

Universal Postal Convention

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¹ In accordance with article 24.2 of the Rules of Procedure of Congresses, the International Bureau renumbers the provisions contained in the consolidated versions of the Acts of the Union referred to in this document, with a view to correctly reflecting the order of these provisions in the aforementioned Acts.

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Universal Postal Convention

The undersigned, plenipotentiaries of the governments of the member countries of the Universal Postal Union (hereinafter the "Union"), having regard to article 22.3 of the Constitution of the Universal Postal Union concluded at Vienna on 10 July 1964, have by common consent and subject to article 25.4 of the Constitution drawn up in this Universal Postal Convention (hereinafter the "Convention") the rules applicable throughout the international postal service.

Section I

Rules applicable in common throughout the international postal service

Article 1

Definitions

- 1 For the purposes of the Convention, the following terms shall have the meanings defined below:
 - 1.1 letter-post item: item described in and conveyed under the conditions of the Convention and Regulations;
 - 1.2 parcel-post item: item described in and conveyed under the conditions of the Convention and Regulations;
 - 1.3 EMS item: item described in and conveyed under the conditions of the Convention, Regulations and associated EMS instruments;
 - 1.4 documents: a letter-post, parcel-post or EMS item consisting of any piece of written, drawn, printed or digital information, excluding objects of merchandise, whose physical specifications lie within the limits specified in the Regulations;
 - 1.5 goods: a letter-post, parcel-post or EMS item consisting of any tangible and movable object other than money, including objects of merchandise, which does not fall under the definition of "documents" as provided in paragraph 1.4 above and whose physical specifications lie within the limits specified in the Regulations;
 - 1.6 closed mail: labelled receptacle(s) sealed with or without lead, containing postal items;
 - 1.7 misrouted mails: receptacles received at an office of exchange other than the one mentioned on the (receptacle) label;
 - 1.8 personal data: information needed to identify a postal service user;
 - 1.9 missent items: items received at an office of exchange meant for an office of exchange in another member country;
 - 1.10 transit charges: remuneration for services rendered by a carrier in the country crossed (designated operator, other service or combination of the two) in respect of the land, sea and/or air transit of letter-post items;
 - 1.11 terminal dues: remuneration owed to the designated operator of the country of destination by the designated operator of the dispatching country in compensation for the costs incurred in the country of destination for letter-post items received;
 - 1.12 designated operator: any governmental or non-governmental entity officially designated by the member country to operate postal services and to fulfil the related obligations arising out of the Acts of the Union on its territory;
 - 1.13 small packet: item conveyed under the conditions of the Convention and the Regulations;

- 1.14 inward land rate: remuneration owed to the designated operator of the country of destination by the designated operator of the dispatching country in compensation for the costs incurred in the country of destination for parcels received;
- 1.15 transit land rate: remuneration owed for services rendered by a carrier in the country crossed (designated operator, other service or combination of the two) in respect of the land and/or air transit of parcels through its territory;
- 1.16 sea rate: remuneration owed for services rendered by a carrier (designated operator, other service or a combination of the two) participating in the sea conveyance of parcels;
- 1.17 inquiry: a complaint or query relating to the use of a postal service submitted in accordance with the conditions of the Convention and its Regulations;
- 1.18 universal postal service: the permanent provision of quality basic postal services at all points in a member country's territory, for all customers, at affordable prices;
- 1.19 transit à découvert: open transit through an intermediate country, of items whose number or weight does not justify the make-up of closed mails for the destination country.

Article 2

Designation of the entity or entities responsible for fulfilling the obligations arising from adherence to the Convention

1 Member countries shall notify the International Bureau, within six months of the end of Congress, of the name and address of the governmental body responsible for overseeing postal affairs. Within six months of the end of Congress, member countries shall also provide the International Bureau with the name and address of the operator or operators officially designated to operate postal services and to fulfil the obligations arising from the Acts of the Union on their territory. Between Congresses, member countries shall notify the International Bureau of any changes in the governmental bodies as soon as possible. Any changes with regard to the officially designated operators shall also be notified to the International Bureau as soon as possible, and preferably at least three months prior to the entry into force of the change.

2 When a member country officially designates a new operator, it shall indicate the scope of the postal services that the latter will provide under the Acts of the Union, as well as the operator's geographical coverage on its territory.

Article 3

Universal postal service

1 In order to support the concept of the single postal territory of the Union, member countries shall ensure that all users/customers enjoy the right to a universal postal service involving the permanent provision of quality basic postal services at all points in their territory, at affordable prices.

2 With this aim in view, member countries shall set forth, within the framework of their national postal legislation or by other customary means, the scope of the postal services offered and the requirement for quality and affordable prices, taking into account both the needs of the population and their national conditions.

3 Member countries shall ensure that the offers of postal services and quality standards will be achieved by the operators responsible for providing the universal postal service.

4 Member countries shall ensure that the universal postal service is provided on a viable basis, thus guaranteeing its sustainability.

Article 4 Freedom of transit

1 The principle of the freedom of transit is set forth in article 1 of the Constitution. It shall carry with it the obligation for each member country to ensure that its designated operators forward, always by the quickest routes and the most secure means which they use for their own items, closed mails and à découvert letter-post items which are passed to them by another designated operator. This principle shall also apply to missent items and misrouted mails.

2 Member countries which do not participate in the exchange of postal items containing infectious substances or radioactive substances shall have the option of not admitting these items in transit à découvert through their territory. The same shall also apply to printed papers, periodicals, magazines, small packets and M bags the content of which does not satisfy the legal requirements governing the conditions of their publication or circulation in the country crossed.

3 Freedom of transit for parcels shall be guaranteed throughout the territory of the Union.

4 If a member country fails to observe the provisions regarding freedom of transit, other member countries may discontinue their provision of postal services with that member country.

Article 5

Ownership of postal items. Withdrawal from the post. Alteration or correction of address and/or name of the addressee (name of the legal person, or family name, given name or patronymic (if any)). Redirection. Return to sender of undeliverable items

1 A postal item shall remain the property of the sender until it is delivered to the rightful owner, except when the item has been seized in pursuance of the national legislation of the country of origin or destination and, in case of application of article 19.2.1.1 or 19.3, in accordance with the national legislation of the country of transit.

2 The sender of a postal item may have it withdrawn from the post or have its address and/or the name of the addressee (name of the legal person, or family name, given name or patronymic (if any)) altered or corrected. The charges and other conditions are laid down in the Regulations.

3 Member countries shall ensure that their designated operators redirect postal items if an addressee has changed his address, and return undeliverable items to the sender. The charges and other conditions are laid down in the Regulations.

Article 6

Postage stamps

1 The term "postage stamp" shall be protected under the present Convention and shall be reserved exclusively for stamps which comply with the conditions of this article and of the Regulations.

2 Postage stamps:

2.1 shall be issued and put into circulation solely under the authority of the member country or territory, in conformity with the Acts of the Union;

2.2 are a manifestation of sovereignty and constitute proof of prepayment of the postage corresponding to their intrinsic value when affixed to postal items, in conformity with the Acts of the Union;

2.3 must be in circulation, for postal prepayment or for philatelic purposes, in the member country or territory of issue, according to its national legislation;

2.4 must be accessible to all citizens within the member country or territory of issue.

3 Postage stamps comprise:

3.1 the name of the member country or territory of issue, in roman letters, or, if the International Bureau of the Union is so requested by the member country or territory of issue, the abbreviation or initials officially representing the member country or territory of issue, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Regulations;²

3.2 the face value, expressed:

3.2.1 in principle, in the official currency of the country or territory of issue, or as a letter or symbol;

3.2.2 through other identifying characteristics.

4 Emblems of state, official control marks and logos of intergovernmental organizations featuring on postage stamps shall be protected within the meaning of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

5 The subjects and designs of postage stamps shall:

5.1 be in keeping with the spirit of the Preamble to the Constitution and with decisions taken by the Union's bodies;

5.2 be closely linked to the cultural identity of the member country or territory, or contribute to the dissemination of culture or to maintaining peace;

5.3 have, when commemorating leading figures or events not native to the member country or territory, a close bearing on the country or territory in question;

5.4 be devoid of political character or of any topic of an offensive nature in respect of a person or a country;

5.5 be of major significance to the member country or territory.

6 Postal prepayment impressions, franking machine impressions and impressions made by a printing press or another printing or stamping process in accordance with the Acts of the Union may be used only with the authorization of the member country or territory.

7 Prior to issuing postage stamps using new materials or technologies, member countries shall provide the International Bureau with the necessary information concerning their compatibility with mail processing machines. The International Bureau shall inform the other member countries and their designated operators accordingly.

Article 7

Sustainable development

Member countries and/or their designated operators shall adopt and implement a proactive sustainable development strategy focusing on environmental, social and economic action at all levels of postal operations and promote sustainable development awareness.

Article 8

Postal security

1 Member countries and their designated operators shall observe the security requirements defined in the Universal Postal Union's security standards and shall adopt and implement a proactive security strategy at all levels of postal operations to maintain and enhance the confidence of the general public in the postal services provided by designated operators, in the interests of all officials involved. This strategy shall include the objectives defined in the Regulations, as well as the principle of complying with requirements for providing electronic advance data on postal items identified in implementing provisions (including the type of, and criteria for, postal items) adopted by the Council of Administration and Postal Operations Council, in accordance with the Union's technical messaging standards. The strategy shall also include the exchange of information on

² An exception shall be granted to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the country which invented the postage stamp.

maintaining the safe and secure transport and transit of mails between member countries and their designated operators.

2 Any security measures applied in the international postal transport chain must be commensurate with the risks or threats that they seek to address, and must be implemented without hampering worldwide mail flows or trade by taking into consideration the specificities of the mail network. Security measures that have a potential global impact on postal operations must be implemented in an internationally coordinated and balanced manner, with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders.

Article 9

Violations

1 Postal items

1.1 Member countries shall undertake to adopt the necessary measures to prevent, prosecute and punish any person found guilty of the following:

1.1.1 the insertion in postal items of narcotics and psychotropic substances, as well as dangerous goods, where their insertion has not been expressly authorized by the Convention and Regulations;

1.1.2 the insertion in postal items of objects of a paedophilic nature or of a pornographic nature using children.

2 Means of postal prepayment and postal payment itself

2.1 Member countries shall undertake to adopt the necessary measures to prevent, prosecute and punish any violations concerning the means of postal prepayment set out in this Convention, such as:

2.1.1 postage stamps, in circulation or withdrawn from circulation;

2.1.2 prepayment impressions;

2.1.3 impressions of franking machines or printing presses;

2.1.4 international reply coupons.

2.2 In this Convention, violations concerning means of postal prepayment refer to any of the acts outlined below committed by any persons with the intention of obtaining illegitimate gain for oneself or for a third party. The following acts shall be punished:

2.2.1 any act of falsifying, imitating or counterfeiting any means of postal prepayment, or any illegal or unlawful act linked to the unauthorized manufacturing of such items;

2.2.2 manufacture, use, release for circulation, commercialization, distribution, dissemination, transportation, exhibition or display (also in the form of catalogues and for advertising purposes) of any means of postal prepayment which has been falsified, imitated or counterfeited;

2.2.3 any act of using or circulating, for postal purposes, any means of postal prepayment which has already been used;

2.2.4 any attempt to commit any of these violations.

3 Reciprocity

3.1 As regards sanctions, no distinction shall be made between the acts outlined in 2, irrespective of whether national or foreign means of postal prepayment are involved; this provision shall not be subject to any legal or conventional condition of reciprocity.

Article 10

Processing of personal data

1 Personal data on users may be employed only for the purposes for which they were gathered in accordance with applicable national legislation.

2 Personal data on users shall be disclosed only to third parties authorized by applicable national legislation to access them.

3 Member countries and their designated operators shall ensure the confidentiality and security of personal data on users, in accordance with their national legislation.

4 Designated operators shall inform their customers of the use that is made of their personal data, and of the purpose for which they have been gathered.

5 Without prejudice to the foregoing, designated operators may transfer electronically personal data to the designated operators of destination or transit countries that need these data in order to fulfil the service.

Article 11

Exchange of closed mails with military units

1 Closed letter-post mails may be exchanged through the intermediary of the land, sea or air services of other countries:

- 1.1 between the post offices of any member country and the commanding officers of military units placed at the disposal of the United Nations;
- 1.2 between the commanding officers of such military units;
- 1.3 between the post offices of any member country and the commanding officers of naval, air or army units, warships or military aircraft of the same country stationed abroad;
- 1.4 between the commanding officers of naval, air or army units, warships or military aircraft of the same country.

2 Letter-post items enclosed in the mails referred to under 1 shall be confined to items addressed to or sent by members of military units or the officers and crews of the ships or aircraft to or from which the mails are forwarded. The rates and conditions of dispatch applicable to them shall be fixed, according to its regulations, by the designated operator of the member country which has made the military unit available or to which the ships or aircraft belong.

3 In the absence of special agreement, the designated operator of the member country which has made the military unit available or to which the warships or military aircraft belong shall be liable to the designated operators concerned for the transit charges for the mails, the terminal dues and the air conveyance dues.

Article 12

Posting abroad of letter-post items

1 A designated operator shall not be bound to forward or deliver to the addressee letter-post items which senders residing in the territory of its member country post or cause to be posted in a foreign country with the object of profiting by the more favourable rate conditions there.

2 The provisions set out under 1 shall be applied without distinction both to letter-post items made up in the sender's country of residence and then carried across the frontier and to letter-post items made up in a foreign country.

3 The designated operator of destination may claim from the designated operator of posting, payment of the internal rates. If the designated operator of posting does not agree to pay these rates within a time limit set by the designated operator of destination, the latter may either return the items to the designated operator of posting and shall be entitled to claim reimbursement of the redirection costs, or handle them in accordance with its national legislation.

4 A designated operator shall not be bound to forward or deliver to the addressees letter-post items which senders post or cause to be posted in large quantities in a country other than the country where they reside if the amount of terminal dues to be received is lower than the sum that would have been received if the mail had been posted in the country where the senders reside. The designated operator of destination may claim from the designated operator of posting payment commensurate with the costs incurred and which may not exceed the higher of the following two amounts: either 80% of the domestic tariff for equivalent items, or the

rates applicable pursuant to articles 29, 30.5 to 30.11, 30.12 and 30.13, or 31.17, as appropriate. If the designated operator of posting does not agree to pay the amount claimed within a time limit set by the designated operator of destination, the designated operator of destination may either return the items to the designated operator of posting and shall be entitled to claim reimbursement of the redirection costs, or handle them in accordance with its national legislation.

Article 13

Use of the Union's forms

1 Unless otherwise provided by the Acts of the Union, only designated operators shall use the Union's forms and documentation for the operation of postal services and exchange of postal items in accordance with the Acts of the Union.

2 Designated operators may use the Union's forms and documentation for the operation of extraterritorial offices of exchange (ETOE), as well as international mail processing centres (IMPCs) established by designated operators outside their respective national territory, as further defined in paragraph 6, in order to facilitate the operation of the aforementioned postal services and exchange of postal items.

3 The exercise of the possibility outlined in paragraph 2 shall be subject to the national legislation or policy of the member country or territory in which the ETOE or IMPC is established. In this regard, and without prejudice to the designation obligations contained in article 2, designated operators shall guarantee the continued fulfilment of their obligations under the Convention and be fully responsible for all their relations with other designated operators and with the International Bureau.

4 The requirement set forth in paragraph 3 shall equally apply to the destination member country for the acceptance of postal items from such ETOEs and IMPCs.

5 Member countries shall inform the International Bureau on their policies with regard to postal items transmitted and/or received from ETOEs or IMPCs. Such information shall be made available on the Union's website.

6 Strictly for the purposes of this article, ETOEs shall be defined as offices or facilities established for commercial purposes and operated by designated operators or under the responsibility of designated operators on the territory of a member country or territory other than their own, with the objective of drawing business in markets outside their respective national territory. IMPCs shall be defined as international mail processing facilities for the processing of international mail exchanged either in order to generate or receive mail dispatches, or to act as transit centres for international mail exchanged between other designated operators.

7 Nothing in this article shall be construed to imply that ETOEs or IMPCs (including the designated operators responsible for their establishment and operation outside their respective national territory) are in the same situation under the Acts of the Union as designated operators of the host country, nor impose a legal obligation on other member countries to recognize such ETOEs or IMPCs as designated operators on the territory where they are established and operated.

Section II

Quality of service standards and targets

Article 14

Quality of service standards and targets

1 Member countries or their designated operators shall establish, publish and update delivery standards and targets for their inward letter-post items and parcel-post items in the relevant compendia as specified in the Regulations.

2 These standards and targets, increased by the time normally required for customs clearance, shall be no less favourable than those applied to comparable items in their domestic service.

3 Member countries or their designated operators of origin shall also establish and publish end-to-end standards for priority and airmail letter-post items as well as for parcels and economy/surface parcels.

4 Member countries or their designated operators shall measure the application of quality of service standards.

Section III

Charges, surcharges and exemption from postal charges

Article 15

Charges

1 The charges for the various postal services defined in the Convention shall be set by the member countries or their designated operators, depending on national legislation, in accordance with the principles set out in the Convention and its Regulations. They shall in principle be related to the costs of providing these services.

2 The member country of origin or its designated operator, depending on national legislation, shall fix the postage charges for the conveyance of letter- and parcel-post items. The postage charges shall cover delivery of the items to the place of address provided that this delivery service is operated in the country of destination for the items in question.

3 The charges collected, including those laid down for guideline purposes in the Acts, shall be at least equal to those collected on internal service items presenting the same characteristics (category, quantity, handling time, etc.).

4 Member countries or their designated operators, depending on national legislation, shall be authorized to exceed any guideline charges appearing in the Acts.

5 Above the minimum level of charges laid down in 3, member countries or their designated operators may allow reduced charges based on their national legislation for letter-post items and parcels posted in the territory of the member country. They may, for instance, give preferential rates to major users of the Post.

6 No postal charge of any kind may be collected from customers other than those provided for in the Acts.

7 Except where otherwise provided in the Acts, each designated operator shall retain the charges which it has collected.

Article 16

Exemption from postal charges

1 Principle

1.1 Cases of exemption from postal charges, as meaning exemption from postal prepayment, shall be expressly laid down by the Convention. Nonetheless, the Regulations may provide for exemption from postal prepayment, transit charges, terminal dues and inward rates for letter-post items and postal parcels sent by member countries, designated operators and Restricted Unions and relating to the postal services. Furthermore, letter-post items and postal parcels sent by the International Bureau of the Union to Restricted Unions, member countries and designated operators shall be exempted from all postal charges. However, the member country of origin or its designated operator shall have the option of collecting air surcharges on the latter items.

2 Prisoners of war and civilian internees

2.1 Letter-post items, postal parcels and postal payment services items addressed to or sent by prisoners of war, either direct or through the offices mentioned in the Regulations of the Convention and of the Postal Payment Services Agreement, shall be exempt from all postal charges, with the exception of air surcharges. Belligerents apprehended and interned in a neutral country shall be classed with prisoners of war proper so far as the application of the foregoing provisions is concerned.

- 2.2 The provisions set out under 2.1 shall also apply to letter-post items, postal parcels and postal payment services items originating in other countries and addressed to or sent by civilian internees as defined by the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war, either direct or through the offices mentioned in the Regulations of the Convention and of the Postal Payment Services Agreement.
- 2.3 The offices mentioned in the Regulations of the Convention and of the Postal Payment Services Agreement shall also enjoy exemption from postal charges in respect of letter-post items, postal parcels and postal payment services items which concern the persons referred to under 2.1 and 2.2, which they send or receive, either direct or as intermediaries.
- 2.4 Parcels shall be admitted free of postage up to a weight of 5 kilogrammes. The weight limit shall be increased to 10 kilogrammes in the case of parcels the contents of which cannot be split up and of parcels addressed to a camp or the prisoners' representatives there ("hommes de confiance") for distribution to the prisoners.
- 2.5 In the accounting between designated operators, rates shall not be allocated for service parcels and for prisoner-of-war and civilian internee parcels, apart from the air conveyance dues applicable to air parcels.
- 3 Items for the blind
- 3.1 Any item for the blind sent to or by an organization for the blind or sent to or by a blind person shall be exempt from all postal charges, with the exception of air surcharges, to the extent that these items are admissible as such in the internal service of the sending designated operator.
- 3.2 In this article:
- 3.2.1 a blind person means a person who is registered as blind or partially sighted in his or her country or who meets the World Health Organization's definition of a blind person or a person with low vision;
- 3.2.2 an organization for the blind means an institution or association serving or officially representing blind persons;
- 3.2.3 items for the blind shall include correspondence, literature in whatever format including sound recordings, and equipment or materials of any kind made or adapted to assist blind persons in overcoming the problems of blindness, as specified in the Regulations.

Section IV

Basic and supplementary services

Article 17

Basic services

- 1 Member countries shall ensure that their designated operators accept, handle, convey and deliver letter-post items.
- 2 Letter-post items containing only documents are:
- 2.1 priority items and non-priority items, up to 2 kilogrammes;
- 2.2 letters, postcards and printed papers, up to 2 kilogrammes;
- 2.3 items for the blind, up to 7 kilogrammes;
- 2.4 special bags containing newspapers, periodicals, books and similar printed documentation for the same addressee at the same address called "M bags", up to 30 kilogrammes.
- 3 Letter-post items containing goods are:
- 3.1 priority and non-priority small packets, up to 2 kilogrammes;
- 3.2 items for the blind, up to 7 kilogrammes, as specified in the Regulations;
- 3.3 special bags containing newspapers, periodicals, books and similar printed documentation for the same addressee at the same address called "M bags", up to 30 kilogrammes, as specified in the Regulations.

4 Letter-post items shall be classified on the basis of both the speed of treatment of the items and the contents of the items in accordance with the Regulations.

5 Within the classification systems referred to in 4, letter-post items may also be classified on the basis of their format as small letters (P), large letters (G), bulky letters (E) or small packets (E). The size and weight limits are specified in the Regulations.

6 Higher weight limits than those indicated in paragraphs 2 and 3 apply optionally for certain letter-post item categories under the conditions specified in the Regulations.

7 Member countries shall also ensure that their designated operators accept, handle, convey and deliver parcel-post items up to 20 kilogrammes.

8 Weight limits higher than 20 kilogrammes apply optionally for certain parcel-post items under the conditions specified in the Regulations.

Article 18

Supplementary services

1 Member countries shall ensure the provision of the following mandatory supplementary services:

- 1.1 registration service for outbound priority and airmail letter-post items;
- 1.2 registration service for all inbound registered letter-post items.

2 Member countries may ensure the provision of the following optional supplementary services in relations between those designated operators which agreed to provide the service:

- 2.1 insurance for letter-post items and parcels;
- 2.2 cash-on-delivery service for letter-post items and parcels;
- 2.3 tracked delivery service for letter-post items;
- 2.4 delivery to the addressee in person of registered or insured letter-post items;
- 2.5 free of charges and fees delivery service for letter-post items and parcels;
- 2.6 cumbersome parcels services;
- 2.7 consignment service for collective items from one consignor sent abroad;
- 2.8 merchandise return service, which involves the return of merchandise by the addressee to the original seller, with the latter's authorization.

3 The following three supplementary services have both mandatory and optional parts:

- 3.1 international business reply service (IBRS), which is basically optional. All member countries or their designated operators shall, however, be obliged to operate the IBRS "return" service;
- 3.2 international reply coupons, which shall be exchangeable in any member country. The sale of international reply coupons is, however, optional;
- 3.3 advice of delivery for registered letter-post items, parcels and insured items. All member countries or their designated operators shall admit incoming advices of delivery. The provision of an outward advice of delivery service is, however, optional.

4 The description of these services and their charges are set out in the Regulations.

5 Where the service features below are subject to special charges in the domestic service, designated operators shall be authorized to collect the same charges for international items, under the conditions described in the Regulations:

- 5.1 delivery for small packets weighing over 500 grammes;
- 5.2 letter-post items posted after the latest time of posting;

- 5.3 items posted outside normal counter opening hours;
- 5.4 collection at sender's address;
- 5.5 withdrawal of a letter-post item outside normal counter opening hours;
- 5.6 poste restante;
- 5.7 storage for letter-post items weighing over 500 grammes (with the exception of items for the blind), and for parcels;
- 5.8 delivery of parcels, in response to the advice of arrival;
- 5.9 cover against risks of force majeure;
- 5.10 delivery of letter-post items outside normal counter opening hours.

Section V

Prohibitions and customs matters

Article 19

Items not admitted. Prohibitions

1 General

- 1.1 Items not fulfilling the conditions laid down in the Convention and the Regulations shall not be admitted. Items sent in furtherance of a fraudulent act or with the intention of avoiding full payment of the appropriate charges shall not be admitted.
- 1.2 Exceptions to the prohibitions contained in this article are set out in the Regulations.
- 1.3 All member countries or their designated operators shall have the option of extending the prohibitions contained in this article, which may be applied immediately upon their inclusion in the relevant compendium. Any member country or its designated operator wishing to extend or amend the list of articles that it prohibits, or admits conditionally, as imports (or in transit) shall inform the International Bureau, which shall then update the relevant compendium accordingly.

2 Prohibitions in all categories of items

- 2.1 The insertion of the articles referred to below shall be prohibited in all categories of items:
 - 2.1.1 narcotics and psychotropic substances, as defined by the International Narcotics Control Board, or other illicit drugs which are prohibited in the country of destination;
 - 2.1.2 obscene or immoral articles;
 - 2.1.3 counterfeit and pirated articles;
 - 2.1.4 other articles the importation or circulation of which is prohibited in the country of destination;
 - 2.1.5 articles which, by their nature or their packing, may expose officials or the general public to danger, or soil or damage other items, postal equipment or third-party property;
 - 2.1.6 documents having the character of current and personal correspondence exchanged between persons other than the sender and the addressee or persons living with them;

3 Dangerous goods

- 3.1 The insertion of dangerous goods as described in the Convention and Regulations shall be prohibited in all categories of items.
- 3.2 The insertion of replica and inert explosive devices and military ordnance, including replica and inert grenades, inert shells and the like, shall be prohibited in all categories of items.
- 3.3 Exceptionally, dangerous goods may be admitted in relations between member countries that have declared their willingness to admit them either reciprocally or in one direction, provided that they are in compliance with national and international transport rules and regulations.

- 4 Live animals
 - 4.1 Live animals shall be prohibited in all categories of items.
 - 4.2 Exceptionally, the following shall be admitted in letter-post items other than insured items:
 - 4.2.1 bees, leeches and silk-worms;
 - 4.2.2 parasites and destroyers of noxious insects intended for the control of those insects and exchanged between officially recognized institutions;
 - 4.2.3 flies of the family Drosophilidae for biomedical research exchanged between officially recognized institutions.
 - 4.3 Exceptionally, the following shall be admitted in parcels:
 - 4.3.1 live animals whose conveyance by post is authorized by the postal regulations and/or national legislation of the countries concerned.
- 5 Insertion of correspondence in parcels
 - 5.1 The insertion of the articles mentioned below shall be prohibited in postal parcels:
 - 5.1.1 correspondence, with the exception of archived materials, exchanged between persons other than the sender and the addressee or persons living with them.
- 6 Coins, bank notes and other valuable articles
 - 6.1 It shall be prohibited to insert coins, bank notes, currency notes or securities of any kind payable to bearer, travellers' cheques, platinum, gold or silver, whether manufactured or not, precious stones, jewels or other valuable articles:
 - 6.1.1 in uninsured letter-post items;
 - 6.1.1.1 however, if the national legislation of the countries of origin and destination permits this, such articles may be sent in a closed envelope as registered items;
 - 6.1.2 in uninsured parcels; except where permitted by the national legislation of the countries of origin and destination;
 - 6.1.3 in uninsured parcels exchanged between two countries which admit insured parcels;
 - 6.1.3.1 in addition, any member country or designated operator may prohibit the enclosure of gold bullion in insured or uninsured parcels originating from or addressed to its territory or sent in transit à découvert across its territory; it may limit the actual value of these items.
- 7 Printed papers and items for the blind:
 - 7.1 shall not bear any inscription or contain any item of correspondence;
 - 7.2 shall not contain any postage stamp or form of prepayment, whether cancelled or not, or any paper representing a monetary value, except in cases where the item contains as an enclosure a card, envelope or wrapper bearing the printed address of the sender of the item or his agent in the country of posting or destination of the original item, which is prepaid for return.
- 8 Treatment of items wrongly admitted
 - 8.1 The treatment of items wrongly admitted is set out in the Regulations. However, items containing articles mentioned in 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 3.1 and 3.2 shall in no circumstances be forwarded to their destination, delivered to the addressees or returned to origin. In the case of articles mentioned in 2.1.1 discovered while in transit, such items shall be handled in accordance with the national legislation of the country of transit. In the case of articles mentioned in 3.1 and 3.2 discovered during transport, the relevant designated operator shall be entitled to remove the article from the item and dispose of it. The designated operator may then forward the remainder of the item to its destination, together with information about the disposal of the inadmissible article.

Article 20

Customs control. Customs duty and other fees

- 1 The designated operators of the countries of origin and destination shall be authorized to submit items to customs control, according to the legislation of those countries.
- 2 Items submitted to customs control may be subjected to a presentation-to-Customs charge, the guideline amount of which is set in the Regulations. This charge shall only be collected for the submission to Customs and customs clearance of items which have attracted customs charges or any other similar charge.
- 3 Designated operators which are authorized to clear items through the Customs on behalf of customers, whether in the name of the customer or of the designated operator of the destination country, may charge customers a customs clearance fee based on the actual costs. This fee may be charged for all items declared at Customs according to national legislation, including those exempt from customs duty. Customers shall be clearly informed in advance about the required fee.
- 4 Designated operators shall be authorized to collect from the senders or addressees of items, as the case may be, the customs duty and all other fees which may be due.

Section VI

Liability

Article 21

Inquiries

- 1 Each designated operator shall be bound to accept inquiries relating to parcels or registered or insured items posted in its own service or that of any other designated operator, provided that the inquiries are presented by customers within a period of six months from the day after that on which the item was posted. The transmission and processing of inquiries between designated operators shall be made under the conditions laid down in the Regulations. The period of six months shall concern relations between claimants and designated operators and shall not include the transmission of inquiries between designated operators.
- 2 Inquiries shall be free of charge. However, additional costs caused by a request for transmission by EMS shall, in principle, be borne by the person making the request.

Article 22

Liability of designated operators. Indemnities

- 1 General
 - 1.1 Except for the cases provided for in article 23, designated operators shall be liable for:
 - 1.1.1 the loss of, theft from or damage to registered items, ordinary parcels (with the exception of parcels in the e-commerce delivery category ("ECOMPRO parcels"), whose specifications are further defined in the Regulations) and insured items;
 - 1.1.2 the return of registered items, insured items and ordinary parcels on which the reason for non-delivery is not given.
 - 1.2 Designated operators shall not be liable for items other than those mentioned in 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, nor for ECOMPRO parcels.
 - 1.3 In any other case not provided for in this Convention, designated operators shall not be liable.
 - 1.4 When the loss of or total damage to registered items, ordinary parcels and insured items is due to a case of force majeure for which indemnity is not payable, the sender shall be entitled to repayment of the charges paid for posting the item, with the exception of the insurance charge.
 - 1.5 The amounts of indemnity to be paid shall not exceed the amounts mentioned in the Regulations.

- 1.6 In cases of liability, consequential losses, loss of profits or moral damage shall not be taken into account in the indemnity to be paid.
- 1.7 All provisions regarding liability of designated operators shall be strict, binding and complete. Designated operators shall in no case, even in case of severe fault, be liable above the limits provided for in the Convention and the Regulations.
- 2 Registered items
 - 2.1 If a registered item is lost, totally rifled or totally damaged, the sender shall be entitled to an indemnity set in the Regulations. If the sender has claimed an amount less than the amount set in the Regulations, designated operators may pay that lower amount and shall receive reimbursement on this basis from any other designated operators involved.
 - 2.2 If a registered item is partially rifled or partially damaged, the sender is entitled to an indemnity corresponding, in principle, to the actual value of the theft or damage.
- 3 Ordinary parcels
 - 3.1 If a parcel is lost, totally rifled or totally damaged, the sender shall be entitled to an indemnity of an amount set in the Regulations. If the sender has claimed an amount less than the amount set in the Regulations, designated operators may pay that lower amount and shall receive reimbursement on this basis from any other designated operators involved.
 - 3.2 If a parcel is partially rifled or partially damaged, the sender shall be entitled to an indemnity corresponding, in principle, to the actual value of the theft or damage.
 - 3.3 Designated operators may agree to apply, in their reciprocal relations, the amount per parcel set in the Regulations, regardless of the weight.
- 4 Insured items
 - 4.1 If an insured item is lost, totally rifled or totally damaged, the sender shall be entitled to an indemnity corresponding, in principle, to the insured value in SDRs.
 - 4.2 If an insured item is partially rifled or partially damaged, the sender shall be entitled to an indemnity corresponding, in principle, to the actual value of the theft or damage. It may, however, in no case exceed the amount of the insured value in SDRs.
- 5 If a registered or insured letter-post item is returned and the reason for non-delivery is not given, the sender shall be entitled to a refund of the charges paid for posting the item only.
- 6 If a parcel is returned and the reason for non-delivery is not given, the sender shall be entitled to a refund of the charges paid by the sender for posting the parcel in the country of origin and the expenses occasioned by the return of the parcel from the country of destination.
- 7 In the cases mentioned in 2, 3 and 4, the indemnity shall be calculated according to the current price, converted into SDRs, of articles or goods of the same kind at the place and time at which the item was accepted for conveyance. Failing a current price, the indemnity shall be calculated according to the ordinary value of articles or goods whose value is assessed on the same basis.
- 8 When an indemnity is due for the loss of, total theft from or total damage to a registered item, ordinary parcel or insured item, the sender, or the addressee, as the case may be, shall also be entitled to repayment of the charges and fees paid for posting the item with the exception of the registration or insurance charge. The same shall apply to registered items, ordinary parcels or insured items refused by the addressee because of their bad condition if that is attributable to the designated operator and involves its liability.
- 9 Notwithstanding the provisions set out under 2, 3 and 4, the addressee shall be entitled to the indemnity for a rifled, damaged or lost registered item, ordinary parcel or insured item if the sender waives his rights in writing in favour of the addressee. This waiver shall not be necessary in cases where the sender and the addressee are the same.

10 The designated operator of origin shall have the option of paying senders in its country the indemnities prescribed by its national legislation for registered items and uninsured parcels, provided that they are not lower than those laid down in 2.1 and 3.1. The same shall apply to the designated operator of destination when the indemnity is paid to the addressee. However, the amounts laid down in 2.1 and 3.1 shall remain applicable:

- 10.1 in the event of recourse against the designated operator liable; or
- 10.2 if the sender waives his rights in favour of the addressee.

11 Reservations concerning the exceeding of deadlines for inquiries and payment of indemnity to designated operators, including the periods and conditions fixed in the Regulations, shall not be made, except in the event of bilateral agreement.

Article 23

Non-liability of member countries and designated operators

1 Designated operators shall cease to be liable for registered items, parcels and insured items which they have delivered according to the conditions laid down in their regulations for items of the same kind. Liability shall, however, be maintained:

- 1.1 when theft or damage is discovered either prior to or at the time of delivery of the item;
- 1.2 when, national regulations permitting, the addressee, or the sender if it is returned to origin, makes reservations on taking delivery of a rifled or damaged item;
- 1.3 when, national regulations permitting, the registered item was delivered to a private mail-box and the addressee declares that he did not receive the item;
- 1.4 when the addressee or, in the case of return to origin, the sender of a parcel or of an insured item, although having given a proper discharge, notifies the designated operator that delivered the item without delay that he has found theft or damage. He shall furnish proof that such theft or damage did not occur after delivery. The term "without delay" shall be interpreted according to national law.

2 Member countries and designated operators shall not be liable:

- 2.1 in cases of force majeure, subject to article 18.5.9;
- 2.2 when they cannot account for items owing to the destruction of official records by force majeure, provided that proof of their liability has not been otherwise produced;
- 2.3 when such loss or damage has been caused by the fault or negligence of the sender or arises from the nature of the contents;
- 2.4 in the case of items that fall within the prohibitions specified in article 19;
- 2.5 when the items have been seized under the national legislation of the country of destination, as notified by the member country or designated operator of that country;
- 2.6 in the case of insured items which have been fraudulently insured for a sum greater than the actual value of the contents;
- 2.7 when the sender has made no inquiry within six months from the day after that on which the item was posted;
- 2.8 in the case of prisoner-of-war or civilian internee parcels;
- 2.9 when the sender's actions may be suspected of fraudulent intent, aimed at receiving compensation.

3 Member countries and designated operators shall accept no liability for customs declarations in whatever form these are made or for decisions taken by the Customs on examination of items submitted to customs control.

Article 24

Sender's liability

1 The sender of an item shall be liable for injuries caused to postal officials and for any damage caused to other postal items and postal equipment, as a result of the dispatch of articles not acceptable for conveyance or the non-observance of the conditions of acceptance.

2 In the case of damage to other postal items, the sender shall be liable for each item damaged within the same limits as designated operators.

3 The sender shall remain liable even if the office of posting accepts such an item.

4 However, where the conditions of acceptance have been observed by the sender, the sender shall not be liable, in so far as there has been fault or negligence in handling the item on the part of designated operators or carriers, after acceptance.

Article 25

Payment of indemnity

1 Subject to the right of recourse against the designated operator which is liable, the obligation to pay the indemnity and to refund the charges and fees shall rest either with the designated operator of origin or with the designated operator of destination.

2 The sender may waive his rights to the indemnity in favour of the addressee. The sender, or the addressee in the case of a waiver, may authorize a third party to receive the indemnity if national legislation allows this.

Article 26

Possible recovery of the indemnity from the sender or the addressee

1 If, after payment of the indemnity, a registered item, a parcel or an insured item or part of the contents previously considered as lost is found, the sender or the addressee, as the case may be, shall be advised that the item is being held at his disposal for a period of three months on repayment of the amount of the indemnity paid. At the same time he shall be asked to whom the item is to be delivered. In the event of refusal or failure to reply within the prescribed period, the same approach shall be made to the addressee or the sender as the case may be, granting that person the same period to reply.

2 If the sender and the addressee refuse to take delivery of the item or do not reply within the period provided for in paragraph 1, it shall become the property of the designated operator or, where appropriate, designated operators which bore the loss.

3 In the case of subsequent discovery of an insured item the contents of which are found to be of less value than the amount of the indemnity paid, the sender or the addressee, as the case may be, shall repay the amount of this indemnity against return of the item, without prejudice to the consequences of fraudulent insurance.

Section VII

Remuneration

A. Transit charges

Article 27

Transit charges

1 Closed mails and à découvert transit items exchanged between two designated operators or between two offices of the same member country by means of the services of one or more other designated operators

(third party services) shall be subject to the payment of transit charges. The latter shall constitute remuneration for the services rendered in respect of land transit, sea transit and air transit. This principle shall also apply to missent items and misrouted mails.

B. Terminal dues

Article 28

Terminal dues. General provisions

1 Subject to exemptions provided in the Regulations, each designated operator which receives letter-post items from another designated operator shall have the right to collect from the dispatching designated operator a payment for the costs incurred for the international mail received.

2 For the application of the provisions concerning the payment of terminal dues by their designated operators, countries and territories shall be classified in accordance with the lists drawn up for this purpose by Congress in its resolution C 7/2016, as follows:

- 2.1 countries and territories in the target system prior to 2010 (group I);
- 2.2 countries and territories in the target system as of 2010 and 2012 (group II);
- 2.3 countries and territories in the target system as from 2016 (group III);
- 2.4 countries and territories in the transitional system (group IV).

3 The provisions of the present Convention concerning the payment of terminal dues are transitional arrangements, moving towards a country-specific payment system at the end of the transition period.

4 Access to domestic services. Direct access

4.1 In principle, each designated operator of a country that was in the target system prior to 2010 shall make available to the other designated operators all the rates, terms and conditions offered in its domestic service on conditions identical to those proposed to its national customers. It shall be up to the designated operator of destination to decide whether the terms and conditions of direct access have been met by the designated operator of origin.

4.2 Designated operators of countries in the target system prior to 2010 shall make available to other designated operators of countries that were in the target system prior to 2010 the rates, terms and conditions offered in their domestic service, on conditions identical to those proposed to their national customers.

4.3 Designated operators of countries that joined the target system from 2010 may opt to make available to a limited number of designated operators the application of domestic conditions, on a reciprocal basis, for a trial period of two years. After that period, they must choose either to cease making available the application of domestic conditions or to continue to make their own domestic conditions available to all designated operators. However, if designated operators of countries that joined the target system from 2010 ask designated operators of countries that were in the target system prior to 2010 for the application of domestic conditions, they must make available to all designated operators the rates, terms and conditions offered in their domestic service on conditions identical to those proposed to their national customers.

4.4 Designated operators of countries in the transitional system may opt not to make available to other designated operators the application of domestic conditions. They may, however, opt to make available to a limited number of designated operators the application of domestic conditions, on a reciprocal basis, for a trial period of two years. After that period, they must choose either to cease making available the application of domestic conditions or to continue to make their own domestic conditions available to all designated operators.

5 Terminal dues remuneration shall be based on quality of service performance in the country of destination. The Postal Operations Council shall therefore be authorized to supplement the remuneration in articles 29, 30 and 31 to encourage participation in monitoring systems and to reward designated operators for reaching their quality targets. The Postal Operations Council may also fix penalties in case of insufficient quality, but the remuneration shall not be less than the minimum remuneration according to articles 30 and 31.

- 6 Any designated operator may waive wholly or in part the payment provided for under 1.
- 7 M bags weighing less than 5 kilogrammes shall be considered as weighing 5 kilogrammes for terminal dues payment purposes. The terminal dues rates to be applied for M bags shall be:
- 7.1 for the year 2022, 1.016 SDR per kilogramme;
- 7.2 for the year 2023, 1.044 SDR per kilogramme;
- 7.3 for the year 2024, 1.073 SDR per kilogramme;
- 7.4 for the year 2025, 1.103 SDR per kilogramme.
- 8 For registered items there shall be an additional payment of 1.463 SDR per item for 2022, 1.529 SDR per item for 2023, 1.598 SDR per item for 2024 and 1.670 SDR for 2025. For insured items, there shall be an additional payment of 1.777 SDR per item for 2022, 1.857 SDR per item for 2023, 1.941 SDR per item for 2024 and 2.028 SDR for 2025. The Postal Operations Council shall be authorized to supplement remuneration for these and other supplementary services where the services provided contain additional features to be specified in the Regulations.
- 9 For tracked delivery service items there shall be an additional payment of 0.400 SDR per item in accordance with the conditions specified in the Regulations. The Postal Operations Council shall be authorized to supplement remuneration for tracked delivery service items on the basis of performance in the electronic transmission of information, as specified in the Regulations.
- 10 For small packets, registered and insured and tracked delivery service items not carrying a barcoded identifier or carrying a barcoded identifier that is not compliant with the Union's Technical Standard S10, there shall be a further additional payment of 0.5 SDR per item unless otherwise bilaterally agreed.
- 11 The Postal Operations Council shall be authorized to supplement remuneration and/or fix penalties in relation to designated operators' compliance with the requirements for providing electronic advance data on letter-post items containing goods.
- 12 The remuneration for returned undeliverable letter-post items shall be specified in the Regulations.
- 13 For terminal dues payment purposes, letter-post items posted in bulk in accordance with the conditions specified in the Regulations shall be referred to as "bulk mail". The payment for bulk mail shall be established as provided for in articles 29, 30 and 31, as appropriate.
- 14 Any designated operator may, by bilateral or multilateral agreement, apply other payment systems for the settlement of terminal dues accounts.
- 15 Designated operators may exchange non-priority mail on an optional basis by applying a 10% discount to the priority terminal dues rate.
- 16 The provisions applicable between designated operators of countries in the target system shall apply to any designated operator of a country in the transitional system which declares that it wishes to join the target system. The Postal Operations Council may set transitional measures in the Regulations. The full provisions of the target system may apply to any new target designated operator that declares that it wishes to apply such full provisions without transitional measures.

Article 29

Terminal dues. Self-declaration of rates for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items

1 Beginning with rates in effect for the year 2021 onwards and notwithstanding articles 30 and 31, designated operators may notify the International Bureau by 1 June of the year preceding the year in which the self-declared rates would apply of a self-declared rate per item and a self-declared rate per kilogramme, expressed in local currency or SDR, that shall apply for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items in the following calendar year. The International Bureau shall annually convert the self-declared rates provided in local currency into values expressed in SDR. To calculate the rates in SDR, the International Bureau shall use the average monthly exchange rate of the five-month period ending 31 March of the year preceding the year

for which the self-declared rates would be applicable. The resultant rates shall be notified by means of an International Bureau circular no later than 1 July of the year preceding the year in which the self-declared rates would apply. The self-declared rates for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items shall be substituted as appropriate in any reference or rate calculation pertaining to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items elsewhere in the Convention or the Regulations. Additionally, each designated operator shall provide the International Bureau with its domestic rates for equivalent services in order to calculate the relevant ceiling rates.

- 1.1 Subject to 1.2 and 1.3, the self-declared rates shall:
 - 1.1.1 at the average E format weight of 0.158 kilogrammes, not be higher than the country-specific ceiling rates calculated in accordance with paragraph 1.2;
 - 1.1.2 be based on 70%, or the applicable percentage in paragraph 8, of the domestic single-piece charge for items equivalent to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items offered by the designated operator in its domestic service and in effect on 1 June of the year preceding the year for which the self-declared rates would be applicable;
 - 1.1.3 be based on the domestic single-piece charge in force for items within the designated operator's domestic service having the specified maximum size and shape dimensions of bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items;
 - 1.1.4 be made available to all designated operators;
 - 1.1.5 be applied only to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items;
 - 1.1.6 be applied to all bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post flows other than bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post flows from countries in the transitional system to countries in the target system, and between countries in the transitional system, if mail flows do not exceed 100 tonnes per year;
 - 1.1.7 be applied to all bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post flows except for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post flows between countries in the target system as from 2010, 2012 and 2016, and from those countries to countries in the target system prior to 2010, if mail flows do not exceed 25 tonnes per year.
- 1.2 The self-declared rates per item and per kilogramme for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items shall not be higher than the country-specific ceiling rates determined by a linear regression of 11 points corresponding to 70%, or the applicable percentage in paragraph 8, of the priority single-piece tariffs of equivalent domestic services for 20-gramme, 35-gramme, 75-gramme, 175-gramme, 250-gramme, 375-gramme, 500-gramme, 750-gramme, 1,000-gramme, 1,500-gramme and 2,000-gramme bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items, exclusive of any taxes.
 - 1.2.1 The determination of whether the self-declared rates exceed the ceiling rates shall be tested at the average revenue using the most current worldwide average composition of one kilogramme of mail in which an E format item weighs 0.158 kilogrammes. In instances in which the self-declared rates exceed the ceiling rates at the average E format weight of 0.158 kilogrammes, the ceiling per-item and per-kilogramme rates shall apply; alternatively, the designated operator in question may choose to reduce its self-declared rates to a level that conforms with paragraph 1.2.
 - 1.2.2 When multiple packet rates are available based on thickness, the lesser domestic tariff shall be used for items up to 250 grammes, and the higher domestic tariff shall be used for items above 250 grammes.
 - 1.2.3 Where zonal rates apply in the equivalent domestic service, the mid-point rate as specified in the Regulations shall be used, and domestic tariffs for non-contiguous zones shall be excluded for determination of the mid-point rate. Alternatively, the determination of the zonal tariff to be used may be based on the actual weighted average distance of inbound bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items (for the most recent calendar year).
 - 1.2.4 Where the equivalent domestic service and tariff include additional features that are not part of the basic service, i.e. tracking, signature and insurance services, and such features are extended across all the weight increments listed in paragraph 1.2, the lesser of the corresponding domestic supplemental rate, the supplemental rate, or the suggested guideline charge in the Acts of the Union shall be deducted from the domestic tariff. The total deduction for all additional features may not exceed 25% of the domestic tariff.

- 1.3 Where the country-specific ceiling rates calculated in accordance with paragraph 1.2 result in a revenue calculated for an E format item at 0.158 kilogrammes that is lower than the revenue calculated for the same item at the same weight on the basis of the rates specified below, the self-declared rates shall not be higher than the following rates:
 - 1.3.1 for the year 2020, 0.614 SDR per item and 1.381 SDR per kilogramme;
 - 1.3.2 for the year 2021, 0.645 SDR per item and 1.450 SDR per kilogramme;
 - 1.3.3 for the year 2022, 0.677 SDR per item and 1.523 SDR per kilogramme;
 - 1.3.4 for the year 2023, 0.711 SDR per item and 1.599 SDR per kilogramme;
 - 1.3.5 for the year 2024, 0.747 SDR per item and 1.679 SDR per kilogramme;
 - 1.3.6 for the year 2025, 0.784 SDR per item and 1.763 SDR per kilogramme.
 - 1.4 Any additional conditions and procedures for the self-declaration of rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items shall be laid down in the Regulations. All other provisions of the Regulations pertaining to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items shall apply to self-declared rates, unless they are inconsistent with this article.
 - 1.5 Designated operators of countries in the transitional system may apply self-declared rates on the basis of sampling of their inbound flows.
- 2 In addition to the ceiling rates provided for in 1.2, the notified self-declared rates shall not be higher than the maximum revenues defined for the years 2021 to 2025, as follows:
- 2.1 2021: the revenue calculated on the basis of the self-declared rates shall be set at the lowest between the country-specific ceiling rates and the revenue in 2020 for an E format item at 0.158 kilogrammes increased by 15%;
 - 2.2 2022: the revenue calculated on the basis of the self-declared rates shall be set at the lowest between the country-specific ceiling rates and the revenue in 2021 for an E format item at 0.158 kilogrammes increased by 15%;
 - 2.3 2023: the revenue calculated on the basis of the self-declared rates shall be set at the lowest between the country-specific ceiling rates and the revenue in 2022 for an E format item at 0.158 kilogrammes increased by 16%;
 - 2.4 2024: the revenue calculated on the basis of the self-declared rates shall be set at the lowest between the country-specific ceiling rates and the revenue in 2023 for an E format item at 0.158 kilogrammes increased by 16%;
 - 2.5 2025: the revenue calculated on the basis of the self-declared rates shall be set at the lowest between the country-specific ceiling rates and the revenue in 2024 for an E format item at 0.158 kilogrammes increased by 17%.
- 3 For rates in effect in 2021 and subsequent years, the ratio between the self-declared item rate and kilogramme rate shall not change by more than five percentage points upwards or downwards compared with the ratio of the previous year. For designated operators that self-declare rates under paragraph 7 or apply self-declared rates on a reciprocal basis under paragraph 9, the ratio in effect in 2020 shall be based on the self-declared per-item rate and per-kilogramme rate established as of 1 July 2020.
- 4 Designated operators that opt not to self-declare their rates in accordance with this article shall fully apply the provisions contained in articles 30 and 31.
- 5 For designated operators that have elected to self-declare their rates for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items in a prior calendar year and that do not communicate different self-declared rates for the subsequent year, the existing self-declared rates shall continue to apply unless they do not satisfy the conditions laid out in this article.
- 6 The International Bureau shall be informed by the designated operator concerned of any reduction in the domestic charge referred to in this article.

7 With effect from 1 July 2020, and notwithstanding paragraphs 1 and 2, a designated operator of a member country that received total annual inbound letter-post volumes in 2018 in excess of 75,000 tonnes (as per the relevant official information provided to the International Bureau or any other officially available information assessed by the International Bureau) may self-declare rates for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items, other than for the letter-post flows referred to in paragraphs 1.1.6 and 1.1.7. The said designated operator shall also have the right not to apply the revenue increase limits set out in paragraph 2 for mail flows to, from and between its country and any other country.

8 If a competent authority with oversight for the designated operator which exercises the aforementioned option in paragraph 7 determines that, in order to cover all costs for handling and delivery of bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items, the designated operator's self-declared rate any year after 2020 must be based on a cost-to-tariff ratio that exceeds 70% of the domestic single-piece charge, then the cost-to-tariff ratio for that designated operator may exceed 70%, subject to a limitation that the cost-to-tariff ratio to be used shall not exceed one percentage point above the higher of 70% or the cost-to-tariff ratio used in the calculation of the self-declared rates currently in effect, not to exceed 80%, and provided that the designated operator in question furnishes all such supporting information with its notification to the International Bureau under paragraph 1. If any such designated operator increases its cost-to-tariff ratio based on such a determination of a competent authority, then it shall notify the International Bureau of that ratio for publication by 1 May of the year preceding the year in which the ratio shall apply. Further specifications related to the costs and revenues to be used for the calculation of the specific cost-to-tariff ratio shall be provided in the Regulations.

9 Where a designated operator of a member country invokes paragraph 7, all other corresponding designated operators (including those whose exempted outbound flows are referred to in paragraphs 1.1.6 and 1.1.7) may do likewise and self-declare rates for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items with respect to the aforementioned designated operator without being subject to the maximum revenue increase limits set out in paragraph 2. Paragraph 8 of this article shall also apply to all such corresponding designated operators. With respect to any such corresponding designated operators that elect to apply self-declared rates under this paragraph 9 (including those whose outbound flows are optionally eligible for exemption under paragraphs 1.1.6 and 1.1.7), the self-declared rates of the designated operator that invoked paragraph 7 shall reciprocally apply.

10 Any designated operator that invokes the possibility outlined in paragraph 7 shall, in the calendar year of the entry into force of the initial rates, be required to pay a charge to the Union, for five consecutive years (beginning with the calendar year of application of the option referred to above under 7), in the amount of 8 million CHF per annum, for a total of 40 million CHF. No further payment shall be expected for self-declaration of rates in accordance with this paragraph after the conclusion of the five-year period.

10.1 The charge referred to above shall be exclusively allocated in accordance with the following methodology: 16 million CHF shall be allocated to a tied fund of the Union for the implementation of projects aimed at electronic advance data and postal security under the terms of a letter of agreement executed between the said designated operator and the Union; and 24 million CHF shall be allocated to a tied fund for the purposes of funding long-term liabilities of the Union, as further defined by the Council of Administration, under the terms of a letter of agreement executed between the said designated operator and the Union.

10.2 The charge set forth in this paragraph shall not apply to those designated operators of member countries that apply self-declared rates reciprocally under paragraph 9 as a consequence of another designated operator exercising the option to self-declare rates in accordance with paragraph 7.

10.3 The designated operator paying the charge shall inform the International Bureau each year how the sum of 8 million CHF per annum is to be allocated, provided that the five annual allocations are distributed as set out above, pursuant to the said letter of agreement. A designated operator that exercises the option to self-declare rates in accordance with paragraph 7 shall be provided with due reporting of the expenditures related to the charge remitted, pursuant to this paragraph, under the terms of a letter of agreement executed between the said designated operator and the Union.

11 If a designated operator exercises the option to self-declare rates in accordance with paragraph 7, or if a designated operator reciprocally applies a self-declared rate under paragraph 9, then simultaneously with the introduction of self-declared rates, the said designated operator should consider making available to sending designated operators of Union member countries, on a non-discriminatory basis, proportionately adjusted charges for volume and distance, to the extent practicable and available in the receiving country's published

domestic service for similar services under a mutually agreeable bilateral commercial agreement, within the framework of the rules of the national regulatory authority.

12 No reservations may be made to this article.

Article 30

Terminal dues. Provisions applicable to mail flows between designated operators of countries in the target system

1 Payment for letter-post items, including bulk mail but excluding M bags and IBRS items, shall be established on the basis of the application of the rates per item and per kilogramme reflecting the handling costs in the country of destination. Charges corresponding to priority items in the domestic service which are part of the universal service provision will be used as a basis for the calculation of terminal dues rates.

2 The terminal dues rates in the target system shall be calculated taking into account, where applicable in the domestic service, the classification of items based on their format, as provided for in article 17.5 of the Convention.

3 Designated operators in the target system shall exchange format-separated mails in accordance with the conditions specified in the Regulations.

4 Payment for IBRS items shall be as described in the Regulations.

5 The rates per item and per kilogramme are separated for small (P) and large (G) letter-post items and bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items. They shall be calculated on the basis of 70% of the charges for a 20-gramme small (P) letter-post item and for a 175-gramme large (G) letter-post item, exclusive of VAT or other taxes. For bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items, they shall be calculated from the P/G format line at 375 grammes, exclusive of VAT or other taxes.

6 The Postal Operations Council shall define the conditions for the calculation of the rates as well as the necessary operational, statistical and accounting procedures for the exchange of format-separated mails.

7 The rates applied for flows between countries in the target system in a given year shall not lead to an increase of more than 13% in the terminal dues revenue for a letter-post item in the P/G format of 37.6 grammes and in the E format of 375 grammes, compared to the previous year.

8 The rates applied for flows between countries in the target system prior to 2010 for small (P) and for large (G) letter-post items may not be higher than:

8.1 for the year 2022, 0.380 SDR per item and 2.966 SDR per kilogramme;

8.2 for the year 2023, 0.399 SDR per item and 3.114 SDR per kilogramme;

8.3 for the year 2024, 0.419 SDR per item and 3.270 SDR per kilogramme;

8.4 for the year 2025, 0.440 SDR per item and 3.434 SDR per kilogramme.

9 The rates applied for flows between countries in the target system for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items may not be higher than:

9.1 for the year 2022, 0.864 SDR per item and 1.942 SDR per kilogramme;

9.2 for the year 2023, 0.950 SDR per item and 2.136 SDR per kilogramme;

9.3 for the year 2024, 1.045 SDR per item and 2.350 SDR per kilogramme;

9.4 for the year 2025, 1.150 SDR per item and 2.585 SDR per kilogramme.

10 The rates applied for flows between countries in the target system for small (P) and for large (G) letter-post items may not be lower than:

10.1 for the year 2022, 0.272 SDR per item and 2.121 SDR per kilogramme;

10.2 for the year 2023, 0.292 SDR per item and 2.280 SDR per kilogramme;

10.3 for the year 2024, 0.314 SDR per item and 2.451 SDR per kilogramme;

10.4 for the year 2025, 0.330 SDR per item and 2.574 SDR per kilogramme.

11 The rates applied for flows between countries in the target system for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items may not be lower than:

11.1 for the year 2022, 0.677 SDR per item and 1.523 SDR per kilogramme;

11.2 for the year 2023, 0.711 SDR per item and 1.599 SDR per kilogramme;

11.3 for the year 2024, 0.747 SDR per item and 1.679 SDR per kilogramme;

11.4 for the year 2025, 0.784 SDR per item and 1.763 SDR per kilogramme.

12 The rates applied for flows between countries in the target system as from 2010 and 2012 as well as between these countries and countries in the target system prior to 2010 for small (P) and for large (G) letter-post items may not be higher than:

12.1 for the year 2022, 0.342 SDR per item and 2.672 SDR per kilogramme;

12.2 for the year 2023, 0.372 SDR per item and 2.905 SDR per kilogramme;

12.3 for the year 2024, 0.404 SDR per item and 3.158 SDR per kilogramme;

12.4 for the year 2025, 0.440 SDR per item and 3.434 SDR per kilogramme.

13 The rates applied for flows between countries in the target system as from 2016 as well as between these countries and countries in the target system prior to 2010 or as from 2010 and 2012 for small (P) and for large (G) letter-post items may not be higher than:

13.1 for the year 2022, 0.313 SDR per item and 2.443 SDR per kilogramme;

13.2 for the year 2023, 0.351 SDR per item and 2.738 SDR per kilogramme;

13.3 for the year 2024, 0.393 SDR per item and 3.068 SDR per kilogramme;

13.4 for the year 2025, 0.440 SDR per item and 3.434 SDR per kilogramme.

14 For flows below 50 tonnes a year between countries that joined the target system in 2010, 2012 and 2016, as well as between these countries and countries that were in the target system prior to 2010, the per-kilogramme and per-item components shall be converted into a total rate per kilogramme on the basis of a worldwide average composition of one kilogramme of mail in which P and G format items account for 3.97 items weighing 0.14 kilogrammes and E format items account for 5.45 items weighing 0.86 kilogrammes.

15 The terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items that have been self-declared pursuant to article 29 shall substitute the rates pertaining to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items in this article; consequently, the provisions laid down in paragraphs 7, 9 and 11 shall not apply.

16 The payment for bulk mail sent to countries in the target system prior to 2010 shall be established by applying the rates per item and per kilogramme provided for in paragraphs 5 to 11 or article 29, as appropriate.

17 The payment for bulk mail sent to countries in the target system as from 2010, 2012 and 2016 shall be established by applying the rates per item and per kilogramme provided for in paragraphs 5 and 10 to 13 or article 29, as appropriate.

18 No reservations may be made to this article.

Article 31

Terminal dues. Provisions applicable to mail flows to, from and between designated operators of countries in the transitional system

1 In preparation for the entry into the target system of the designated operators of countries in the terminal dues transitional system, payment for letter-post items, including bulk mail but excluding M bags and IBRS items, shall be established on the basis of a rate per item and a rate per kilogramme.

2 Other than for the terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items that have been self-declared pursuant to article 29, the provisions of article 30, paragraphs 1 to 3, 9 and 10, shall apply for the calculation of rates per item and per kilogramme applicable to small (P), large (G), bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items.

3 The rates applied for flows to, from and between countries in the transitional system in a given year shall not lead to an increase of more than 15.5% in the terminal dues revenue for a letter-post item in the P/G format of 37.6 grammes, and more than 13% in the terminal dues revenue for a letter-post item in the E format of 375 grammes, compared to the previous year.

4 Payment for IBRS items shall be as described in the Regulations.

5 The rates applied for flows to, from and between countries in the transitional system for small (P) and for large (G) letter-post items may not be higher than:

5.1 for the year 2022, 0.285 SDR per item and 2.227 SDR per kilogramme;

5.2 for the year 2023, 0.329 SDR per item and 2.573 SDR per kilogramme;

5.3 for the year 2024, 0.380 SDR per item and 2.973 SDR per kilogramme;

5.4 for the year 2025, 0.440 SDR per item and 3.434 SDR per kilogramme.

6 The rates applied for flows to, from and between countries in the transitional system for small (P) and for large (G) letter-post items may not be lower than:

6.1 for the year 2022, 0.272 SDR per item and 2.121 SDR per kilogramme;

6.2 for the year 2023, 0.292 SDR per item and 2.280 SDR per kilogramme;

6.3 for the year 2024, 0.314 SDR per item and 2.451 SDR per kilogramme;

6.4 for the year 2025, 0.330 SDR per item and 2.574 SDR per kilogramme.

7 Other than for the terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items that have been self-declared pursuant to article 29 and in accordance with 2 above, the rates applied for flows to, from and between countries in the transitional system for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items may not be higher than:

7.1 for the year 2022, 0.864 SDR per item and 1.942 SDR per kilogramme;

7.2 for the year 2023, 0.950 SDR per item and 2.136 SDR per kilogramme;

7.3 for the year 2024, 1.045 SDR per item and 2.350 SDR per kilogramme;

7.4 for the year 2025, 1.150 SDR per item and 2.585 SDR per kilogramme.

8 Other than for the terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items that have been self-declared pursuant to article 29 and in accordance with 2 above, the rates applied for flows to, from and between countries in the transitional system for bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items may not be lower than:

8.1 for the year 2022, 0.677 SDR per item and 1.523 SDR per kilogramme;

8.2 for the year 2023, 0.711 SDR per item and 1.599 SDR per kilogramme;

8.3 for the year 2024, 0.747 SDR per item and 1.679 SDR per kilogramme;

8.4 for the year 2025, 0.784 SDR per item and 1.763 SDR per kilogramme.

9 Other than for the terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items that have been self-declared pursuant to article 29, the per-kilogramme and per-item components shall be converted into a total rate per kilogramme on the basis of a worldwide average composition of one kilogramme of mail as follows:

9.1 for the year 2022, not lower than 6.376 SDR per kilogramme and not higher than 7.822 SDR per kilogramme;

- 9.2 for the year 2023, not lower than 6.729 SDR per kilogramme and not higher than 8.681 SDR per kilogramme;
- 9.3 for the year 2024, not lower than 7.105 SDR per kilogramme and not higher than 9.641 SDR per kilogramme;
- 9.4 for the year 2025, not lower than 7.459 SDR per kilogramme and not higher than 10.718 SDR per kilogramme.

10 Other than for the terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items that have been self-declared pursuant to article 29, the flat rate per kilogramme shall be applied if neither the designated operator of origin nor the designated operator of destination requests the revision mechanism in order to revise the rate on the basis of the actual number of items per kilogramme, rather than the worldwide average. The sampling for the revision mechanism shall be applied in accordance with the conditions specified in the Regulations.

11 For mail flows from and between countries in the transitional system below 100 tonnes a year, the total rate per kilogramme shall be as follows:

- 11.1 for the year 2022, 6.376 SDR per kilogramme;
- 11.2 for the year 2023, 6.729 SDR per kilogramme;
- 11.3 for the year 2024, 7.105 SDR per kilogramme;
- 11.4 for the year 2025, 7.459 SDR per kilogramme.

12 For mail flows from countries in the target system to countries in the transitional system below 100 tonnes a year where terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items have been self-declared pursuant to article 29, the per-kilogramme and per-item components shall be converted into a total rate per kilogramme on the basis of a worldwide average composition of one kilogramme of mail, as referred to in article 30.14, except for the flows in 29.1.5 of 50 tonnes and above where the country in the transitional system samples its inbound flow.

13 For mail flows to, from and between countries in the transitional system above 100 tonnes a year where terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items have been self-declared pursuant to article 29 and where the country of destination decides not to sample the inbound mail, the per-kilogramme and per-item components shall be converted into a total rate per kilogramme on the basis of a worldwide average composition of one kilogramme of mail, as referred to in article 30.14.

14 Except for the mail flows described in paragraph 12, the terminal dues rates applicable to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items that have been self-declared pursuant to article 29 shall substitute the rates pertaining to bulky (E) and small packet (E) letter-post items in this article; consequently, the provisions laid down in paragraphs 7, 8 and 10 shall not apply.

15 The downward revision of the total rate in paragraph 10 may not be invoked by a country in the target system against a country in the transitional system unless the latter asks for a revision in the opposite direction.

16 For mail flows to, from and between countries in the transitional system that are below 100 tonnes per year, designated operators may send and receive format-separated mail on an optional basis, in accordance with the conditions specified in the Regulations. In the case of format-separated exchanges the rates in paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 above shall apply if the designated operator of destination opts not to self-declare rates pursuant to article 29.

17 The payment for bulk mail to designated operators of countries in the target system shall be established by applying the rates per item and per kilogramme provided for in article 29 or 30. For bulk mail received, designated operators in the transitional system may request payment according to paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 above and article 29, as appropriate.

18 No reservations may be made to this article.

Article 32

Quality of Service Fund

1 Terminal dues payable by all countries and territories to the countries classified as least developed countries and included in group IV for terminal dues and Quality of Service Fund (QSF) purposes, except for M bags, IBRS items and bulk mail items, shall be increased by 20% of the rates provided for in article 29 or 31 for payment into the QSF for improving the quality of service in those countries. There shall be no such payment from one group IV country to another group IV country.

2 Terminal dues, except for M bags, IBRS items and bulk mail items, payable by countries and territories classified as group I countries to the countries classified as group IV countries, other than the least developed countries referred to in paragraph 1 of this article, shall be increased by 10% of the rates provided for in article 29 or 31, for payment into the QSF for improving the quality of service in those countries.

3 Terminal dues, except for M bags, IBRS items and bulk mail items, payable by countries and territories classified as group II countries to the countries classified as group IV countries, other than the least developed countries referred to in paragraph 1 of this article, shall be increased by 10% of the rates provided for in article 29 or 31, for payment into the QSF for improving the quality of service in those countries.

4 Terminal dues, except in respect of M bags, IBRS items and bulk mail items, payable by countries and territories classified as group III countries to the countries classified as group IV countries, other than the least developed countries referred to in paragraph 1 of this article, shall be increased by 5% of the rates provided for in article 29 or 31, for payment into the QSF for improving the quality of service in those countries.

5 An increase of 1%, calculated on the basis of terminal dues payable by countries and territories classified as group I, II and III countries to the countries classified as group III countries, except in respect of M bags, IBRS items and bulk mail items, shall be paid into a common fund to be established for improving the quality of service in countries classified in groups II, III and IV and managed in accordance with the relevant procedures set by the Postal Operations Council.

6 An increase of 0.5%, calculated on the basis of terminal dues payable by countries and territories classified as group I, II and III countries to the countries classified as group III countries, except in respect of M bags, IBRS items and bulk mail items, shall be paid into a special account to be established as part of the common fund referred to in paragraph 5, specifically for improving the quality of service in group IV countries classified by the United Nations as least developed countries and managed in accordance with the relevant procedures set by the Postal Operations Council.

7 Subject to the relevant procedures set by the Postal Operations Council, any unused amounts contributed under paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this article and accumulated over the four preceding QSF reference years (with 2018 as the earliest reference year) shall also be transferred to the common fund referred to in paragraph 5 of this article. For the purposes of this paragraph, only funds that have not been used in QSF-approved quality of service projects within two years following receipt of the last payment of contributed amounts for any given four-year period as defined above shall be transferred to the aforementioned common fund.

8 The combined terminal dues payable into the QSF for improving the quality of service of countries in group IV shall be subject to a minimum of 20,000 SDR per annum for each beneficiary country. The additional funds needed for reaching this minimum amount shall be invoiced, in proportion to the volumes exchanged, to the countries in groups I, II and III.

9 The Postal Operations Council shall adopt or update, by December 2021 at the latest, procedures for financing QSF projects.

C. Rates for parcel post

Article 33

Parcel post land and sea rates

1 With the exception of ECOMPRO parcels, parcels exchanged between two designated operators shall be subject to inward land rates calculated by combining the base rate per parcel and base rate per kilogramme laid down in the Regulations.

- 1.1 Bearing in mind the above base rates, designated operators may, in addition, be authorized to claim supplementary rates per parcel and per kilogramme in accordance with provisions laid down in the Regulations.
- 1.2 The rates mentioned in 1 and 1.1 shall be payable by the designated operator of the country of origin, unless the Regulations provide for exceptions to this principle.
- 1.3 The inward land rates shall be uniform for the whole of the territory of each country.

2 Parcels exchanged between two designated operators or between two offices of the same country by means of the land services of one or more other designated operators shall be subject to the transit land rates, payable to the designated operators which take part in the routeing on land, laid down in the Regulations, according to the distance step applicable.

- 2.1 For parcels in transit à découvert, intermediate designated operators shall be authorized to claim the single rate per item laid down in the Regulations.
- 2.2 Transit land rates shall be payable by the designated operator of the country of origin unless the Regulations provide for exceptions to this principle.

3 Any designated operator which participates in the sea conveyance of parcels shall be authorized to claim sea rates. These rates shall be payable by the designated operator of the country of origin, unless the Regulations provide for exceptions to this principle.

- 3.1 For each sea conveyance used, the sea rate shall be laid down in the Regulations according to the distance step applicable.
- 3.2 Designated operators may increase by 50% at most the sea rate calculated in accordance with 3.1. On the other hand, they may reduce it as they wish.

D. Air conveyance dues

Article 34

Basic rates and provisions concerning air conveyance dues

1 The basic rate applicable to the settlement of accounts between designated operators in respect of air conveyance shall be approved by the Postal Operations Council and shall be calculated by the International Bureau according to the formula specified in the Regulations. The rates applying to the air conveyance of parcels sent via the merchandise return service shall be calculated according to the provisions defined in the Regulations.

2 The calculation of air conveyance dues on closed dispatches, priority items, airmail items and air parcels sent in transit à découvert, missent items and misrouted mails, as well as the relevant methods of accounting, are described in the Regulations.

3 The air conveyance dues for the whole distance flown shall be borne:

- 3.1 in the case of closed mails, by the designated operator of the country of origin of the mails, including when these mails transit via one or more intermediate designated operators;
- 3.2 in the case of priority items and airmail items in transit à découvert, including missent items, by the designated operator which forwards the items to another designated operator.

4 These same regulations shall be applicable to items exempted from land and sea transit charges if they are conveyed by air.

5 Each designated operator of destination which provides air conveyance of international mail within its country shall be entitled to reimbursement of the additional costs incurred for such conveyance provided that the weighted average distance of the sectors flown exceeds 300 kilometres. The Postal Operations Council may replace the weighted average distance by other relevant criteria. Unless agreement has been reached that no charge should be made, the dues shall be uniform for all priority mails and airmails originating abroad whether or not this mail is reforwarded by air.

6 However, where the terminal dues levied by the designated operator of destination are based specifically on costs, domestic rates or self-declared rates set under article 29, no additional reimbursement for internal air conveyance shall be made.

7 The designated operator of destination shall exclude, for the purpose of calculating the weighted average distance, the weight of all mails for which the terminal dues calculation has been based specifically on costs, domestic rates or self-declared rates set under article 29 of the designated operator of destination.

E. Settlement of accounts

Article 35

Provisions specific to the settlement of accounts and payments for international postal exchanges

1 Settlements and payments in respect of operations carried out in accordance with the present Convention (including settlements and payments for the transport (forwarding) of postal items, settlements and payments for the treatment of postal items in the country of destination and settlements and payments in compensation for any loss, theft or damage relating to postal items) shall be based on and made in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and other Acts of the Union, and shall not require the preparation of any documents by a designated operator except in cases provided for in the Acts of the Union.

2 In order to ensure the provision of the universal postal service, as set forth in article 3, and the integrity of the international postal network, designated operators shall make payments for operations carried out in accordance with the Convention.

F. Fixing of charges and rates

Article 36

Authority of the Postal Operations Council to fix charges and rates

1 The Postal Operations Council shall have the authority to fix the following rates and charges, which are payable by designated operators in accordance with the conditions shown in the Regulations:

- 1.1 transit charges for the handling and conveyance of letter mails through one or more intermediary countries;
- 1.2 basic rates and air conveyance dues for the carriage of mail by air;
- 1.3 inward land rates for the handling of all inward parcels except ECOMPRO parcels;
- 1.4 transit land rates for the handling and conveyance of parcels through an intermediary country;
- 1.5 sea rates for the conveyance of parcels by sea.
- 1.6 outward land rates for the provision of the merchandise return service for parcels.

2 Any revision made, in accordance with a methodology that ensures equitable remuneration for designated operators performing the services, must be based on reliable and representative economic and financial data. Any change decided upon shall enter into force at a date set by the Postal Operations Council.

Section VIII

Optional services

Article 37

EMS and integrated logistics

- 1 Member countries or designated operators may agree with each other to participate in the following services, which are described in the Regulations:
 - 1.1 EMS, which is a postal express service for documents and merchandise, and shall whenever possible be the quickest postal service by physical means. This service may be provided on the basis of the EMS Standard Multilateral Agreement or by bilateral agreement;
 - 1.2 integrated logistics, which is a service that responds fully to customers' logistical requirements and includes the phases before and after the physical transmission of goods and documents.

Article 38

Electronic postal services

- 1 Member countries or designated operators may agree with each other to participate in the following electronic postal services, which are described in the Regulations:
 - 1.1 electronic postal mail, which is an electronic postal service involving the transmission of electronic messages and information by designated operators;
 - 1.2 electronic postal registered mail, which is a secure electronic postal service that provides proof of sending and proof of delivery of an electronic message and a secure communication channel to the authenticated users;
 - 1.3 electronic postal certification mark, which provides evidentiary proof of an electronic event, in a given form, at a given time, and involving one or more parties;
 - 1.4 electronic postal mailbox, which enables the sending of electronic messages by an authenticated mailer and the delivery and storage of electronic messages and information for the authenticated addressee.

Section IX

Final provisions

Article 39

Conditions for approval of proposals concerning the Convention and the Regulations

- 1 To become effective, proposals submitted to Congress relating to this Convention must be approved by a majority of the member countries present and voting which have the right to vote. At least half of the member countries represented at Congress and having the right to vote shall be present at the time of voting.
- 2 To become effective, proposals relating to the Regulations must be approved by a majority of the members of the Postal Operations Council having the right to vote.
- 3 To become effective, proposals introduced between Congresses relating to this Convention and to its Final Protocol must obtain:
 - 3.1 two thirds of the votes, at least one half of the member countries of the Union which have the right to vote having taken part in the vote, if they involve amendments;
 - 3.2 a majority of the votes if they involve interpretation of the provisions.
- 4 Any member country may, no later than ninety days from the date of notification of an amendment adopted under 3.1, propose a reservation to that same amendment, subject by analogy to the same approval conditions as set out under 3.1 and the relevant provisions of article 40.

Article 40

Reservations at Congress

- 1 Any reservation which is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Union shall not be permitted.
- 2 As a general rule, any member country whose views are not shared by other member countries shall endeavour, as far as possible, to conform to the opinion of the majority. Reservations should be made only in cases of absolute necessity, and proper reasons given.
- 3 Reservations to any article of the present Convention shall be submitted to Congress as a Congress proposal written in one of the working languages of the International Bureau and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure of Congresses.
- 4 To become effective, proposals concerning reservations must be approved by whatever majority is required for amendment of the article to which the reservation relates.
- 5 In principle, reservations shall be applied on a reciprocal basis between the reserving member country and the other member countries.
- 6 Reservations to the present Convention shall be inserted in the Final Protocol to the present Convention, on the basis of proposals approved by Congress.

Article 41

Entry into force and duration of the Convention

This Convention shall come into force on 1 July 2022 (with the exception of all the provisions contained in section VII, "Remuneration", which shall come into force on 1 January 2022) and remain in force for an indefinite period.

In witness whereof the plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the member countries have signed this Convention in a single original which shall be deposited with the Director General of the International Bureau. A copy thereof shall be delivered to each member country by the International Bureau of the Union.

Done at Abidjan, 26 August 2021