Chapter X

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

In 2003, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) continued to promote and develop a fast and reliable universal postal service through international collaboration among its member countries.

UPU’s 190 members remained the largest physical distribution network in the world, with more than 5 million postal employees in some 650,000 post offices.

Activities of the UPU organs

Universal Postal Congress

The Universal Postal Congress, UPU’s supreme legislative authority, met every five years. It last met in 1999 [YUN 1999, p. 1408] and was scheduled to meet in 2004, in Bucharest, Romania.

Council of Administration

The Council of Administration, which ensured the continuity of the Union’s work between Congresses and studied regulatory, administrative, legislative and legal issues, held its annual session in Berne, Switzerland (9-27 October). It adopted a resolution on extraterritorial offices of exchange and approved the objectives of the future World Postal Strategy that would be adopted at the 2004 Bucharest Congress.

Postal Operations Council

During 2003, the Postal Operations Council (POC) dealt with the operational, economic, and commercial aspects of international postal services. At its annual session (Berne, 31 March–11 April), POC endorsed the principles of the future terminal dues system and finalized the quality link for industrialized countries, which would be presented to the 2004 Bucharest Congress for final approval.

Actions to combat money-laundering and terrorist-financing activities topped the agenda of the Postal Security Action Group in April. Conferences were also held on postal financial services and international parcels development.

International Bureau

In 2003, UPU continued to provide support, liaison, information and consultation to postal administrations of member countries. It studied developments in the postal environment, monitored the quality of postal service on a global scale, and published information and statistics on international postal services.

UPU’s Postal Technology Centre, which was responsible for managing the postal application of electronic data interchange, introduced new technology applications and information solutions to improve the quality, reliability and speed of national and international postal services through, among other methods, tracking-and-tracing of mail items.

As at 31 December 2003, the Bureau’s permanent staff numbered 151, of whom 58 were in the Professional or higher categories and 93 were in the General Service category.

Budget

Under UPU’s self-financing system, contributions were payable in advance by member States based on the following year’s budget. The Council of Administration approved a budget of 71.4 million Swiss francs for the 2003-2004 budget.

NOTE: For further details on UPU’s activities in 2003, see Universal Postal Union Biennial Report 2003-2004, published by UPU.