

UNION POSTALE

Moving the postal sector
forward since 1875

July 2018 | N°4/17



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**3 to 7 September 2018
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

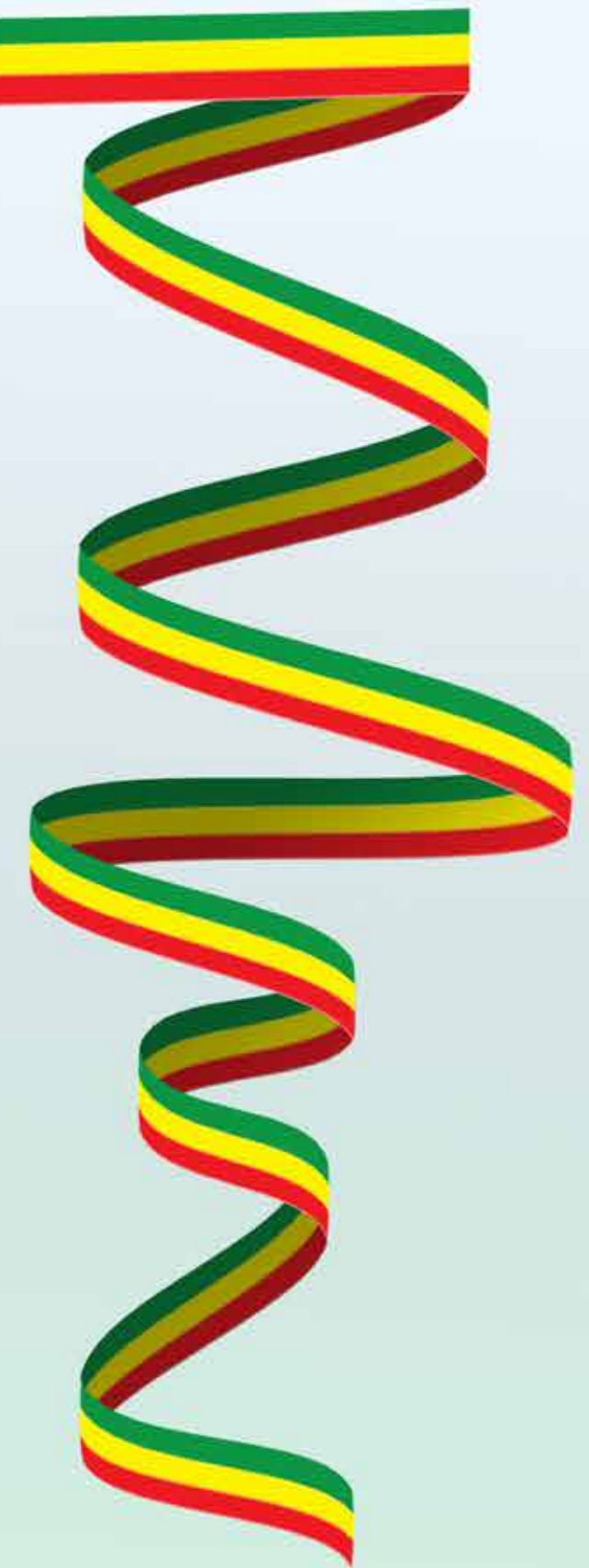
UPU is holding its second-ever Extraordinary Congress, calling together some 1,000 delegates from its 192 member countries in Addis Ababa this September. They will take crucial decisions regarding the future of the UPU and the postal sector, including:

- Implementation of the UPU's Integrated Product Plan and the Integrated Remuneration Plan
- Reform of the UPU
- Reform of the system applied to contributions by UPU member countries
- Sustainability of the UPU Provident Scheme

Government ministers and other senior decision-makers from around the globe will also participate in a special **Ministerial Strategy Conference September 6 & 7**. They will discuss how the postal sector can better serve nations and citizens and review the implementation of the UPU World Postal Strategy adopted at the Istanbul Congress in 2016.

Registration is now open. Please visit the UPU website for more details on the event and information for participants.

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Discussions during the 2018 UPU World CEO Forum had postal chief executives envision a digital future, together.

UNION POSTALE

UNION POSTALE is the Universal Postal Union's flagship magazine, founded in 1875. It is published quarterly in seven 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, Chinese, German, Russian and Spanish.

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The UPU World CEO Forum has grown from a seedling idea to one of the organization's flagship events over the course of a few years. UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein shed some insights into how the event started, how it has developed and where he sees it – and the postal sector – moving in the future.



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FEATURE

Just two years after hosting the 26th Universal Postal Congress, Turkish Post stepped up to the plate to host yet another major UPU event: the third UPU World CEO Forum. UNION POSTALE caught up with the company's CEO and Chairman of UPU's Council of Administration, Kenan Bozgeyik, to gain his perspective on the event.



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PERSPECTIVE

Money received from loved ones working abroad can transform a family's living standards. From Albania to Australia and from Bahrain to Bangladesh, the essential bridges built between countries due to remittances support migrant families and keep children in desperately-needed education.

UNION POSTALE

Moving the postal sector forward since 1875



Standing tallest, seeing furthest: Together CEOs can shape a positive postal future

Bringing together the world's postal chief executive officers was never a luxury, it was an overriding necessity for both the industry and a shared postal future. CEOs have a leadership role and bear ultimate responsibility for the day-to-day management of decisions and for implementing the long-term strategy of their postal operators.

The CEOs, however, are also ambassadors of their operators and a major voice in determining how this industry moves forward and grasps the future. Within this truly varied and extensive industry, there is no doubt that they, among all others, stand tallest and see furthest. It is their powerful vision, their ability to see the next trends and developments appearing on the far horizon that the Universal Postal Union (UPU) wished to harness at the CEO Forum.

In Turkey, at UPU's third World CEO Forum, I believe we saw the beginnings of that future being visualized, but also clear evidence of CEOs uniting to clarify the challenges and opportunities standing before the industry. Confirmation of this came from the numerous panel sessions, but also in the less formal discussions and dialogues held on the margins of the forum.

From the animation of these conversations, I sensed that CEOs were emerging from a long period of self-reflection on challenges, and beginning to seize on solutions. I felt a renewed confidence flowing from CEOs about the future; an optimism allied to a growing belief in the ability of e-commerce and digitalization to take us to the high ground of success and profitability.

Such diversification, including an embrace of financial services, cannot simply be hollow words, it must be adopted as a postal operator's organizing principle. It is exactly at this terminal point, this crossroads between adding and subtracting value, that the unique selling point of UPU becomes self-evident.

With our growing focus on financial services and digitalization, our emphasis on technology, the multilateral strength of our treaties, and our relationship with both the United Nations system and governments, we are well placed to assist postal operators to move to the future.

I believe the forum succeeded in helping to reinforce the impression that we are stronger together than apart. This is why I would close my foreword with a very simple message.

Together we weathered a difficult period, but if we are to prosper under clearer skies, we must form a strong alliance of CEOs dedicated to moving forward in the spirit of optimism and taking advantage of the technological advances of the 21st Century.

The third UPU World CEO Forum did much to help make this a reality, but we need to go faster and we need to do it together.

Bishar A. Hussein, UPU Director General

“ Together we weathered a difficult period, but if we are to prosper under clearer skies, we must form a strong alliance of CEOs dedicated to moving forward in the spirit of optimism and taking advantage of the technological advances of the 21st Century. ”

EDITOR'S NOTE

SPOTLIGHT ON CEOs

Readers will notice we have done something different with this issue; we have dedicated it to the recent UPU World CEO Forum held in Istanbul, Turkey.

This special edition will take you through what has become one of the premier events of the postal sector, where the captains of the industry meet on an annual basis to network and set their sights on building a resilient postal network for the future.

Throughout these pages, you will have an exclusive look into the minds of postal chief executives through interviews and our cover story on the forum's discussions. A special forward and editorial by UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein will shed light on the organization's strategic direction.

Regular subscribers will also notice that we have given our flagship magazine's layout a makeover. As the Post transforms, so must **UNION POSTALE**.

Kayla Redstone, Editor-in-chief

What do the world's postal captains think about the UPU World CEO Forum?



“ The UPU CEO Forum is becoming a key annual event for postal chief executives around the world. It allows us to better understand everyone's expectations, and to discuss industry trends and strategies. It also provides a space to exchange ideas regarding sector developments and to share our experiences.

The 2018 edition, on the theme "Postal digital dividends: A new portfolio, better performance or a redefined mission?", stimulated discussion on the role of Posts in national economies.

It also provided an opportunity to highlight economic practices and models that postal entities could adopt to improve their performance, at a time when Posts need to evolve in response to globalization and technological advances.

The UPU CEO Forum is becoming an eagerly anticipated event for all top managers wanting to share ideas and solutions for efficient and lasting developments in the postal sector.

I would like to thank the UPU for this excellent – and I hope continuing – initiative.”

Amin Benjelloun Touimi, Director General, Poste Maroc

Amin Benjelloun Touimi, Director General, Poste Maroc



“ This forum is where experience meets new ideas. Every meeting with a colleague from another country can bring a fresh perspective in dealing with business challenges. Professional relationships built here are a great platform for future cooperation.”

Ivan Čulo, CEO, Croatian Post

Ivan Čulo, CEO, Croatian Post



“ What motivated me to participate in such a valuable event first of all was the great idea of gathering all the CEOs of the postal service providers worldwide in one meeting. The second

was the agenda. Each time we have found that it is very rich, dealing with our problems and dealing with the obstacles that we are facing every day in our business. The third is the networking and the chance at building relationships with other colleagues around the world.”

Khaled Lahham, Director General, Jordan Post Company

Khaled Lahham, Director General, Jordan Post Company



“ The UPU World CEO Forum is the only event in the world that brings together CEOs of Posts from every continent. This is an opportunity not only to make mutual discoveries, especially for new

CEOs, but also to engage in exchanges that highlight changes and innovation within the postal sector. It is an event that inspires progress and the desire to forge ahead. I could not be more pleased with my experience participating in the 2017 and 2018 forums. I encourage all CEOs to attend the meeting in 2019.”

Nabi Issa Coulibaly, Director General, SONAPOST

Nabi Issa Coulibaly, Director General, SONAPOST



“ The World CEO Forum is the perfect place for exchanges between postal operators around the world. It is also an opportunity to discuss postal operator experiences, strategies and visions among peers. This is the second time Algeria Post is participating in this event, which we believe is important for many reasons. It gives us the chance to see what new opportunities are being offered to postal operators to develop and improve quality of service, and get an idea of the challenges postal operators may have to face in the coming years. The forum is a valuable space for us and we believe it will always be important to maintain this place of exchange between the heads of Posts around the world.”

Abdelkarim Dahmani, Director General, Algeria Post

Abdelkarim Dahmani, Director General, Algeria Post



“ I am very happy to be with my colleagues in Istanbul to attend the CEO Forum. It is a very good opportunity to meet and understand the perspectives of all the CEOs around the world.”

Faleh Al Naemi, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Managing Director, Qatar Post

Faleh Al Naemi, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Managing Director, Qatar Post



“ It is my first time at the CEO Forum. It was a chance for me to participate and get to know people from other countries and share experiences to find out how they overcame the situation they were in a few years ago, which is similar to what we're experiencing now.”

Enrique Prado López de Romaña, Chairman of the Board, Serpost

Enrique Prado López de Romaña, Chairman of the Board, Serpost

SPEAKERS' CORNER

UNION POSTALE caught up with CEOs for an exclusive look into their goals, the state of their Posts and the messages they would like to share with their peers.



FALEH AL NAEMI
Chairman of the Board of Directors
and Managing Director, Qatar Post

Qatar hosted the UPU Congress in 2012. How have you seen UPU change since? We were very proud and privileged to host the 2012 Congress and we have seen the outcome of it at the Istanbul Congress in 2016. The most important thing for me that the UPU has started to react to is the demand for reform and we are seeing more tangible results in that regard. I'm very happy for that.

What have you gained from this forum's discussions? It was a very inspiring discussion and there were a number of topics that have the interest of all of us as CEOs. I hope that our messages will be communicated to the UPU, upon which it will act and develop our

network, our quality of service and our achievements.

What is the biggest challenge facing your Post today?

Qatar Post is like any other Post, we face the challenge to become customer-centric. It has been a long time since the world changed and became more digital. We're trying to cope with the current circumstances and changes in the environment and in the demands of the customer and fulfil the new requirements for the market. That's the challenge for all of us.

Which message would you like to share with fellow CEOs?

I think we need to optimize. We need to calibrate, we need to emphasize our other areas. We all know that the mail is declining and it is only 38 percent of the volume nowadays. There is a big opportunity for e-commerce, especially with parcels and small packets. There is an opportunity for financial services. There is more opportunity in acting as a facilitator for government services.

I'm quite sure that if we take the right steps, the postal network will be the strongest, the most efficient and the most valuable for the customer.



KHALED LAHHAM
Director General,
Jordan Post Company

What do you hope to gain from this forum's discussions?

I expect a high level of participation and to have a chance at new business opportunities with our colleagues and partners. I hope to see the right way of studying new business models and adapting new technologies that others are adapting in other parts of the world through transformations that have already taken place and to transfer this experience to our Jordan Post Company in order to achieve our strategic goals.

What is the biggest challenge facing your Post?

There are common challenges that we are facing together as postal service providers. The top challenge for Jordan Post involves human resources. We have 1,100 staff in the Jordan Post Company and they need more and better training to make them ready for the new business plan that has been adopted by the company. We initiated a strategy for 2017-2019, which included a new business model for the company emphasizing an intervention of financial services, providing new services for our customers, meeting their expectations and trying to compete with other service providers in Jordan.

What important role do UPU events such as this play in the workings of the postal sector?

There are many important returns from UPU events and forums, which gather UPU members worldwide, letting everyone meet and discuss their pains. They help us get new ideas and new direction for the UPU, unifying our positions in many cases such as reform or any other project offered by UPU.

Therefore, UPU is playing a vital role in transforming the postal companies around the world. It is also helping us in a very important manner, which is conveying a message to the governments worldwide, telling them how postal companies are very important to their network and are serving to achieve socioeconomic development and the national goals adopted by each country.

Which message do you want to share with fellow CEOs, including those who did not participate?

We need more efforts in terms of building capacity for postal workers because not all countries are equal. We are willing and we are hoping to get more support in terms of building capacity for our staff.

For those who did not participate, I would tell them that they should participate and see the value added through meeting their partners, their colleagues, and having the chance to see the new business models and projects that are offered by other companies.



ENRIQUE PRADO LÓPEZ DE ROMAÑA, Chairman of the Board, Serpost

What is the role of a forum as such as this in ensuring that our sector can continue to improve services for customers?

I think it is a great opportunity to share experiences. We found in one of the panels that there were two opposing views on how the postal services should work and I think that brings a lot of richness to the conversation because no position is right or wrong. It depends on the situation in your country in terms of how developed you are, how old your postal service is, how rich it is.

The value of the forum is in being able to meet these people and find out about their situations and share those experiences and bring out the best of them.

What is the role of the UPU in bringing together postal stakeholders?

I think it has an important role because it is the organization that brings together postal services worldwide. If there was no centralized organization, then it would be very difficult for each one of the countries to organize or to meet all the other participants on a one-to-one basis for bilateral agreements or whatnot. I think the UPU is doing a great job in bringing us all together at the same time, in the same place for two days, and just focusing on the problematic situations of the postal services, everywhere.



JEAN-LUC DELCROIX, Director,
Monaco Post

What are you hoping to gain from the forum's discussions?

The UPU forums, and especially the CEO Forums, are very valuable because colleagues are able to gather and discuss one another's issues. It becomes clear that no matter the country or continent, we have similar problems. Sometimes that allows us to implement solutions that have been used previously by other countries.

What is the biggest challenge facing Monaco Post today?

The biggest challenge today is integrating digital components into traditional postal business. It is a major issue. Personally, I believe that we are in the middle of an industrial revolution, just as with the advent of trains, planes and boats. These new means of communication must be integrated into our postal activity. It is important to remember that the postal industry has been around for 700 years,

and it has always prevailed despite various revolutions and challenges.

What opportunities are you looking to seize?

Our current goal is to ensure the economic efficiency to fund public service. I believe that the Post can and should be efficient, but I think it is important that it also provides a public service to the citizens of a country. During one panel, we saw that in certain countries a public service is something important and essential.

The advice I would give to UPU countries is to try and reconcile economic development and the notion of public service as a universal service. Both are important. Business for business' sake might be good, but the postal service cannot neglect its larger mission: to be of service to our fellow citizens. In some countries, people in remote areas cannot access services, and the Post plays a key role in social cohesion. I believe the Post also plays a part in social action in all countries.



ABDELKARIM DAHMANI,
Director General, Algeria Post

What will Algeria Post look like in 2020?

Algeria Post is a public postal operator in the midst of a complete transformation. Our strategic plan for 2018–2020 covers ambitious goals in terms of digitalization and improving quality of service. In line with this new digital era, Algeria Post has developed an investment plan on several fronts.

First, we are investing in strengthening our postal network – in other words, the physical aspects of the postal network. We are also investing in digitalizing services and providing new electronic services, such as remote services, to better respond to the increasingly demanding needs of customers, who need fast, reliable and interactive services.

We want to keep up with these changes, so we are implementing this new strategy to better meet the needs of our customers.

Is there anything you would like to say to encourage other CEOs to participate in the forum?

First I would like to thank all the CEOs who participated in this event and who agreed to share ideas between industrialized and developing countries. The forum is an important space for cooperation and exchange.

I would also like to encourage any CEOs who were unable to participate in the event to come watch and participate in discussions on interesting topics, which are detailed on the CEO Forum agenda. I think our peers should also be encouraged to come share their experience.

Everyone brings unique experiences to the table. Each country's experience and model is different, so we should share our knowledge in order to reach our common goals: improving quality of service and satisfying our customers.

“ I’m quite sure that if we take the right steps, the postal network will be the strongest, the most efficient and the most valuable for the customer.”

Faleh Al Naemi, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Managing Director, Qatar Post



ROHANA ABEYARATNE,
Postmaster General, the Department of Post, Sri Lanka

What is it that brought you back to participate for a second time in the UPU World CEO Forum?

This is a great opportunity for all of us CEOs. We are representing different types of countries – developed countries, developing countries – and we can share our experiences here and we can share our views on the issues that need to be addressed. This is an open forum to discuss everything. It gives big support to UPU to plan and design its roadmap for the coming year. It is also a good opportunity to create a network with all other postal operators.

Do you have an example of something that you gained from participating in the forum?

Last time I participated in this forum, in Moscow, I was able to form a very big network among the CEOs so I am still sharing all of my ideas with the other postal operators. It's a very big benefit for us.

What is your Post in particular doing to take advantage of the opportunities of digitization?

Sri Lanka Post is now in the process of introducing digitization. Sri Lanka Post's issue is investment. We have already submitted a proposal to create a digital platform for the postal sector in Sri Lanka to the World Bank. Now it is in the revision stage. I hope that we will be able to introduce and establish our digital platform in the coming year.

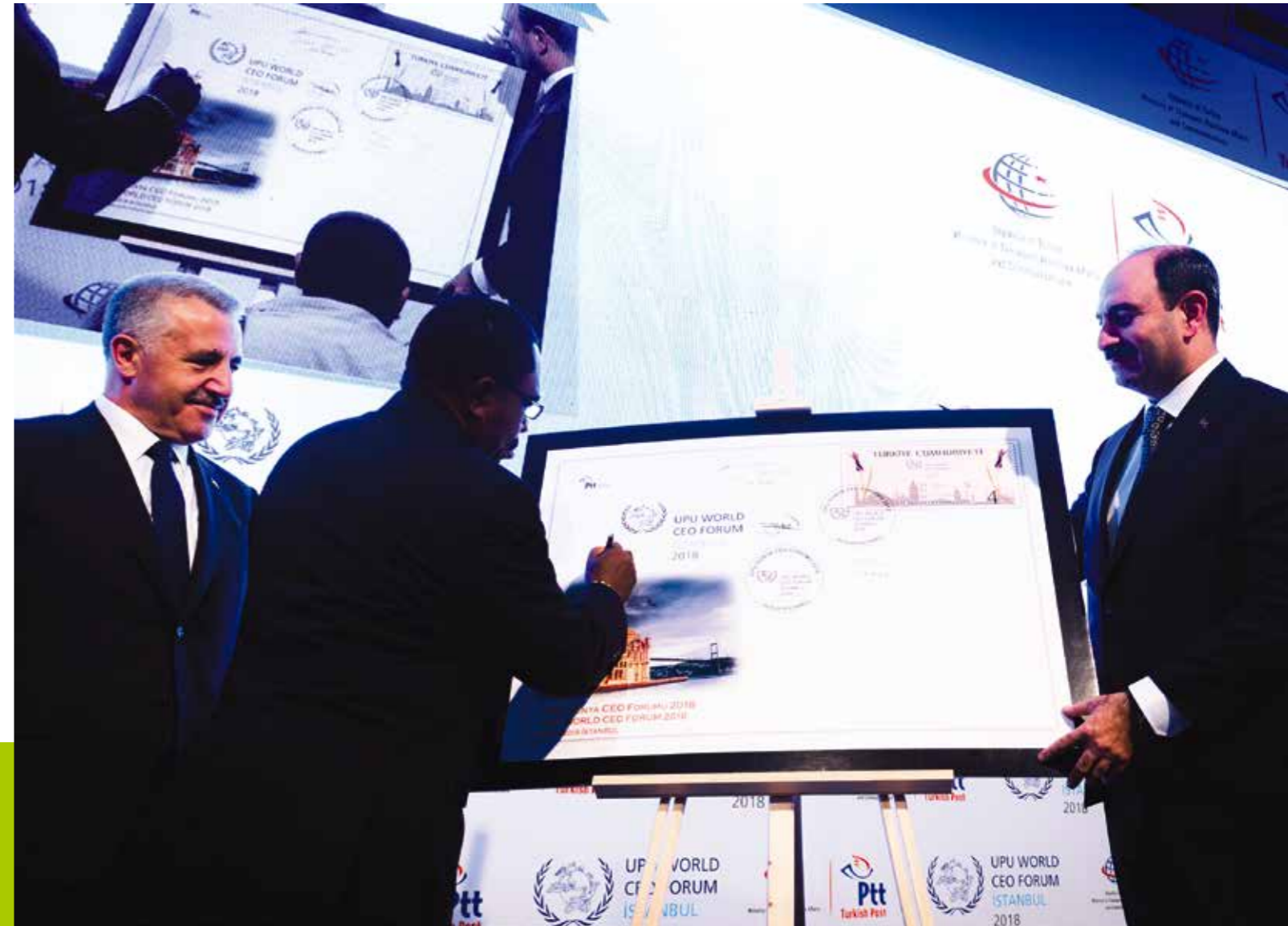
These interviews have been edited for length and clarity. Reporting by Fella Rabbahi & Kayla Redstone with files from Olena Muravyova.

Turkish Post unveils commemorative stamp



Above: The commemorative stamp.

Below: Liberian Minister of Posts and Telecommunications Cooper W. Kruah signs the special first-day cover, while Turkish Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications Ahmet Arslan (left) and Turkish Post CEO Kenan Bozgeyik (right) look on.



Formidable force: CEOs look toward alliance building

Discussions during the 2018 UPU World CEO Forum had postal chief executives envision a digital future, together.

TEXT: Kayla Redstone
PHOTOS: Uğur Çobanoğlu



UPU launched the World CEO Forum in Paris during 2016, aiming to fulfil the need for a space where industry decision-makers could share their experiences and ideas for creating a vibrant postal sector. Since then, the annual gathering has transformed into one of the organization's premier events and an exclusive opportunity to hear from the captains of the postal industry.

"UPU's reason for existence is to help define the postal industry and assist it to grow and prosper. There is no better way to do this than to do it together with the main decision makers of the Posts, the CEOs," said UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein during the opening of the 2018 event.

Turkish Post hosted the forum's third instalment May 9th and 10th in Istanbul. It gathered CEOs from around the globe to share their postal industry views under the theme "Postal digital dividends: A new portfolio, better performance or a redefined mission?".

Leaders of the Posts spent a day and a half engaged in a conversation about how they could champion what has become both one of the industry's biggest challenges and one of its greatest opportunities: digitization.

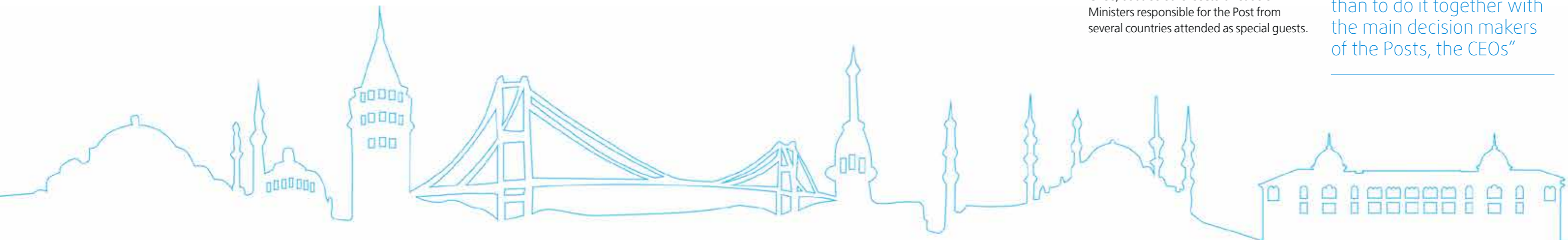
"Our sector has been going through transformation and we are at a turning point. We are in your capable hands," said Turkish Post CEO Kenan Bozgeyik, addressing his peers and guests.

The subject had not only the support of CEOs, but also other sectoral leaders. Ministers responsible for the Post from several countries attended as special guests.

Speaking during the opening of the event, Turkish Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications Ahmet Arslan drew light to the societal value contributed by postal operators.

"[Turkish Post] is very important to our country and it has a history of more than 178 years, has a strong corporate structure and provides many services ... making life easier for our citizens every day," he added.

"UPU's reason for existence is to help define the postal industry and assist it to grow and prosper. There is no better way to do this than to do it together with the main decision makers of the Posts, the CEOs"



Carrying the conversation

One of the keys to assuming that central public service role is being able to transform with the needs of the public, namely through providing the electronic and mobile services that customers demand.

Russian Post CEO and 2017 World CEO Forum host Nikolay Podguzov drove this point home in a video message to those attending the 2018 forum.

"Participants concluded that the technological changes bring not only some risks, but also give much opportunity to the Posts, which would help them to secure the role of public services provider," reflected Podguzov, recalling the previous year's discussions.

That event centred its discussions around multidimensional growth with the goal of identifying successful business models to fulfil the needs of postal stakeholders, with CEOs delivering a unified message: digitization cannot be ignored.

Although digitization is often seen as one of the Post's greatest challenges, the UPU Director General stressed that adopting technological changes was something the Post had undertaken from the very beginnings of its history.

"We don't fear new technologies. We adopt them and use them to provide better service to our citizens," said Mr. Hussein.

"This is why it is critical to reform our networks, to reform our strategies, to reform our business plans, to reform even our staff. We need to upgrade our systems so that we can be able to provide the services which the young generation and modern customers are looking for," he emphasized.

The question, the Director General explained, is how quickly today's Post's will be able to adopt new technologies demanded by customers. This, he said, would be determined by the priority, resourcing and reform efforts each operator channels towards digital transformation.

"We don't fear new technologies. We adopt them and use them to provide better service to our citizens"

Gaining perspective

It is not only the customers demanding modern services who provide an opportunity for the Post, but also those who are potentially left behind in the global push toward digitization, according to Turkey's UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano.



She explained that there was an opportunity for Posts to "rediscover the market". She raised this point during the forum's second panel, "Global perspectives: Elusive growth despite improved environment", which had panellists reflect on why postal growth has stagnated despite improvements in the global economy.

In Korea, the decoupling between gross domestic product (GDP) and postal revenues is something that has been taking place for more than 10 years, shared Korea Post President Seong Ju Kang, who also remarked that this gap is one that faces Posts in both developing and industrialized countries.

Korea Post has endeavoured to implement new technologies such as drone delivery to catch up with the market, but Kang explained that this effort comes with its fair share of not only technological, but also legal and institutional barriers.

In the case of drones, Kang noted that the Post must consider safety, security and privacy regulations. Adopting new technologies can require hefty investment with slow returns, but Kang assured his Post would persevere to implement digitization despite these hurdles.

South African Post Office Group CEO Mark Barnes called on his peers to persist in modernizing the postal portfolio by first working on the mindset of their organizations.

"We take four months to make a decision, the private sector takes four minutes to make a decision. We can't play on a level playing field like this," he explained.

Once Posts have matched the private sector's innovation-enabling culture, true innovation can take place.

"We need to have an equally diverse and growing portfolio beyond our simple business before we can even correlate with GDP," Barnes urged.

Balancing act

The following panel invited CEOs to share their view of a perfectly balanced postal portfolio. This balance, according to CEOs, is something that can vary from country to country depending on development status. Those from the developing world expressed worry that the pace of technological change had overtaken the pace of change in their capacity.

"There should be a balance between conventional postal services and innovative services"

Algeria Post Director General Abdelkarim Dahmani cautioned Posts against spreading themselves too thin in the pursuit of a diverse portfolio. "There should be a balance between conventional postal services and innovative services," he said.

Right now postal financial services make up about 66 per cent of the Post's business, he said adding that the company is now focusing its innovation efforts in that area, working to develop electronic bank cards.

Varying levels of digital penetration across Burkina Faso have meant that physical products still comprise 80 per cent of that country's postal portfolio, while 20 percent is focused on digital products, explained SONAPOST Director General Nabi Issa Coulibaly.

"In Burkina Faso, people still want a human touch to their services, they don't want technology to omit that," said Coulibaly.

The case of Estonia showed that leapfrogging could be the answer, as long as the Post works to move more traditional customers along with it.

With the average Estonian receiving fewer than 10 and sending a mere 1.3 letter post items per year, the company was forced to embrace new, digital products, explained former Chairman of the Board and CEO Joonas Saluveer. He said this was largely driven by young people, but the company hasn't forgotten its older customers.

Take parcel lockers for example.

When Omniva first introduced the self-serve terminals about six or seven years ago they were barely used, said Saluveer. Now some 80 per cent of Estonians say they prefer parcel locker delivery. The reason for the success – the Post made sure to train its customers.

"We put older people to explain to other older people how to use the machines so that [making the change] wouldn't be so scary for them," said Saluveer.

He said that since the Post has introduced new digital offerings into its portfolio customer demand for these types of innovative products and services has continued to accelerate.

Deliver now

It is not only cutting-edge technology that postal customers desire, they also expect a "when I want it, where I want it" service. The availability of the Internet has given consumers around the globe access to more service providers than ever. Not only do they have more choice, but they have more opportunity to share experiences using different providers and to select the one that best suits their needs.

So how should Posts deal with steadfastly changing customer demands?

"Our challenge is to think like a customer and act like a start-up"

"Systems have to be constantly revisited to provide efficiency. We have to restructure permanently because we cannot predict change," said LibanPost CEO Khalil Daoud during a panel discussion that had participants zero in on changes in the consumer-provider relationship and identify solutions enabling them to provide the fast, predictable and secure transactions customers demand.

Daoud asserted that the digitization wave had only just begun to rise and that new players were cropping up every day. In order to compete, he suggested Posts should change their thinking processes.



“Our challenge is to think like a customer and act like a start-up,” he said.

For LibanPost, this has included a shift from mass- to one-on-one communication with customers and keeping databases to ensure that changing customer needs can be properly analysed.

CEOs agreed that Post should not only provide the variety of digital services customers expect, but also uphold the level of quality they demand. Georgian Post Director General Levan Chikvaizde lauded UPU’s role as a force to help Posts deliver.

Chikvaizde expressed confidence that Posts could provide quicker service, build up logistics chains and make the international connections needed to satisfy customers, but not alone. The value of being part of the UPU was that it could bring operators together. Daoud echoed this, noting that integrating with UPU’s International Postal System (IPS) – an international mail management application built to provide a comprehensive view of mail movement between origin and destination – was one way to control quality of service.

Partnerships could also be an option, offered Burundi Post CEO Benjamin Nikoyindi, who said his operator was already working with banks and other financial institutions on financial services and with transport companies on logistics. Cooperation with UPU and International Organization for Migration (IOM) has even enabled the Post to develop a service that will improve living standards among the Burundian diaspora



by offering them access to affordable money transfers.

Mission vs. margins

Participants also touched upon partnerships during a panel discussion on “Redefining USO: Sharing the burden”.

Caught between a need to satisfy the demands of customers who crave innovation and an obligation enforced by governments to provide an often unprofitable array of public services, modern-day Posts are facing an identity crisis. CEOs agreed that the universal service obligation (USO) played an important role in extending social, financial and economic inclusion for citizens across the globe, on the other hand describing the struggle they face to keep afloat financially.

This is a pinch being felt even by the most advanced Posts, highlighted Başkent

University economics professor Uğur Emek. He noted that USO had created a loss in Canada, for instance, causing the Post there to shift from door-to-door service to community mailboxes. In other cases designated operators have been forced to reduce their service days, he said.

“In these circumstances there is a need to redefine the USO. There is a serious postal dilemma – on one hand you are carrying the flag of USO and on the other hand there is extreme pressure on Posts to turn around and show profits,” explained Pakistan Post Director General Rubina Tayyab.

She said that despite this pressure, many governments are very hesitant to allow Posts to increase their prices to meet those of the market and they have not put in place the financial or legal conditions necessary to innovate. According to Tayyab, one means of overcoming this dilemma is to focus on public-private partnerships.

Chief executives from the Posts of Haiti and Djibouti suggested Posts go even further by mirroring the activity of private companies. Haiti Post Director General Carel Camille Alexandre remarked on the possibility of using a franchising system to reduce operating costs.

“Birds cannot fly with one single wing, so we know that employee satisfaction is as important as customer satisfaction. If our employees are happy, so are our customers”

Djibouti Post Director General Bahnan Ali Moidal suggested Posts could see success if they focused more on collaborating with each other within the context of UPU.

Barnes lent his support in comments from the floor, adding that in their transformation, Posts had started to disrupt the comfort zones of governments and private sector players alike. He said the world’s Posts should focus on their complementarity, not see each other as yet another competitor.

He called on his peers to imagine the potential to shift the “postal technology dynamic” if operators combined resources rather than trying to tackle their issues individually.

The UPU Director General said the idea of forming a postal alliance would be possible if the political will and revolutionary thinking required to do so were shared by all 192 member countries.

Moving forward

Wrapping up the discussions, the final panellists were asked to draw together some key messages that participants could use to move forward.

“It is you, the captains of the industry, who will come up with the solutions needed to keep our industry a key player in the economy”

Metin Türkay, professor of engineering at Turkey’s Koç University, said that in the 21st century value would shift from infrastructure to information.

“You are the luckiest people on the planet,” said Türkay. “People are paying premium money to collect data, but in your system a wealth of data is available”

The wrap-up focused on the need to shift the postal culture, starting first with people.

For his part, Jordan Post’s Director General Khaled Lahham said though it would be difficult to turn around the postal sector’s traditional public service culture, it was a common struggle shared among all Posts.

“Birds cannot fly with one single wing, so we know that employee satisfaction is as important as customer satisfaction. If our employees are happy, so are our customers,” said Bozgeyik.

For his part, the UPU Director General lauded CEOs for their participation in the forum, adding, “It is you, the captains of the industry, who will come up with the solutions needed to keep our industry a key player in the economy.”

He urged CEOs to continue attending the annual event, calling on them to consider the potential of strengthening alliances between them.

“Is there a possibility that we can pool ourselves together to project a formidable force that would be impossible to beat? Is this possible and if so, how can we go about it?” he asked.

The UPU Director General assured that the forum’s outcomes would be taken note of during the Ministerial Strategy Conference being held within the Extraordinary Congress in Ethiopia this September.

“This will be an opportunity for the CEOs to directly contribute to the designing of the future strategy of the Post,” said Mr. Hussein.

The place and dates of the 2019 World CEO Forum will be released shortly. **KR**



REGIONAL OUTLOOK

For the first time during a UPU CEO Forum, a special breakout session had leaders of two of the postal sector's restricted unions give views on their regions.

POSTEUROP Secretary General Botond Szbeny provided an outlook for its 52 members in the European region. Szbeny noted a decline in letter mail volumes of about 4 to 5 percent across Europe.

He said the loss has put pressure on Posts' expansive physical infrastructure and calls into question the long-term sustainability of the universal service obligation (USO) which was designed at a time when letter post was the central business focus.

He highlighted double-digit growth in e-commerce, adding that "infrastructure that was designed to carry letter mail has to be converted to serve the digital economy". The good news, he said, was that regional figures show that the Post delivers 70 percent of e-commerce items across Europe.

Looking forward, he added that the region would have to cope with the new European regulatory agenda, including new rules on data protection, customs charges on international imports and the effects of Brexit.

Adequate infrastructure remains a significant barrier for digital services in Africa, according to Pan-African Postal Union (PAPU) Secretary General Younouss Djibrine.

While the restricted union's members serve upwards of 1.5 billion people across 30 million square kilometres of territory, they are doing so with only 40,000 postal outlets, he noted. At that, 30 percent of African post offices lack electricity altogether, he said.

On a positive note, Djibrine said the regions Posts were continuing to diversify their portfolios, with many offering educational, healthcare or agricultural services, among others. He highlighted Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tunisia, Morocco as examples where the government has pushed to make post offices hubs for delivering public services.

He said despite infrastructure challenges, African Posts would continue contributing to the socioeconomic development of their countries. **KR**

The UPU World CEO Forum has grown from a seedling idea to one of the organization's flagship events in the course of a few years. UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein shed some insights into how the event started, how it has developed and where he sees it – and the postal sector – moving in the future.



Envisioning a postal future

INTERVIEW BY: Kayla Redstone
PHOTOS: Uğur Çobanoğlu

We have now wrapped up the UPU's third World CEO Forum. How did this idea start? Organizing a CEO Forum was an idea that myself and the Deputy Director General started three years ago. We were trying to satisfy some hunger, some demands from member countries who were wondering about the role and purpose of the UPU. We were not seeing governments very much engaged in the UPU and didn't see the CEOs of the Posts.

These are busy people, they can't take three weeks away from their businesses to come to Berne and meet us. There was no forum where we could hear the views and the expectations of these great leaders who are running their industry. It was out of this desire and this gap that we decided, myself and the Deputy Director General, that we should set up a high-level forum so that the CEOs could meet once annually and be able to exchange views.

In your opening remarks, you mentioned that you have seen this event mature. How do you think the CEO Forum has grown over its three iterations?

We started with Paris, we didn't know how it was going to go the first time. We had to find a country that could take leadership because it requires resources. We wanted to have high profile countries to take leadership in organizing the first, second and the third forums. I was very happy when France came forward to take the first proposal of the UPU. We co-hosted this

together in 2016. In that meeting we had more than 55 CEOs gather and it was quite successful.

And then Russian Post's CEO expressed desire to host the 2017 edition and we were very proud when we went to Moscow. And again, we had a similar number – close to 60 CEOs – who gathered there. It was a very remarkable success in Moscow as well. It was there that Mr. Bozgeyik, the CEO of Turkish Post, expressed the desire to host the 2018 edition here in Istanbul.

So, when I say the forum has been maturing, what I mean to say is that first it started as an idea, then we saw it happen once, the second time and the third time, and it just shows you that it was something that was necessary and something that was missing. I think we gave a space and a platform for our CEOs and leaders of designated operators to have the opportunity to be able to express their views, so that we would be able to tap into their ideas and their leadership experiences, so that we would be able to enrich the general postal community.

“We were trying to satisfy some hunger, some demands from member countries who were wondering about role and purpose of the UPU”

During the forum, you spoke about the UPU's 192 networks coordinating to act as one single network. What is the UPU's role in achieving this?

What do we, UPU, do to support these 192 countries? We understand that these are different countries, with different rules and regulations, different networks, different capacities, different resources, different challenges. It's in our treaty, it is the vision of our founding fathers, that the UPU was meant to become a single postal territory. What does that mean? It means much more than what it says.

It means that the mail, the parcel, or the postal item, whatever it is, should be able to go across borders without any limitations, in the cheapest possible manner, without any bias and, of course, as fast as possible with the necessary security features. That is what has built up the trust for the UPU's brand during its 143 years of existence. This is a strength we are incredibly proud of.

There is also an opportunity that is created by having this global brand – which is a trusted brand. There are opportunities that it can bring to governments and the citizens of these countries for the financial inclusion, social inclusion and digital inclusion of those millions and millions of people who do not have access to other services. This is the treasure of what UPU is all about.

I can say with confidence that UPU is like no other organization that touches the lives of the citizens of this globe. To that extent I think that we want only to strengthen the interconnectivity of the postal network globally. And UPU is the forum for that. It is the intergovernmental body that has the capacity and the legal framework and international treaties behind it to be able to deliver critical connectivity for those member countries. We have a very important role to play in helping member countries with advice, with technical services, with capacity building, exchange of information and the repository of data and other intellectual resources that they need to help them develop their services.

“It's in our treaty, it is the vision of our founding fathers, that the UPU was meant to become a single postal territory”

What is your vision of the postal future and how do we get there as a sector?

The future of the Post is a topic upon which we always reflect very deeply at the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union. We look at the whole postal industry. We look at the trends. We look at the business itself. We look at competition. We look at the economic environment. And then we form what you call a SWOT-analysis: we look at our strengths, our weaknesses, and we look at the opportunities and the threats that we have to face. We also listen to our key stakeholders.

“By the time we head to the Extraordinary Congress in Addis Ababa, the International Bureau secretariat will be able to unveil what we consider Agenda 2030 for the UPU”

In Istanbul we had an excellent forum of the CEOs of the world's Posts. What we were talking about over the course of these two days allowed them to express the challenges they're facing in the field, the opportunities that are abound, and how we can harness all this energy and these thoughts and ideas to concretize them into a future strategy and a roadmap for the Union.

What does the future of the UPU look like to you?

If you ask me what the future of the UPU looks like, it's quite clear in my mind: we must have a mega transformation of our business processes. The supply chain has to be improved, we have to digitalize our systems, we have to listen to our customers and we have to be able to deliver their expectations. If we don't do that, then we shall not be fit for purpose and then the competition will take advantage. That is what we're trying to put in place.

I am very optimistic that we can build upon the successes we have achieved with the reform process started at the Istanbul Congress two years ago. By the time we head to the Extraordinary Congress in Addis Ababa, the International Bureau secretariat will be able to unveil what we consider Agenda 2030 for the UPU, which is a strategic roadmap for the Union going forward. **KR**



Thoughts from the host



Just two years after hosting the 26th Universal Postal Congress, Turkish Post stepped up to the plate to host yet another major UPU event: the third UPU World CEO Forum. **UNION POSTALE** caught up with the company's CEO and Chairman of UPU's Council of Administration, Kenan Bozgeyik, to gain his perspective on the event.

INTERVIEW BY: Fella Rabbahi
PHOTOS: Uğur Çobanoğlu

Turkish Post has just hosted the third edition of UPU World CEO Forum. What motivated you to take on this responsibility?

We are deeply pleased to have hosted the UPU team and World CEO Forum participants in Turkey. We, as Turkey, have taken a very crucial responsibility in organizing this Forum. The 26th World Postal Congress was held in Turkey in 2016 and the resulting strategy for the next four years was named the "Istanbul World Postal Strategy". This laid a certain responsibility on our shoulders.

Being aware of these responsibilities and believing that the third UPU World CEO Forum should be perfectly organized, we have accomplished a very good result. Thanks to the meticulous work carried out both by our managers and colleagues who were responsible for the organization in Turkey, as well our colleagues from the UPU's International Bureau, I believe that we have carried out a very productive cooperation and forum here.

As a CEO, what opportunity do you hope you and your peers can seize from this forum?

This question is of utmost importance. The importance of the UPU CEO Forum in the workings of postal sector lies in the fact that all CEOs function as the sectoral captains in their own countries. As a result of their function, they are the top-level decision makers. It will be an important factor in future UPU decisions if top-level decision makers effectively participate in these types of meetings to exchange their opinions and ideas.



This event will be a pathfinder for us, not only in the meetings of the UPU's Council of Administration and Postal Operations Council, but in all work performed by our Directorate General at Turkish Post. In this respect, we attach great importance to the opinions and ideas shared by our CEOs in the annual forum. I believe that these outcomes will guide our sector in the future.

There are times and platforms when and where the leaders of our sector come together and they not only exchange their ideas and opinions about future business opportunities, but also form good relations. At the CEO Forum, our CEOs seize the opportunity to create cross-border friendships and establish new cooperation.

During these two days, we discussed very important topics and also negotiated future opportunities for cooperation at bilateral meetings, whenever possible. We, as Turkish Post, achieved highly significant outcomes from these discussions and negotiations. Most importantly, we formed new cooperation. We signed memorandums of understanding with a series of countries that we deem as important to us. I hope and pray that we will cooperate on many points, especially e-commerce.

What message would you like to share with UPU member countries following the forum?

This is really something that needs to be underlined. Change and reform has been discussed in UPU for many years, especially in the last 40-50 years. Now it is time to realize these discussion points. Therefore, the decisions taken in Istanbul play a very crucial and historical role and the Istanbul World Postal Strategy is the most important key for change and transformation.

It would be a proper injustice if I do not underline this fact: all the managers in UPU, especially our Director General and Deputy Director General, as well as all the heads of the units in the International Bureau, provided invaluable contributions and efforts to realize this reform. We also extend our support and interest not only during the meetings of the Council of Administration but also at every meeting, at any level. I believe that this change will be marked down in the UPU's history. **FR**

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Postal operators can reduce cost of sending money

Money received from loved ones working abroad can transform a family's living standards. From Albania to Australia and from Bahrain to Bangladesh, the essential bridges built between countries due to remittances support migrant families and keep children in desperately-needed education.

TEXT BY: Bishar A. Hussein

Money received from loved ones working abroad can transform a family's living standards. From Albania to Australia and from Bahrain to Bangladesh, the essential bridges built between countries due to remittances support migrant families and keep children in desperately-needed education.

For parts of Africa, however, life-enhancing remittances come at a high price. Sub-Saharan Africa is the world's most expensive region to send money home. Africans last year paid, as a fee, an average of almost 10 cents from every dollar sent back, and these excessive costs strike hardest at the poorest, especially in rural areas.

Delivering services

More than 200 million people in Africa rely on payments from abroad and some 80 million live in rural areas. The lack of roads and bridges, and other essential infrastructure, can make badly needed access to financial services challenging. There are also significant hidden costs, including transport fees, potential dangers along the route and monopolies on the services provided.

All of these problems drive up costs, and make the receipt of remittances prohibitive in the region. The question for governments, international organisations and consumer groups has been how to reduce these costs by finding alternative providers capable of delivering services that are cost-effective and reliable.

An efficient solution may come in the form of something that has been a staple of African community life for over a hundred years; the humble, but resilient local post office. The historic footprint of the post office, and the inherent trust placed in these community services, serve to reinforce their suitability.

Rapid changes

In some Sub-Saharan countries, post offices are less than 10 minutes' walk away for 42 per cent of their customers; their proximity shows that postal operators are well-placed to deliver financial services to their customers. The facts speak for themselves: In Benin and Madagascar, for instance, 67 per cent of remittance recipients walk to the Post Office for their money, and in Senegal and Ghana it is 62 per cent and 57 per cent respectively.

Digitalisation is also sweeping relentlessly across Africa, perhaps at a greater speed than many other parts of the world. These trends are forcing rapid changes in the remittance market and revolutionising payment systems. The opportunities for postal operators to develop sustainable finance networks that support migrant families and further financial services are immense.

Poorest sections

The findings in the African Postal Financial Services Initiative, a success story on remittances at the post in Africa, support these findings and highlight the urgency of the situation. The report was authored by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and its partners, including the Universal Postal Union. It makes the point that we cannot afford to ignore the impact of high costs on the poorest sections of society.

Reductions in remittance costs are on everyone's list of global priorities. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under Goal 10, on reducing inequality, calls for steep reductions to less than three per cent of the transaction costs of migrant remittances and the elimination of remittance corridors with costs higher than five per cent.

Farsighted strategy

Posts are well-positioned to help achieve this goal: They have the networks, the logistics, and the strong ties to government. If these connections are bound to a farsighted strategy and a commitment to offering inclusive financial services, they can succeed in this challenge. The time for action, however, is now. Posts need to reach out and seize this generational opportunity.

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www.nation.co.ke.*

Australia

AUSTRALIA POST is shifting to innovative three-wheeled electric delivery vehicles (EDVs) across the country as part of its efforts to cut transport emissions. New Swiss-made scooters can carry a total of 195 kg, i.e. three times more mail than regular postal motorbikes. Unlike bicycles, EDVs can be left unattended as their storage compartments lock automatically when the vehicle is switched off.

Estonia

OMNIVA and the telecommunications company Levira installed three smart mailboxes in Harju county. The letterboxes are installed with Internet of Things (IoT) technology, which gives real-time information on the post boxes' use, reporting when they should be emptied. The technology helps reduce costs and save time. The Post is planning to expand the IoT usage throughout its logistics operations to manage its processes better.

France

LA POSTE is testing a robot cart called "Assistant Livraison Facteur" (ALF) that will help mail carriers deliver letters and packages in Nantes. This smart assistant follows a postal worker at a 50 cm distance using technology that detects their legs. Compared to a classic trolley that contains up to 45 kg of mail, ALF can carry maximum 150 kg, improving the working conditions of postal workers.

India

DEUTSCHE POST DHL Group launched DHL SmarTrucking, an innovative road transportation solution for India. The company aims to create an Internet of Things (IoT)- fleet of 10,000 enabled vehicles in India by 2028, including hiring more than 20,000 drivers. The new solution will help reduce transit times by up to 50 percent compared to average vehicles and ensures over 95 percent reliability due to its end-to-end real-time visibility and temperature-controlled capabilities. It can also help Indian companies reach customers and markets in a faster and more securely.

Ireland

AN POST has delivered one million parcels through its AddressPal service, which enables Irish shoppers to buy online from American and British companies that do not deliver to Ireland. Approximately 200,000 Irish customers signed up on AddressPal.ie. Over 70 per cent of such parcels originate in the UK but volumes from the USA have continued to grow. In June, AddressPal received the Retail Customer Access Award at the World Post & Parcel Awards ceremony in London.

Kazakhstan

KAZPOST JSC is training citizens in digital literacy as part of implementing the national "Digital Kazakhstan" Program. The training courses will be held in all regions of Kazakhstan from June to August 2018. They are free of charge and cover four main areas: basic digital skills, e-government and public e-services, open government and e-commerce.

Korea

KOREA POST opened a big data center designed to manage a database of 3.8 billion mail deliveries per year. The postal operator is also in the process of adopting artificial intelligence and drones to develop a new delivery system that would help reach the remotest areas in the country. The Post stated that such efforts were necessary to "proactively address shifts with the arrival of the fourth industrial revolution."

Malaysia

POS MALAYSIA has introduced its latest digital project, the 3D Hologram Raya Greeting Card. The postal operator wanted to create an innovation that would combine digital media with traditional postcards. The card comes in two designs and includes videos. Customers can watch the 3D hologram videos using a relevant mobile application with a hologram plastic projector attached to their smartphones.

New Zealand

NEW ZEALAND POST is training its staff to use new Paxster delivery vehicles. The bright red and yellow vehicles will replace mopeds and bicycles and can contain up to 200 kg of mail, while their batteries last for distances of up to 90 km. Paxsters are an investment in the postal operator's future as it strives to adapt to growing volumes of parcels.

Pakistan

PAKISTAN POST has launched a number of online services to meet modern customers' needs in line with its current digitization initiative. Customers will now have online access to all financial services that the postal operator is providing with the help of its new Centralized Software Solution (CSS), e.g. pension payments and postal account savings.

Singapore

SINGAPORE POST will run 39 innovative locker sites in Punggol located within 250 m from apartment blocks and at Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) stations. Residents will be able to pick up their packages from the new lockers day and night by entering the required information on their digital screens. The postal operator will promote this innovation and provide customers with instructions to teach them how to use the lockers.

Sweden

POSTNORD STRÅLFORS has launched a portal for modern 3D printing solutions. The company entered into a cooperation with 3YOURMIND, a German 3D printing software company, at the beginning of this year. According to PostNord, the company strives to be a digitization partner for its customers and to benefit from the opportunities created by digital development.

Switzerland

SWISS POST has extended deliveries of urgent medical samples by drones from Lugano to Berne and is aiming to implement this project in Zurich shortly. The postal operator and the drone manufacturer, Matternet, strive to assess the link between University Hospital Insel and the Tiefenau hospital. There have been more than 1,000 successful flights with the programme so far. The drones ship lab samples efficiently and quickly and saving crucial time for doctors and patients compared to courier deliveries.

Thailand

THAILAND POST launched a new service enabling local online retailers to deliver their products abroad with 20 percent lower rates compared to its global competitors. The postal operator connected its portal to eBay for more than 10,000 Thai merchants. According to the Post, connecting its service with eBay "will help Thai retailers profit from cross-border e-commerce at lower costs".

The postal operator also launched the ePacket service to enhance competitiveness for Thai online merchants. EPacket targets companies sending parcels up to 2 kg to 16 countries, including Japan, China, Singapore, South Korea and the US.

Ukraine

JSC UKRPOSHTA opened a unique express delivery channel with JD.com, one of the world's largest retailers. The channel will allow the delivery of goods from China within 14 days, while average deliveries with JD can take up to 45 days. Ukrposhta also extended its free educational project "E-Export School", which helps hundreds of Ukrainian entrepreneurs learn about e-commerce and enter foreign online markets.

United Arab Emirates

EMIRATES POST GROUP (EPG) received the Best Performance Project Award from Saba Software Talent Management Solutions. In line with the United Arab Emirates' e-government strategy, the Post replaced their paper-based performance system with the appraisal software "Talent Platform" that allows them to manage and evaluate their employees' performance more effectively. The platform, available in Arabic and English, improves communication between managers and staff and links individual performance indicators with the designated operator's strategic goals, making personal objectives clear.

United States

AMAZON has developed a new delivery solution called "Hub by Amazon", which will see parcel lockers built in apartment buildings. More than 500,000 residents across the country are already using this innovation to receive deliveries from anywhere, not just Amazon. The Hub makes deliveries simpler, providing residents with secure access to packages, day and night. For couriers, it offers a single, convenient place to deliver packages.

Zimbabwe

ZIMPOST launched two new digital services to bring convenience to its customers. The Virtual Post Office is an interactive web-portal where customers can take an online tour of a post office, ask any questions and use all services that physical post offices provide. A second service, known as the Zimpost Mall, is an online shopping platform where customers can purchase goods and compare prices from different local and international retailers.

All items by Olena Muravyova.

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