

## THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION (UPU)

The main event for the Universal Postal Union (UPU)<sup>1</sup> during the year 1957 was the meeting of its Fourteenth Universal Postal Congress, held in Ottawa, Canada, between 14 August and 3 October. The Congress revised the Universal Postal Convention (previously amended at Brussels in 1952<sup>2</sup>) which governs the functions and operations of the Union. The revised Convention is to enter into force on 1 April 1959. In amending the Convention, the Congress also set up a new permanent body within the Union, the Consultative Commission on Postal Studies, which was authorized to start work immediately (for details, see CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION ON POSTAL STUDIES below). Some changes were made too in the functions assigned to UPU's Executive and Liaison Committee (for details, see EXECUTIVE AND LIAISON COMMITTEE below).

Membership of UPU rose during 1957 to 97 countries with the admission of Ghana.

## RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES

UPU continued its efforts during the year to co-ordinate its activities with those of other major international organizations and to cooperate more closely with them.

Its relations with the United Nations bore primarily upon technical assistance to under-developed countries—the nomination of postal experts—and upon the international control of narcotic drugs, the transport of dangerous goods and UPU participation in the Brussels Universal and International Exhibition of 1958. In addi-

tion, the two organizations exchanged a large volume of documentation, provided the customary information to each other and arranged to be represented at meetings at which matters of common interest were discussed.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) continued to make an effective contribution to the study of various questions concerning air-mail services, particularly with respect to variations in basic rates for conveyance by air. It did so by providing the Executive and Liaison Committee of UPU with statistical data and its views and comments on the Union's suggestions with respect to conveyance charges for air mail. It sent an observer to the meetings of the Executive and Liaison Committee and its various organs and also to the Universal Postal Congress held at Ottawa.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) agreed, at the meeting of the IATA/UPU Contact Committee on 15 and 16 March, to maintain the regulations concerning the rounding out, up and down, of air-mail weights. An agreement was also reached between the two organizations on the new bases laid down for calculating air-mail distances. IATA also presented its views on the proposed scheme for calculating remunerations, time-table changes

<sup>1</sup> For further information about UPU, see *L'Union postale universelle: Sa fondation et son développement, 1874-1949; Mémoire* (Berne, Bureau international de l'Union 1950); annual reports of UPU and previous volumes of the Yearbook.

<sup>2</sup> For text of Universal Postal Convention as revised at Brussels in 1952, see Y.U.N., 1953, pp. 798-814.

and the proposal for remunerating air transport carriers. All these problems were also dealt with by the Air Mail Sub-Committee (Expanded).

The observer of the World Health Organization (WHO) to the Executive and Liaison Committee, in the light of the replies received from Postal Administrations to WHO's proposals, agreed that the conveyance of perishable biological materials should be limited to those exchanged between qualified and officially recognized laboratories. He expressed satisfaction, too, with the possibility of sending such materials as registered items and was prepared, in co-operation with the International Bureau of UPU, to provide detailed instructions on the packing and make-up of such items. Proposals in this connexion were submitted to the Ottawa Congress.

The Congress, to which an observer from WHO had been invited, decided upon the optional acceptance, at the general rate for letters, of perishable biological materials packed in accordance with detailed regulations and exchanged under the conditions specified above.

Representatives of the International Labour Office (ILO), WHO and the International Bureau of UPU noted the results of the inquiry into occupational diseases of postal workers; the technical services of ILO and WHO stated that they were ready, if required, to continue their co-operation with UPU in this field.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) submitted proposals to its member States, which had previously been examined by UPU's Executive and Liaison Committee, with the suggestion that they be submitted to the Ottawa Congress on UNESCO's behalf. Some of them were adopted by the Congress; facilities will thereby be given to persons using the mails with regard to the forwarding of books, newspapers and other publications, from the date the new revised Universal Postal Convention enters into force (1 April 1959).

#### FOURTEENTH UNIVERSAL POSTAL CONGRESS

The Universal Postal Congress held in Ottawa between 14 August and 3 October 1957 was the fourteenth of its kind, the previous one meeting in Brussels in 1952. The Congress meets once every five years, each time in a different capital

city. Ninety-five of the 96 countries which were UPU members at the time were represented at Ottawa. Ghana became a member on 10 October, after the Congress had ended.

About 1,300 proposals were submitted to the Congress by UPU member countries. It is not possible here to list in detail all the decisions taken and all the amendments to the Acts of the Union. Reference should, however, be made to the establishment of a new permanent body, the Consultative Commission on Postal Studies.

All UPU members are full members of this Commission. It was authorized to start work immediately, that is, before 1 April 1959, the date on which the Acts as revised and signed at the Ottawa Congress and other decisions taken at the Congress were to enter into force.

The new Consultative Commission is charged with carrying out studies and issuing advice on technical, operational and economic questions of concern to postal services. It elects a Steering Committee consisting of 20 members who choose a Chairman and three Vice-Chairmen from among themselves. The Steering Committee reports annually to UPU's Executive and Liaison Committee.

The Consultative Commission meets in plenary session on the decision of the Chairman of its Steering Committee, after agreement with the Chairman of UPU's Executive and Liaison Committee and the Director of the International Bureau of UPU.

Among the technical decisions adopted by the Congress for the purpose of improving the quality of postal services for the user are the following:

The establishment of a maximum weight of 5 kilogrammes for sending books at the tariff for printed papers, with the possibility of raising this maximum to 10 kilogrammes upon agreement between the Postal Administrations of the countries of origin and destination;

The acceptance for postal transport of perishable biological materials exchanged between officially recognized laboratories, subject to certain conditions for packing and labelling;

The conclusion of an international post office savings bank agreement;

The extension to foreign countries which agree of facilities already offered by internal postal cheque services.

The Congress approved the preparation of a

multilingual vocabulary of postal terms so that words or expressions relating to postal questions would have the same specific meaning for postal workers throughout the world.

It also adopted a humanitarian measure for the benefit of the blind; henceforth, letters for the blind will be exempt from postal charges, an exemption previously limited to literature for the blind. In both cases, the exemptions from postal charges will be extended to registration fees, advices of delivery, special delivery items, enquiries and reimbursements.

In order to bring international postal rates into line with operating costs, the Congress authorized the Postal Administrations, if they deemed it necessary, to increase basic charges for items of correspondence by 25 per cent.

The Congress further decided to raise the credit limit for UPU's ordinary expenditure, including the working expenses of the Executive and Liaison Committee and the Consultative Commission on Postal Studies, from 1,300,000 gold francs to 1,750,000 gold francs.

#### EXECUTIVE AND LIAISON COMMITTEE

In 1957, the Executive and Liaison Committee met at Lausanne, Switzerland, from 1 to 12 April. Its discussions bore primarily upon relations with the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other international organizations, the proposals it intended to submit on its own behalf to the Ottawa Congress, questions concerning air mail and, lastly, the work of its various sub-committees.

The constituent meeting of the new Executive and Liaison Committee, appointed by the Congress at Ottawa, was held in that city on 26 September 1957. The Congress entrusted to it a number of studies, the most important of which is perhaps the revision of the Universal Postal Convention.

As a result of the Ottawa Congress, the Executive and Liaison Committee was empowered to transmit questions for consideration by the Consultative Commission on Postal Studies on which the latter shall undertake studies and give advice. This is in addition to the other main functions of the Executive and Liaison Committee, which, as in earlier years, are: (1) to maintain close relations with the Postal Administration of UPU members, with a view to improving international postal service; (2) to

study administrative, legislative and juridical "questions affecting that service, and to transmit the results of such studies to Postal Administrations; (3) to establish and maintain working relations with the United Nations, other specialized agencies and other international organizations; and (4) to control the activities of the International Bureau of UPU.

#### WORK OF SUB-COMMITTEES

During 1957, all the UPU Sub-Committees of the Executive and Liaison Committee met at Lausanne in conjunction with the session of the main Committee.

The Sub-Committee on the Film Library took note of the current production programme of films and slides serving as visual counterparts of certain brochures in the Postal Studies Series. In its programme of future work, the Sub-Committee included, in particular, the problem of postal mechanization considered from the point of view of development through films.

The Universal Decimal Classification Sub-Committee completed: the second reading of its draft extension of the postal section of the Universal Decimal Classification system (UDC); its study of the extract from the UDC<sup>3</sup> covering material affecting activities related to Postal Administrations; and the examination of analytical tables which serve to classify material by various categories. The draft extension was to be submitted to the International Federation of Documentation (IFD) for approval and review and was to be made available at the same time to Postal Administrations interested in the UDC for any proposals they might wish to make before final publication.

In pursuance of its terms of reference, the Sub-Committee on Technical Studies submitted proposals to the Executive and Liaison Committee for the establishment of a Consultative Commission on Postal Studies and drew up a list of subjects which the Committee might study. After approving the work of the Sub-Committee, the Executive and Liaison Committee decided to discontinue this body.

The Sub-Committee on Costs of Postal

<sup>3</sup> Intended as a consolidated excerpt of the many scattered references in the UDC to various postal matters, to be appended as an annex to the draft extension of the postal part proper of the UDC which the Sub-Committee had previously prepared.

Operations completed the final draft of a brochure entitled *The Calculation of Costs in Postal Administrations*. The brochure was accompanied by a draft recommendation, for eventual submission to the Ottawa Congress, that the work on costs should be continued. The study in question, after being approved by the Executive and Liaison Committee, was published in the Postal Studies Series and distributed to the Administrations.

The Sub-Committee on the Organization of the Rural Postal Service also prepared a draft brochure, on rural postal service, for publication in the Postal Studies Series. The draft was submitted to the Executive and Liaison Committee and approved. Published under the title *The Organization of the Rural Postal Service*, the study was distributed to all the Administrations. The Executive and Liaison Committee decided to discontinue this Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee on the Multilingual Vocabulary of Postal Terms met in order to put the finishing touches to a draft second edition of the multilingual vocabulary, which includes a selection of approximately 1,300 French words and phrases translated into different languages by various working groups. It also prepared, for submission to the Ottawa Congress, a draft recommendation and a draft resolution providing, on the one hand, for continuation of the work on the vocabulary and, on the other, for the inclusion of technical terms in the vocabulary in collaboration with the Consultative Commission on Postal Studies. After approving the Sub-Committee's work and the drafts, the Executive and Liaison Committee decided to discontinue this body.

The Air-Mail Sub-Committee (Expanded) continued to study a large number of air-mail problems, particularly those dealing with the weight of air mail, methods of calculating remuneration, the payment of remuneration to carriers, the list of postal distances by air, time-tables and forms. It made its customary annual report on its work to the Executive and Liaison Committee.

As a result of the Executive and Liaison Committee's recommendation in 1956 that the study of rates for conveyance by air should be continued so as to keep the problem under review, the Sub-Committee on Variations in Basic Rates for Conveyance by Air was reconvened for the

purpose of examining additional statistical data, furnished by ICAO, on the financial year of airline companies and supplementary information supplied by countries which are members of the Committee. All this information was brought together in a special fascicle, which was distributed to UPU members.

#### CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION ON POSTAL STUDIES

The Consultative Commission on Postal Studies held its constituent meeting on 13 September 1957, during the Ottawa Congress, and appointed 20 of its members to its Steering Executive Committee to initiate and co-ordinate the Commission's work.

The Steering Committee elected the United States as its Chairman and the Netherlands, France and the USSR as its three Vice-Chairmen, each of whom is to direct one of the three sections established. The Technical Section was to be directed by the Netherlands, the Operations Section by France, and the Economic Section by the USSR.

The programme adopted by the Steering Committee includes, in particular, the following studies:

By the Technical Section: mechanization and automation of letter sorting, mechanization of the sorting of parcels, packages, etc.; standardization of the format and colour of letter envelopes and the wording of addresses of postal items; mechanical equipment for post offices, conveyors, etc.

By the Operations Section: Functional architecture of buildings to meet the needs of the postal service; organization of work in the postal services; conditions and methods of work in handling air mail; motorization of urban and rural delivery; health conditions, etc.

By the Economic Section: Methods of determining, and the economic basis for, rates applicable to different categories of postal items; determination of postal operating costs and output; elaboration of work standards, methods of determining the economic efficiency of the mechanization and automation of post offices.

Member countries of UPU were invited by circular letter to state whether they wished to associate themselves with the work of the Steering Committee or to propose the study of specific questions.

## INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF UPU

In the course of 1957, the International Bureau of UPU issued 217 circulars, including about 100 dealing with the execution, suspension, restoration or abolition of various services provided for by the Convention and Agreements of the Union, 75 bulletins and 86 circular letters. To the Postal Administrations, it issued 6,302,800 international reply coupons and 1,137,098 postal identity cards, and it distributed, in 11 different consignments, 2,738 kinds of postage stamps and sample cancellations, comprising 1,792 ordinary stamps of all kinds, 11 blocks or miniature sheets, 928 entires and 7 sample cancellations.

The International Bureau also issued or re-issued certain publications, including the report on the work of the Union for 1956, the list of publications of the International Bureau, the list of the heads and senior officials of Postal Administrations, the list of kilometric distances and two compendiums of statistics.

## BUDGET

Expenses of the International Bureau of UPU are met in common by all UPU members. For this purpose, members are divided into seven classes, each of which contributes to the Agency's expenditures in the following proportions:

CLASS OF CONTRIBUTION		CONTRIBUTORY SHARES	
Class	Units	Gold Francs	Swiss Francs
First	25	33,442.50	47,775.00
Second	20	26,754.00	38,220.00
Third	15	20,065.50	28,665.00
Fourth	10	13,337.00	19,110.00
Fifth	5	6,688.50	9,555.00
Sixth	3	4,013.10	5,733.00
Seventh	1	1,337.70	1,911.00

(See Annex, below, for classification of UPU members for apportionment of contributions as of 31 December 1957.)

In case of a new accession to the Convention, the Government of the Swiss Confederation determines, in agreement with the Government of the member concerned, the contribution class to which it will belong.

The financial ceiling of 1,300,000 gold francs (1,857,143 Swiss francs) for the ordinary expenses of the Union is fixed by article 110, paragraph 1, of the Regulation of the Brussels Convention of 1952.

The Swiss Government supervises the expenses of the International Bureau and advances the necessary funds. These sums must be repaid by the debtor Governments as quickly as possible and, at the latest, before the end of the year in which the account is rendered. If this time limit is not met, the sums due are charged interest at the rate of 5 per cent per year, from the date of expiration of the period.

Receipts and expenditures for the year 1957 may be summarized as follows:

RECEIPTS	
Ordinary	Swiss Francs
Contributions from members	1,767,675.00
Sale of documents and other receipts	111,943.98
Extraordinary	
Sale of documents and other receipts	357,980.03
Total Receipts	2,237,599.01
EXPENDITURE	
Ordinary	
Personnel	878,615.00
Premises	102,479.85
Supplies	265,368.80
Miscellaneous	212,342.46
Total Ordinary Expenditure	1,458,806.11
Extraordinary	
Special work	77,092.20
Congress and Conferences	<u>701,700.70</u>
Total Extraordinary Expenditure	778,792.90
Total of Ordinary and Extraordinary Expenditure	2,237,599.01

## ANNEX. MEMBERS, CLASS OF CONTRIBUTION, OFFICERS AND HEADQUARTERS

(As of 31 December 1957)

## MEMBERS OF UPU AND CLASS OF CONTRIBUTION

Member	Class of Contribution	Member	Class of Contribution	Member	Class of Contribution	Member	Class of Contribution
Afghanistan	6	Australia*	1	Bolivia	6	Byelorussian	
Albania*	6	Austria*	5	Brazil	1	SSR*	5
Algeria*	3	Belgium*	3	Bulgaria*	5	Cambodia*	7
Argentina*	1	Belgian Congo*	6	Burma*	6	Canada*	1

Member	Class of Contribution	Member	Class of Contribution	Member	Class of Contribution	Member	Class of Contribution
Ceylon*	5	Honduras*	6	Nicaragua*	6	Syria*	7
Chile*	5	Hungary*	4	Norway*	4	Thailand*	6
China*	1	Iceland*	7	Pakistan*	1	Tunisia*	5
Colombia	5	India*	1	Panama	6	Turkey*	3
Costa Rica	6	Indonesia*	3	Paraguay*	6	Ukrainian	
Cuba*	6	Iran	5	Peru*	5	SSR*	3
Czechoslovakia*	3	Iraq	7	Philippines*	7	Union of South	
Denmark*	4	Ireland*	4	Poland*	3	Africa*	1
Dominican		Israel*	6	Portugal*	4	USSR*	1
Republic*	6	Italy*	1	Portuguese		United Kingdom*	1
Ecuador	6	Japan*	1	Provinces of		United Kingdom	
Egypt*	3	Jordan†	7	West Africa*	4	Overseas	
El Salvador*	6	Korea, Rep. of*	4	Portuguese		Colonies,	
Ethiopia*	6	Laos*	7	Provinces of		Protectorates	
Finland*	4	Lebanon*	7	East Africa,		and Territories	
France*	1	Liberia	7	Asia and		under Trustee-	
French Overseas		Libya†	7	Oceania*	4	ship*	3
Territories and		Luxembourg*	6	Romania*	3	United States*	1
Territories ad-		Mexico*	3	San Marino*	7	United States	
ministered as		Monaco†	7	Saudi Arabia†	7	Territories*	3
such*	3	Morocco*	4	Spain*	1	Uruguay	6
Germany,		Nepal†	6	Spanish		Vatican City*	7
Fed. Rep. of†	1	Netherlands*	3	Colonies*	7	Venezuela*	6
Ghana†	6	Netherlands		Sudan†	7	Viet-Nam*	6
Greece*	5	Antilles and		Sweden*	3	Yemen	7
Guatemala*	6	Surinam*	6	Switzerland*	3	Yugoslavia*	3
Haiti*	6	New Zealand*	1				

NOTE: The UPU official nomenclature differs from that of the United Nations.

\* Members who had deposited their instruments of ratification of the Universal Postal Convention of Brussels, 1952, by 31 December 1957.

† Countries which acceded to the Convention after the Congress of Brussels, by 31 December 1957.

#### MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE AND LIAISON COMMITTEE

President: United Kingdom.

Vice-Presidents: (1) Canada, (2) Union of South Africa, (3) Japan, (4) Yugoslavia.

Secretary-General: Dr. Fritz Hess (Switzerland),  
Director of the International Bureau.

Members: Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Federal Republic of Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Libya, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

#### MEMBERS OF STEERING COMMITTEE OF CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION ON POSTAL STUDIES

President: United States.

First Vice-President: USSR.

Vice-Presidents: France, Netherlands.

Members: Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Co-

lombia, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Paraguay, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, USSR, United Kingdom, United States.

#### OFFICERS OF INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF UPU

Director: Dr. Fritz Hess (Switzerland).

Deputy Director: Fulke Radice (United Kingdom).

Senior Counsellor: F. Deprez (Switzerland).

Counsellors: E. Kern (Switzerland), M. Parra (Chile), A. Boënnec (France), A. Vuilleumier

(Switzerland), M. Rahi (Egypt).

First Secretaries: W. Schlaefli (Switzerland), P. Piguët (Switzerland), M. Froidevaux (Switzerland). Z. Caha (Czechoslovakia).

#### HEADQUARTERS

Bureau international de l'Union postale universelle  
Schosshaldenstrasse 46  
Berne, Suisse

Postal Address: U.P.U., Case postale, Berne 15,  
Suisse

Cable Address: UPU BERNE