

PostEurop Declaration

28/09/2017

Future Management of the work of the UPU & Reform of the UPU

Preamble:

On the occasion of the UPU Extraordinary Congress in Addis Ababa, September 2018, Member Countries will have to decide on the future Management of the work of the Union and the reform of its governance. First, the CA will have to adopt a proposal to the Congress.

Thus, the Designated Postal Operators being members of PostEurop have taken note and have lively and keenly contributed to the work so far achieved by the AHGUR.

In order to continue with the constructive involvement and looking ahead to the Addis-Ababa Mid-term Congress, the members of PostEurop would like to state their comments on the objectives of the reform and on the means to achieve those. They are willing to contribute to any further work on these issues.

Declaration on the AHGUR draft recommendations in view of the CA 2017 second session

With reference to their previous declaration in Yerevan, 20 April 2016, the Designated Postal Operators being members of PostEurop wish to confirm their commitment to the Universal Postal Union (UPU) as the global facilitator for the exchange of postal services. European Postal operators have been strongly and actively involved in the evolution of the reform process from the very beginning and are prepared to continue to support reform and contribute to this work for the benefit of all Member Countries and customers' needs.

The members of PostEurop believe that UPU can maintain its global relevance and the unique role which it has been playing since its foundation. The UPU needs to continue to embrace the fundamental and quick developments, and structural changes which continuously are taking place in the marketplace, while Designated Postal Operators, being the entities which are designated to fulfill Member Countries' obligations, need as much flexibility as possible in order to cope with current and future challenges.

It should also be noted that PostEurop members have been and still are in full support of Congress Resolution C27/2016, which explicitly referred to "*the need to continue to evaluate the organization, structure and running of various UPU bodies [...], in order to draw a clearer distinction between their respective roles [...]*".

PostEurop welcomes the Istanbul CA and POC working methods

As a consequence of Congress Resolution C27/2016, CA and POC committees and working groups have been streamlined. All Congress decisions have been translated into a matrix that allows a transparent follow-up of the work in progress during the Istanbul cycle.

PostEurop supports these new methods as far as they contribute to making the organization more agile. Having said that, further improvements are required.

PostEurop supports the efforts of the AHGUR

PostEurop notes positively that the membership of the AHURG, set up with reference to the Congress resolution, has been widely opened to all stakeholders. Through meetings, consultations and a working team, a lot has already been achieved in a consensual way. It is very important to keep this open, progressive and transparent approach.

PostEurop notes with satisfaction the broad support for a 2 body structure

PostEurop has taken note of the conclusions of the AHGUR in April, that were endorsed by the CA (CA - doc 2017.1), the results of the questionnaire sent to all member countries in May, and the minutes of the working team meeting on 16 August 2017.

While it is clear to everyone that the UPU is an intergovernmental organization, a broad majority of member countries calls for keeping the current functional roles for CA and POC.

It is PostEurop members' understanding that the overarching responsibility and interest of the governments of UPU member countries is to ensure functional postal services by means of setting the necessary regulatory framework. As it is the operators which have the necessary technical and operational expertise, it should be left to them, within a council responsible for operational affairs elected by Congress, to ensure the development of technical, commercial and operational solutions to meet these regulatory requirements. In this sense, Designated Postal Operators need to continue to play a strong and clear role, with an adequate level of flexibility, within the framework of the UPU.

European Designated Operators devote significant time and resources to the work of highly relevant UPU tasks and they expect the work of UPU to be relevant for their business.

CA and POC have specific functions, as defined in the General Regulations (art 107 and 113). Because those bodies have to deal with their own objectives and perspectives, PostEurop acknowledges the need for coordination and consultation between both Councils, which can be assured by a non-decision making coordinating Committee. It is henceforth desirable to clarify the role of the current Coordinating Committee by adding provisions on its role and composition in the General Regulations.

The POC composition and election rules need to be appropriately addressed

PostEurop members are aware that the issue of representation is very delicate and has to be addressed very carefully at any Congress. Therefore, PostEurop advocates the following:

- Need to maintain specific representation and election rules for the POC, guaranteeing both the supply of technical expertise and financial contributions.

- European countries should retain the same conditions as currently to run for election at the POC and obtain a seat while for other regions 1 or more additional seats could be agreed upon, recognizing their growing economic importance. In any case, it remains crucial to take a pragmatic approach.

PostEurop would recommend to study carefully the option of a mid-term Congress

While it seems that a permanent mid-term Congress meets ample support, PostEurop would recommend that UPU members assess costs and benefits of the 2018 Congress before taking a final decision.

Closing remark

PostEurop members wish that fruitful and transparent discussions in the AHGUR will allow the CA to adopt in April 2018, preferably by consensus, an acceptable and balanced proposal to the Addis-Ababa Congress.

Along those coming discussions, PostEurop members are prepared to contribute to making the UPU a more agile and relevant organization, helping all member countries and their designated operators to definitively maintain a sustained and innovative role for the Postal sector in an increasingly competitive environment.