs," said Stéphane Herrmann, Lead Technical Account Manager for Mail Products and Services. "But now we are targeting the customers, also, to make it easier for the Post. There will be more and more IT tools for the customers because what we want is to get rid of the paper forms."

Since the release of the EAD Mobile App in December 2020, more than 40 posts actively use the EAD Mobile App, with almost 10,000 active devices.

With electronic advance data, or EAD, customs in the receiving country knows ahead of time what it will get. The destination country can perform risk assessments and financial assessments ahead of time and select parcels for inspection in advance.



"With only paper documents, you can do that only once the mail arrives at the destination country," Herrmann said. "If there's no electronic customs declaration, you have no idea of what you're going to receive."

While customs declarations may include some optional fields, there are seven mandatory fields the sender must enter into the EAD Mobile App: sender name, sender address, recipient name, recipient address, number of units, total gross weight, and description of the contents. The post must also add a mail identifier.

Without these fields populated, the customer will not be able to validate the customs declaration.

"If the customer fills the customs declaration, there are less risks of mistakes than if it's something done by the employee of the post," Herrmann said. "It's also a question of responsibility, because when you click 'OK', you take the responsibility of the information you have captured."

The app also provides a cost-effective means for posts in developing countries to keep up with the advances in technology.

Since the release of the EAD Mobile App in December 2020, more than 40 posts actively use the EAD Mobile App, with almost 10,000 active devices.

For instance, some posts may set up a tablet in their post office lobby, on which customers can complete the declaration, validate the form, and go directly to the counter and hand over their parcel, Herrmann explained.

"It requires a new tablet and it's quite cheap compared to the price of computer and printer," he said. "So, what we're doing is to help, in fact, the developing countries to ensure that they are not left aside with the transition to electronic exchanges."

Guyana Post Office Corp. began using the EAD mobile app in January 2021, the first mobile app the Post implemented for use

by customers, said Thalissa Grant-McClure, Public Relations Officer.

"The staff welcomed the new technology as it reduced manual work and they adjusted quickly," she said. "Our regular customers also quickly gravitated to the mobile app."

It was important for Guyana Post to utilize this technology to continue delivery to the United States and Europe, Grant-McClure said. It enables the Post to meet requirements for international standards and avoid penalties.

While the app helps streamline the customs process, customers may still require help from postal staff. Some customers are unable to use a computer and therefore unable to use the app, Grant-McClure said. Others may require assistance to walk them through the process, either in person or online through the Post's social media platforms.

"The implementation and utilization of this app is in keeping with our vision for technological development in the Post," Grant-McClure said. **TG**

Canada Post eyes green future

Canada Post launched an ambitious environmental plan to help create a more sustainable operation over the coming decades.

TEXT: Tara Giroud





“We are seized by the urgency of the issue regarding greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation thereof; and adaptation to what could be a warming world, what scientists are saying will be an exceedingly warming world if we don’t do something about it.”

**DILHARI FERNANDO, GENERAL
MANAGER, CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY
FOR CANADA POST**

The joint Environmental Action Plan, created with the Post and its bargaining agents, is one of the largest efforts the Post has undertaken to address environmental concerns.

While the Post previously implemented projects with an environmental element, such as an electric vehicle pilot program ten years ago, the Environmental Action Plan launched in October goes even further. It features four key environmental targets and specific plans for how these targets can be achieved.

“This plan ... lays out for us, for the very first time, a more systematic approach to tackle the environment,” said Dilhari Fernando, General Manager, Corporate Sustainability for Canada Post. “We are seized by the urgency of the issue regarding greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation thereof; and adaptation to what could be a warming world, what scientists are saying will be an exceedingly warming world if we don’t do something about it.”

The four areas on which the action plan will focus are: cutting carbon emissions, redirecting waste away from landfills, finding innovations in packaging, and incentivizing its employees to be actively involved in creating an environmentally conscious culture.

Canada Post plans to operate at net zero carbon emissions by 2050, with a 30% reduction by 2030. The path to those goals includes utilizing low-emission and electric vehicles, building new facilities to be net-zero carbon ready and retrofitting some of its 6,000 existing buildings to reduce the amount of fossil fuels needed for heat.

Its zero-waste plan by 2030 means that at least 90% of its waste will be diverted away from landfills. Today the Post diverts nearly 73% of its waste. This goal could be reached by initiatives such as the Post’s requirement for contractors to repurpose nonhazardous construction and demolition waste, returning packaging materials to vendors, or composting, Fernando explained. And by 2022, the Post plans to eliminate all unnecessary single-use plastics from events and meetings.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PLAN AT

[canadapost.ca/
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The efforts toward more sustainable delivery include carbon-offset programmes and printing clear recycling instructions on boxes so that customers know how to dispose of them after they have used them, she said. It also plans to phase out the use of plastic film from its e-commerce packaging.

Finally, the Post hopes to encourage its 68,000-person workforce to innovate environmental projects. One way the Post hopes to accomplish this is to create an action fund by which employee ideas voted as feasible would be funded, such as installing community gardens or bike racks.

It’s a set of ideas that Fernando said could have implications beyond Canada’s 10 million square kilometers (4 million square miles).

“We’re really excited about not just doing this in Canada, but also sharing our best practices with the other posts and with the other organizations that are in this delivery space with us,” Fernando said. “We really feel that there are so many advantages of putting in place a greener approach to carry out our mandate.” **TG**



Young members of a reading club stand outside a post office in South Africa, where they just collected their Nal'ibali reading supplements. (Photo provided by SAPO)

SAPO invests in the future of South Africa through literacy programme

For many years the South African Post Office (SAPO) has played an important role in helping to eradicate poverty in the country. According to Nomkhitha Mona, Group CEO of SAPO, as the national postal operator for South Africa, the operator has a duty to “invest in the future of the country.” One way it is doing this is through its partnership with non-profit organization Nal'ibali.

TEXT: Helen Norman

Nal'ibali is a national literacy campaign that aims to spark a culture of reading in South Africa. The initiative is built on the logic that a well-established culture of reading can be a real game-changer for education across the country.

"The SA Post Office is primarily in the business of moving goods to the right destination, and we also use this expertise to promote literacy in South Africa," said Mona.

Nal'ibali produces free original, age-appropriate, contextually-relevant interactive reading materials in the form of newspaper supplements, available in all 11 official languages of South Africa. SAPO transports the reading material to the destination post office, where it is collected by a representative of the reading club, school, or library. A few copies are also left on the counters so that customers can take a copy home. All this is done free of charge.

"As a result of the partnership with the SA Post Office, Nal'ibali has been able to greatly increase the number of reading clubs, schools and libraries they reach, getting more reading materials into children's hands," Mona added.

SAPO's partnership with Nal'ibali was launched in 2016 and, according to Mona, has gradually grown since its inception. Nal'ibali lodges the pre-packaged and addressed reading materials at the Tshwane sorting centre in Pretoria, South Africa. The packages are then sorted and sent to the destination post office.

"Nal'ibali means, 'here's a story' in isiXhosa ... the mother language of approximately 8.3 million South Africans."

"The SA Post Office considers the partnership as a corporate social investment programme and does not charge Nal'ibali for this service," Mona explained. "The relationship has grown to such an extent that now, Nal'ibali has been able to make available 80,000 reading supplements to people that collect them from 406 post office outlets, and 400,000 supplements to reading clubs, schools and preschools."

Sections of the reading materials produced by Nal'ibali can be also assembled by the children themselves, which helps to make reading even more enjoyable. It is this interactive reading approach that has increased the effectiveness of the Nal'ibali initiative.

"Parents and teachers have reported that Nal'ibali does indeed help children develop their reading skills," Mona commented. "It gives parents and children an opportunity to spend quality time together. Happy children grow up to be happy, functional adults."

South Africa's National Development Plan aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030, and education is one of the key factors that give youth better opportunities. "The one skill all people need to live a better life is literacy," said Mona.

"Reading gives us access to knowledge and experience gained by others. Literacy is a requirement for all jobs and vocations, and in South Africa – where unemployment is high – it is vital to give young people the skills they need to participate in the economy. They must be confident enough to create work for themselves and not just to rely on employment, and this will happen only if their literacy skills turn them into informed, well-integrated members of society. No economy can continue to exist without a literate population."

For SAPO, the partnership with Nal'ibali is about more than just literacy. According to Mona, SAPO is proud to be part of a programme that "brings happiness and a brighter future to so many."



"Reading gives us access to knowledge and experience gained by others. Literacy is a requirement for all jobs and vocations, and in South Africa – where unemployment is high – it is vital to give young people the skills they need to participate in the economy."

NOMKHITA MONA, GROUP CEO OF SOUTH AFRICAN POST OFFICE (SAPO)

"Nal'ibali means, 'here's a story' in isiXhosa, one of South Africa's 11 official languages. isiXhosa is the mother language of approximately 8.3 million South Africans. Language and cultural identity are closely intertwined, and we are privileged to be part of a programme that preserves South Africa's fascinating diversity of cultures. The SA Post Office is not just part of the infrastructure – we are part of society," Mona concluded. **HN**

Australia

In early December **AUSTRALIA POST** announced that alongside Qantas it will convert two Airbus A330 200 passenger aircraft into freighters to help support increased demand for online shopping. One of the aircraft will operate domestically and the other for Qantas internationally. A third A321 P2F freighter was added to Australia's fleet in early December, and alongside the converted A330s, it brings the number of dedicated freighter fleet aircraft to 12. The new aircraft further strengthen Qantas Freight's long-standing agreement with Australia Post.

Austria

ÖSTERREICHISCHE POST has revealed its financial results for the first three quarters of 2021. The group's revenue rose by 22.2%, driven by 8.8% organic growth and the full consolidation of the Turkish subsidiary Aras Kargo. Following high growth rates in the previous quarter, third-quarter 2021 revenue was up by 10.5% year-on-year or 2.4 % on a like-for-like basis excluding the subsidiary Aras Kargo. Parcel volumes have also increased over the last quarterly periods. Parcel revenue increased by 57.1% year-on-year to EUR 905.6 million (USD 1.02 billion).

Belgium

BPOST'S Board of Directors has announced the appointment of Jean Muls as CEO of bpost Belgium and revealed the expansion of the Group Executive Committee (GEC) with the addition of Nicolas Baise as Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer. The announcements were made during the presentation of the post's third quarter results, where CEO Dirk Tirez also revealed that the Belgian activities of bpost will be integrated into one business unit called bpost Belgium.

Canada

CANADA POST has promoted its Delivery Accommodation Program, which offers support to residential customers whose functional limitations, limited mobility or other health conditions impact their ability to retrieve mail from their mailbox. Accommodation solutions vary and can be provided year-round, temporarily or during winter only. More than 24,500 Canadians have enrolled in the program since it was launched in 2014. Examples of accommodation solutions include a key turner to help open mailboxes, or a setting up weekly home deliveries for people who can't get to their mailbox.

Estonia

At the end of November 2021, **OMNIVA**, Estonia's designated postal operator, announced its new vision and strategic goals. The post intends to become the most preferred logistics partner in the Baltic states within the next five years. Omniva will be focusing on greater customer satisfaction in the next few years through IT investment and by providing quicker, simpler, and more timely deliveries. The company will aim to deliver parcels next day as standard and will expand its parcel machine network to nearly 1,000 parcel machines in the Baltic states.

Finland

In November Finnish postal service **POSTI GROUP** started using a dynamic parcel routing system throughout the country. The post has announced that in the future artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning will be used alongside this system to predict changes to the filling rate of Posti parcel lockers. The AI added to the parcel lockers can already predict with an accuracy of 96% which parcels will be picked up from the parcel locker within 24 hours. With a prediction model capable of learning, parcels can be delivered without unnecessary driving and to a location near the consumer.

Germany

DEUTSCHE POST DHL GROUP has announced that Frank Appel, DPDHL Group CEO, will step down following the company's Annual General Meeting in 2023. Tobias Meyer will then take over as Group CEO. Meyer joined the company in 2013 and has held a wide variety of positions including Head of Corporate Development, Chief Operations Officer at DHL Global Forwarding, and Head of Operations and IT at Post & Parcel Germany. He has been CEO of Post & Parcel Germany and a member of the DPDHL Management Board since March 2019.

Netherlands

POSTNL has announced that two members of its Executive Committee will be leaving the company. Resi Becker, Director of Mail in the Netherlands, has been appointed CEO of energy company Essent as from February 1, 2022. Chief Information Officer Marcel Krom has decided to steer his career in a new direction and will leave PostNL on May 1, 2022. PostNL has now started the search for the roles of Director of Mail in the Netherlands and Chief Information Officer, about which it will be making further announcements at a later stage.

Norway

POSTEN NORGE has adopted a new environmental strategy with ambitions in line with the Paris Agreement and approved by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). The operator aims to halve greenhouse gas emission by 2030, based on 2012 levels, and achieve net zero emissions from all road transport by 2040 and net zero emissions from the entire business by 2050. One way it will achieve this is by only procuring vans powered by renewable sources in the cities from 2022 and outside the cities from 2023.

Russia

In December **RUSSIAN POST** opened a new customer experience laboratory at the Skolkovo Innovation Center in Moscow. The lab will become a testing and piloting area for new innovative services for the postal operator's customers. Within the lab, tech start-ups will be able to run pilot projects showcasing how their products or solutions could benefit the post. Currently a new speech analytics system and intelligent video analytics solution are being trialed in the lab. The latter can draw heat maps to assess which services are in most demand.

Singapore

SINGPOST announced in November its results for the half year ending September 30, 2021. Revenue rose 3.3% to SGD 731.4 million (USD 535.6 million), led by growth in the Domestic Post and Parcel, Logistics and Property segments, offset by a reduction in the International Post and Parcel segment. Group operating profit increased by 28.4% because of strong contributions from Logistics and Property segments. SingPost also announced the promotions of Neo Su Yin and Ryan Tang as CEOs of the Singapore and International businesses, respectively.

South Africa

THE SOUTH AFRICAN POST OFFICE (SAPO) issued a new set of stamps at the beginning of December 2021 to commemorate World Wildlife Week. The set of four stamps depict South Africa's endangered frogs and are available from the SAPO Philatelic Services in Pretoria. A commemorative envelope has also been issued. The stamps feature threatened frog species that only occur within South Africa, such as the Table Mountain Ghost frog. The SA Post Office worked closely with the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), and its Threatened Amphibian Program, during the creation of the educational stamp theme.

United Arab Emirates

EMIRATES POST GROUP (EPG) has signed a MoU with all-electric delivery system provider BrightDrop. The agreement seeks to support EPG's growing operations at Emirates Post, the UAE's official postal operator and leading express services provider for more efficient and sustainable last mile solutions. The MoU will explore opportunities around sustainable logistics services in the UAE, particularly in delivery vehicles. Emirates Post has also partnered with ENOC Group to enhance its last-mile delivery. Convenience store ZOOM has become a pick-up and drop-off location for customers sending or receiving courier shipments via Emirates Post.

United Kingdom

Ahead of COP26, **ROYAL MAIL** announced the launch of its first delivery office in Scotland to feature an all-electric fleet of delivery vehicles. 13 diesel delivery vans were replaced by fully electric equivalents in the Govan office, and two micro electric vehicles joined the fleet. Royal Mail worked with BP Pulse in Glasgow to complete infrastructure works and install eight 7kW electric charging points. The energy to power the vehicles is from 100% renewable hydroelectric, solar and wind sources.

United States of America

THE US POSTAL SERVICE (USPS) has teamed up with WeAreTeachers to launch a new USPS Pen Pal Project, which is a free educational program for the 2021-2022 school year for students in grades three to five. The project will provide 25,000 classrooms across the US the opportunity to partner with matched classes to write one million letters with the goal of building friendships and understanding diverse perspectives. Each participating classroom will receive a USPS Pen Pal Project kit with a teaching poster, cards, and envelopes.

All items by Helen Norman

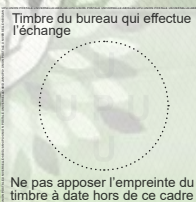
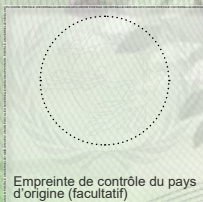


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UNION POSTALE

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Union Postale is the Universal Postal Union's flagship magazine, founded in 1875. Each issue is published quarterly in several languages, giving advertisers a regular opportunity to reach out to their audience.

Some 12,000 copies of Union Postale are sent to named distribution lists annually. The bulk of these readers are the top decision-makers from national Posts and ministries from the UPU's 192 member countries. They include chief executives, operations managers, technical experts, industry regulators and government ministers.

Around 1,000 further copies of the magazine are also distributed each year during meetings of the UPU's decision-making bodies, the Postal Operations Council and Council of Administration, attended by thousands of delegates from member countries and special industry events, such as Post-Expo.

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