



## **Project for the creation of a postal prosperity zone in Morocco**

### **Speech by the Director General**

14 November 2023

Excellencies,

Directors General,

Honoured guests,

I would like to begin by wishing you all a warm welcome, particularly to those who have travelled some distance to be here, to this second round table on the project for the creation of a postal prosperity zone in Morocco.

Today's meeting is a clear indication of our shared desire to harness our efforts to facilitate and develop international trade, particularly the e-commerce sector, which is experiencing exponential growth.

Indeed, its growth is such that e-commerce can no longer be considered merely a passing phenomenon. It is now a sector in its own right, and one that has a major socio-economic impact.

The remarkable surge in cross-border e-commerce has revolutionized how we do business and our mode of consumption.

It has also opened up huge growth opportunities at the global level, particularly for micro, small and medium enterprises, by providing them with the tools and know-how to access international trade and global markets.

In this context, the evolution of cross-border e-commerce has led us to adapt our approach to the challenges we face in terms of logistics and the processing of cross-border e-commerce flows.

Moreover, the proliferation of business-to-consumer transactions and steep growth in small-item volumes – two phenomena underpinning this deep and irreversible e-commerce trend – represent a real threat for customs administrations in terms of security risks and fiscal concerns, and for consumers in terms of the conformity of the products they purchase with the regulations in force.

This requires the various stakeholders, and customs authorities in particular, to guarantee a reduction in the clearance times of postal items while managing safety and security risks and ensuring effective collection of revenue.

While there is no magical solution to this, the answer lies in the provision of electronic advance data and making use of the information on postal items shipped, improving data compliance and quality, simplifying customs clearance procedures, and adopting new technology to strengthen risk analysis capacities, all within an automated environment with minimum need for human intervention.

All these concerns have given rise to lively debate at the global level, led primarily by the UPU–WCO working group, whose work resulted in the signing of a joint declaration at the first WCO–UPU Global Conference, held in Tokyo (Japan) from 6 to 8 June 2023, which defines shared objectives in the areas of digitalization, data exchange, supply chain security and strengthening of capacities.

In a similar vein, the WCO’s framework of standards, particularly the section dealing with e-commerce, is an important tool in defining the interventions of the various supply chain stakeholders.

In Morocco, the agreement in place between the Moroccan Customs and its historical partner Poste Maroc has allowed a certain number of actions to be implemented with a view to enhancing and adapting the processing of postal items. These include:

- The establishment of a national postal customs clearance centre that you will have the opportunity to visit tomorrow, which has enabled considerable improvement to be made in the processing of postal items;
- Accession to the UPU's SECUREX project, aimed at the advance provision and improvement in the quality of data relating to postal items;
- The introduction of an appropriate procedure for the processing of postal items for tax and Customs revenue collection purposes, following the measure to that effect taken on 1 July 2021.

While these measures clearly underline the quality of the Customs-Post partnership and their capacity to adapt to rapidly changing supply chain requirements, much remains to be done. It is our hope that the project bringing us together today for this round table will add value in this regard.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize that this organization is entirely committed to ensuring the success of this project, which is fully aligned with the strategic aim of transforming the Kingdom of Morocco into a regional economic hub by placing its logistic infrastructure at the service of a more robust and more resilient continental supply chain.

Once again, I would like to thank all partners here today for their involvement in this project, and to wish them great success in the work of this round table.