

PAPU 40TH ANNIVERSARY

PAPU Milestones since 1980

1. INTRODUCTION

- ▣ PAPU is a Specialized Agency of the African Union responsible for the development of postal services in Africa;
- ▣ The 14th Session of the OAU Heads of State and Government Summit held in Libreville, Gabon in 1977 approved a Resolution for the creation of the Union;
- ▣ For its implementation the OAU organized in Arusha, Tanzania, a Plenipotentiary Conference of Ministers from 8th to 18th January 1980;
- ▣ The PAPU Convention was signed by ministers representing 35 member states on 18th January 1980.

2. OBJECTIVES

- ▣ To maintain and extend cooperation among member states for improvement of postal services;
- ▣ Harmonize tariff structures among member states with a view to establishing tariffs compatible with quality services and sound financial management of postal services;
- ▣ Promote the establishment of regional and sub-regional training institutes in cooperation with international organizations;
- ▣ Harmonize the position of member states during international meetings in order to safeguard their interests.
- ▣ To publish information and research materials on postal services for the benefit of members;
- ▣ Encourage the exchange of information and staff skills and expertise among member states;
- ▣ Act as a servicing institution for member states for integrated postal development, providing them with the necessary technical support.

3. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ▣ The membership has grown from 35 at the inception, to the current 45 Member States, making PAPU the largest restricted union in the postal sector globally;
- ▣ The Pan African Post Day was created in 1985 for commemoration of the founding of PAPU on 18th January 1980;

- ▣ A year later in 1986, a Customer Day was created to sensitize Member States on the necessity to change the traditional management strategy of postal administration to a customer focused policy;
- ▣ In 1998, the first customers' and marketing event was organized in Tunis, Tunisia with the theme, "The African post, listening to its customers," which led to the adoption of the Tunis Declaration that recommended, among others, the setting up of the then Marketing Action Group;
- ▣ From 1985 to 2007 a total of 12 Administrative and Technical Committees of PAPU were established. The committees closely studied specific issues related to development of postal services, that are entrusted to them from time to time, by the organs of the Union;
- ▣ In 2003, the current PAPU Headquarters was built and inaugurated, giving PAPU a new identity and positive image;
- ▣ In 2004, the seat distribution in the Administrative Council of PAPU was reviewed from 16 to 20 seats for better representation of the sub-regions and more efficiency during deliberations;
- ▣ In 2007, the PAPU Secretariat Management Board was established to assist the Secretariat in the accomplishment of its mission;
- ▣ In the same year, PAPU Secretariat actively participated as member of AUC Study Team on harmonization of postal policies, regulations and strategies for strengthening the postal sector in Africa;
- ▣ The results of this study were adopted by the conference of ministers in charge of postal affairs in Africa who came up with the 2008 Cairo Declaration and recommendations for their implementation;
- ▣ In 2008, the PAPU Administrative and Technical Committees were merged from 12 to 7 for more efficiency. Their Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct were then redefined in June 2009, to give them more focus;
- ▣ In 2008/2009, the Union's Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives were redefined to adapt them to the realities of the evolving postal environment and in order to provide a clear roadmap for the Union's activities;
- ▣ Over the same period, the Acts of the Union were revised and adopted by the 4th PAPU Extra-Ordinary Plenipotentiary Conference in Cairo, Egypt in June 2009;
- ▣ Further to a Council resolution No.02/PAPU/AC/XXX/2011, extending the scope of Public Private Partnership arrangement for development of PAPU House project beyond the BOT option, the General Secretariat and an Agency of the host country, Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), resolved to enter into a Joint Venture Partnership for speedy realization of PAPU

House Project. The partnership entails a 60/40% ownership structure to PAPU and TCRA, respectively;

- ▣ In 2016, the 9th Extraordinary Session of the Administrative Council established three (3) new Technical Committees for the 2016-2020 cycle. The main development was the dissolution of the Management Board. The newly constituted committees were Operations and Technology, Policy, Strategy & Governance and Finance & Administration;
- ▣ Again in 2016, the 9th Plenipotentiary Conference held in Yaoundé, Cameroon established the Postal Regulators Forum to ensure that there is annual platform of exchange for postal regulators;
- ▣ In 2017, a resolution on drafting a bill on the harmonization of rules and regulations to govern the postal sector in Africa was made drawn from current sub-regional models;
- ▣ Legal Experts Taskforce proposed amendments to the Acts of PAPU after their meeting in Arusha, Tanzania from 27th to 30th November, 2017. The 37th Administrative Council held in April 2018 in Algiers made recommendations to realign the Acts of the Union with the current realities of the postal environment;
- ▣ Upon consideration, the 5th Extraordinary Plenipotentiary Conference held in July, 2018, in Antananarivo, Madagascar adopted the proposed amendments to the Acts bringing them into force with immediate effect. The new Acts override the 2009 Acts which were not ratified;
- ▣ During the same Conference, PAPU harmonized Africa's positions on key issues on the agenda of the UPU Extraordinary Congress scheduled to take place from 3rd to 7th September, 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;
- ▣ On Associate Membership, the 38th Administrative Council Session in Ouagadougou adopted the annual financial contributions and recommended the same to the Chair of Plenipotentiary Conference for anticipatory approval in order to operationalize their admission process;
- ▣ Further to a resolution made in 2017 on the harmonization of rules and regulations, a consultant was recruited in 2019 who conducted a study whose report was presented during the 38th Ordinary Session of the Administrative Council Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The report has been circulated to Member States for further refinements before submission to the next Plenipotentiary Conference;
- ▣ Due to the lack of a formal continental platform for interaction between postal CEOs, the 38th Administrative Council Session held in June 2019, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso established the African Postal CEO Forum for postal leaders that will enable them to discuss and exchange views on issues encountered in managing their organizations, with a view to coming up with possible common solutions to those issues. The Annual Forum will be held simultaneously with the Postal Regulators' Forum, on the sidelines of the PAPU Administrative Council meetings;
- ▣ The PAPU House foundation stone will be laid by His Excellency the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dr John Pombe Joseph Magufuli on 18 January 2020.

4. OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- ▣ PAPU and the African Airlines Association established a contact committee in 1985 to enhance quality of service and security of mail transmission in Africa, the PAPU/ AFRAA Contact Committee
- ▣ A study was done in 1990 for preparation of general information and operational guidelines on Express Mail Service (EMS) to assist member countries master the new products and effectively face competition from the private sector;
- ▣ PAPU put in place quality measurement system for Letter Post, EMS and other items;
- ▣ The African postal fraternity developed a common framework for customization of Beijing, Bucharest and Nairobi postal strategies for better implementation;
- ▣ In 2012 a study on addressing and post code systems funded by the AUC was commissioned, In 2014 the study report was validated and Sensitization of the guidelines was done in 2018. Ministers in charge of the post had adopted a declaration (STC CICT 1) during their 1st Specialized Technical Committee (STC) meeting in 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. and urged Member States among others to incorporate addressing and postcode systems project in national development plans and publish strategies for their smooth implementation;
- ▣ In 2013, the General Secretariat of PAPU in collaboration with the International Bureau of the UPU formulated the Regional Development Plan (RDP) for Africa (2013-2016);
- ▣ In 2013, PAPU contributed to the Long-Term Finance for Accelerating Africa's Industrialization- (CAM1-20) conference whose outcome was that Africa's Ministers of Industry appreciated the important role the post could play in Africa's industrialization and trade facilitation, particularly for SMEs and included the post as a key player in long-term financing for Industrialization in Africa particularly in the post-2015 period;
- ▣ In 2014, through PAPU, Money transfer services was introduced between Emirates post and some African posts;
- ▣ In 2014 Emirates Post committed USD 100, 000 from their QSF account for financing various projects within the Member States of PAPU;
- ▣ In 2014, PAPU in collaboration with AUC and UPU formulated the Electrification and Connectivity project for Post Offices in Africa aimed at fostering economic development through the post, in which 13 countries are participating. Ministers in charge of the post endorsed the project during their 1st Specialized Technical Committee (STC) meeting in 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. and emphasized on sourcing multiple sources of funding for the successful implementation of the project among others;

- ▣ Heads of State endorsed the addressing & post code as well as the electrification & connectivity projects during the January, 2016 Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;
- ▣ In 2014, PAPU played a key role in coming up with resolution L12 on postal financial services during the 7th Joint AU-ECA Ministers of Finance, Economy and Development planning in Abuja, Nigeria;
- ▣ PAPU in collaboration with UPU implemented the Quality of service programme for the period 2013-2016; the programme culminated in quality certification of Member States;
- ▣ The International Bureau of the UPU in collaboration with the General Secretariat of PAPU formulated the Regional Development Plan (RDP) for Africa in 2017;
- ▣ PAPU is a key player in the implementation of the flagship project of the RDP, the Operational Readiness for e-Commerce (ORE), being implemented for the period 2017-2020;
- ▣ In furtherance of the PAPU/ AFRAA relationship and in line with the implementation of a resolution made by the 37th Administrative Council in Nairobi, Kenya, PAPU reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was drawn in 1985, taking into account developments in the mail conveyance business. The revised agreement was signed by both parties in February 2019 at AFRAA headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya;
- ▣ Currently, coordinating the Customs Declaration System (CDS) project being implemented in seventeen (17) Designated Postal Operators. The Project which started in 2019 is expected to be completed in 2021.

5. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MATTERS

- ▣ In 2013, during the 32nd Ordinary Administrative Council the post of Legal Officer of the Pan African Postal Union was created;
- ▣ In 2016, the PAPU Staff Association was established;
- ▣ In 2016, PAPU commissioned a study on the improvement of finances of the Union. The study report was adopted by the 9th Plenipotentiary Conference in Yaoundé, Cameroon;
- ▣ Following the adoption of the study report a new organizational structure was implemented in 2017;
- ▣ PAPU in collaboration with member countries, the UPU and international partners has developed annual programmes for conferences, workshops, seminars and roundtables targeting staff of postal administrations for skills development and upgrading the African Post.

- ▣ In 2015, through a resolution passed by the 34th Administrative Council session in Khartoum, Sudan, two regional training centers for English and French African countries were established in Cairo in Egypt and Yaoundé in Cameroon, respectively;

6. COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

- ▣ PAPU adopted a deliberate policy of enhancing cooperation among member states and between PAPU and international partners;
- ▣ Cooperation with the African Union Commission has been strengthened since 2004 resulting in close collaboration and support for the development of the postal sector in Africa;
- ▣ PAPU and UPU have always collaborated on implementation of the annual programme of activities and co-financing of joint development activities, under which priorities areas have been identified, key among them, e-commerce, quality of service improvement, financial services and digitization and reform among others;.
- ▣ PAPU and Postal Operators from Industrialized countries such as La Poste France, Swiss Post, Post Italiana, and USPS have developed close cooperation and technical and financial support;
- ▣ Similarly, close cooperation has been forged with several developing countries including India Post, Korea Post, Emirates Post and China State Post Bureau. This has resulted in securing equipment, experts and training opportunities for members;
- ▣ On Restricted Unions, collaboration with the Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC), Asia Pacific, American, Spain and Portugal and PostEurop was enhanced;
- ▣ Collaboration among member states is symbolized in the establishment of the Africa Support Committee to harmonize positions of member countries on UPU key content issues and for election into key organs of the UPU The Committee is also responsible for support to prospective UPU congresses host countries;
- ▣ The General Secretariat takes advantage of the existing cooperation agreement with Alliance Française in Arusha to participate in a programme aimed at enhancing interaction not only between them and PAPU but also among all regional and international organizations based in Arusha. Our staff participated in the Francophonie Week festivities and played various roles depending on their specialties and professional background;
- ▣ In 2013, PAPU financed and availed an Expert who prepared the Draft Financial Regulations, Staff Rules and Regulations, and the constitutive Annual Budget of WAPCO. The Expert also participated and gave clarifications during the Ministerial Conference where these documents were discussed and adopted;
- ▣ As part of the Union's assistance towards development of postal services within the sub-regions of Africa, PAPU contributed USD 7,500 in 2015, towards the Communications Regulators Association

of Southern Africa (CRASA) for a study on Postal Sector Reforms in Southern African Development Community (SADC);

- ▣ In 2017, the African Support Committee was re-established for the organization of the UPU Extraordinary Congress in 2018, in Addis Ababa, the 27th Congress in 2020 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire and monitoring key UPU content issues;

- ▣ Since 2017, as part of the promotion of the image of the Union in the host country, PAPU actively participates during the "Open Day" of the international organizations present in Arusha organized by the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunal (MICT);

- ▣ In 2017, PAPU participated in the launch of the Dot Africa project on behalf AUC during which the DotAfrica flag was proudly mounted on Africa's highest point of Mount Kilimanjaro;

- ▣ In 2018, PAPU signed an MOU with European Conference of Postal And Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) represented by European Committee for Postal Regulation (CERP) during the UPU Extraordinary Congress in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;

- ▣ In 2019 PAPU and China Post State Post Bureau signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at strengthening Sino-African bilateral cooperation;

- ▣ During the 3rd Extra ordinary UPU Congress held in Geneva in September 2019, PAPU through the TEAM Approach coordinated discussions on remuneration of E-format items resulting in the adoption of a compromise proposal, Option V averting the withdrawal of the United States from the UPU.

7. CONCLUSION

- ▣ Africa's solidarity has served the Union well and should be continued;

- ▣ All member countries of the African Union should join PAPU to ensure Africa-wide integration of postal development;

- ▣ Commitment to the realization of the vision, mission and strategic objectives to ensure that PAPU's mandate of fostering the development of postal services in Africa is enhanced;

- ▣ PAPU is and will continue to be an important co-ordination entity for development and cooperation in the postal sector in Africa and for harmonized positions to safeguard Africa's interests at the international arena;

- ▣ The postal sector is a key element of the communication industry and should be prioritized in the national development plans of member states;

- ▣ Passionate appeal to member States to continue supporting the General Secretariat in the implementation of the Union's mandate through active participation in its programme of activities including regular financial contributions.