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**STRATEGY COMMITTEE (SC)
5, 6 JUNE 2024 ARUSHA, TANZANIA**

**PAPU TASK FORCE (PTF) ON THE OPENING UP OF THE UPU TO WIDER SECTOR POSTAL PLAYERS
REPORT**

1. Subject Opening Up of The UPU to Wider Sector Postal Players (PTF) Report	References/Paragraphs PAPU Action Plan 2022-2025
2. Decisions expected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the Report. • Consider the Recommendations of the Task Force. 	

1. INTRODUCTION

The PAPU Task Force on the Opening Up of the UPU to Wider Sector Postal Players met virtually on 12 March 2024. During the meeting, two (2) main issues on the agenda were deliberated on, as indicated below.

2. THE MAIN ISSUES TABLED AND DISCUSSED

The following salient issues were deliberated on during the meeting:

- i. Final Report on the PAPU Task Force on the UPU Opening up to Wider Postal Sector Players;
- ii. PAPU Task Force Roadmap and Achievements:

3. REPORT SUBMISSION

The detailed report for the Working Group meeting is annexed herewith as **Annexure 1**.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force tables the following recommendations for consideration and adoption by the Strategy Committee:

4.1 On the Final Report on the PAPU Task Force on the UPU Opening up to Wider Postal Sector Players

To take note of the Decisions made during the fourth Extraordinary UPU Congress in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, held in October 2023 as follows:

- a) WPSPs were directed to ensure a truly interconnected, efficient, and universal postal service for all;
- b) The changes were introduced in three principal areas as follows:
 - i) To amend and better define the UPU's institutional framework to encourage the participation of WPSPs in UPU discussions and decision-making processes through the organization's Consultative Committee;
 - ii) To enable WPSPs' eventual access to specific sets of UPU products and services to encourage seamless network interconnection and improve the global quality of postal services;
 - iii) To facilitate the exchange of postal items between national postal operators and WPSPs, the UPU will work to establish the operational, technical, legal, and policy frameworks needed.
 - iv) UPU will also push forward the development of a solution that will bring together the demand and supply of UPU-certified international postal transport services, as well as an interface allowing WPSPs to easily capture and generate postal data required to ship items through the UPU's universal postal network;
 - v) To ensure the organization's continued modernization amidst rapid market changes and increasing competition

4.2 On PAPU Task Force Roadmap and Achievements

- i) To consider the proposal to transform the Task Force as a Working Group within the Strategy Committee, albeit with a refined mandate;
- ii) Consider the name of the proposed Working Group and guide it.

5. DECISIONS EXPECTED

This document is submitted for the Committee to:

- i) Adopt the Report.
- ii) Consider the Recommendations of the Task Force.



PAPU TASK FORCE (PTF) ON THE OPENING UP OF THE UPU TO WIDER SECTOR POSTAL PLAYERS REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Task Force on Opening Up of the UPU to Wider Sector Players held its virtual meeting on 12th March 2024 to present its Final Report after the 4th Extraordinary Congress in October 2023 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The meeting also presented an outline of the Task Force's achievements against its objectives as per the ToRs, and finally concluded with recommendations on the way forward.

2. OPENING REMARKS

2.1 Welcome Remarks by the Chairperson

The Chairperson, Mrs. BIKAY MUTLEN Pauline Catherine (Cameroon), called the meeting to order and commenced deliberations at 08:20 hrs. (GMT). She welcomed all participants to the meeting and expressed gratitude for the honor of chairing this important Task Force meeting, which had been on the table, triggering debate in many UPU fora and others for quite some time until it came to its logical conclusion in October 2023 during the fourth Extraordinary UPU Congress in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She called upon participants to feel free and contribute positively to the deliberations during the meeting.

2.2 Opening Remarks by the Secretary General

In his opening remarks, the PAPU Secretary General welcomed the participants to the meeting and saluted the Chairperson of the PAPU Task Force, Madam Pauline Bikay Mutlen, and the entire Bureau for their visionary stewardship. He also thanked participants who were drawn from African Postal Task Force Membership, as well as others from the general PAPU Universe, and requested them to be open-minded for optimum grasp and assimilation of the issues to be discussed. He shared the main objective of the meeting was to apprise members about the developments on the subject of Opening Up the UPU to WPSPs, specifically after the fourth Extraordinary UPU Congress in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in October 2023. He indicated that this culminated in a series of meetings, consultations, and engagements, the genesis of which dates back to the Doha Congress in 2012, Istanbul in 2016, and the Abidjan Congress in 2021. He seized the opportunity to congratulate the African postal fraternity for having worked in unison during the Congress and achieved what was needed from the Extraordinary Congress. As a recap, he recalled that a UPU Task Force on the 'Opening up' of the Union was created by the Council of Administration of the UPU to implement the Congress mandate. In that regard, the Pan African Postal

Union (PAPU) deemed it necessary to establish a similar Task Force within its governance structures to unpack the 'Opening Up' subject and enlighten PAPU Members on the same to guide the crafting of an African position in preparation for the aforementioned Extra-ordinary Congress which was held from 1- 5 October. 2023 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He continued by stating that since the UPU is Opened up and the PAPU TF is deemed to have achieved its mandate, it was up to members to decide whether the TF should be wound up. Alternatively, its mandate could be re-constituted for reassignment to other tasks. On this note, he once more thanked the Chairperson, the Bureau, and the Membership of the Task Force for untiringly and diligently working towards achieving its mandate and finally wished participants fruitful deliberations.

3. CONFIRMATION OF BUREAU

The General Secretariat confirmed the presence of the Bureau Membership as follows:

CHAIR:	CAMEROON
1ST VICE CHAIR:	ALGERIA
2ND VICE CHAIR:	- VACANT
RAPPORTEUR:	- VACANT
SECRETARIAT:	PAPU SECRETARIAT

The Task Force was observed lacking a second Vice Chair and rapporteurs. Thus, the members were requested to volunteer as the second Vice Chair and rapporteurs of the Working Group. However, no Member volunteered to fill those vacant positions, and the meeting proceeded as such.

4. Participation

4.1 Member States

Over 48 participants attended the meeting from the following PAPU Member States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Congo Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Egypt, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

4.2 PAPU General Secretariat

The Secretary General, Dr. Sifundo Chief Moyo, and the General Secretariat Team attended the meeting.

5. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The following Agenda was adopted to guide the meeting proceedings:

- a) Final Report on the PAPU Task Force on the UPU Opening up to Wider Postal Sector Players
- b) PAPU Task Force Roadmap and Achievements:
 - i. Objectives;

- ii. Achievements;
- iii. Recommendation to Wind up the Task Force;
- c) Date and Venue of the next meeting;
- d) Any Other Business;
- e) Closing.

6. PRESENTATION ON THE FINAL REPORT ON THE PAPU TASK FORCE ON THE UPU OPENING UP TO WIDER POSTAL SECTOR PLAYERS

a) Introduction

The General Secretariat gave an overview of the Final Report on the PAPU Task Force on the UPU Opening up to Wider Postal Sector Players vide **PAPU/SC/PTF/01/2024- Doc No. 02**.

The final report summarized the discussions on how the UPU should interface with WPSPs, who are operators and partners across the postal supply chain that fall outside the UPU's network of Government-Designated Operators. The debate on the subject has been ongoing from the Istanbul Congress in 2016 to the 27th UPU Congress, held in 2021 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The final report further highlighted that the Abidjan Congress set up a UPU Task Force to schedule and prioritize the work on opening up the UPU to WPSPs. It also agreed to hold a fourth UPU Extraordinary Congress to decide on the matter.

In addition, to fully understand the issues surrounding the opening up of the UPU and to coordinate the effective participation of the PAPU Member States, the Final Report highlighted that PAPU created a Task Force on the Opening up of the UPU to WPSPs in 2021 within its governance structures to follow up on the matter to its logical conclusion. Thus, it presented the outcomes of the UPU's fourth Extraordinary Congress, which was held from 1st to 5th October 2023 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where a suite of proposals to expand and formalize the UPU's relationship with WPSPs, including private sector companies were approved as structured below.

b) Workstreams

The UPU Task Force on Opening up of the UPU to WPSPs worked through 3 Workstreams which guided their work as follows:

- i) **Workstream 1:** Institutional Framework;
- ii) **Workstream 2:** Products and Services;
- iii) **Workstream 3:** Reform as a Continuum.

c) Decisions to Enhance the UPU's Engagement

As far as the proposals to enhance the UPU's engagement with WPSPs were concerned, the following critical Decisions were made:

- i) WPSPs were directed to ensure a truly interconnected, efficient, and universal postal service for all;
- ii) The changes were introduced in three principal areas as follows:
 - a. To amend and better define the UPU's institutional framework to encourage the participation of WPSPs in UPU discussions and decision-making processes through the organization's Consultative Committee;
 - b. To enable WPSPs' eventual access to specific sets of UPU products and services to encourage seamless network interconnection and improve the global quality of postal services;
 - c. Following these decisions, the UPU will work to establish the operational, technical, legal, and policy frameworks needed to facilitate the exchange of postal items between national postal operators and WPSPs.
- iii) UPU will also push forward the development of a solution that will bring together the demand and supply of UPU-certified international postal transport services, as well as an interface allowing WPSPs to easily capture and generate postal data required to ship items through the UPU's universal postal network;
- iv) These approved proposals provide a Roadmap to ensure the organization's continued modernization amidst rapid market changes and increasing competition.

The PAPU Task Force's final report on the UPU's opening up was adopted as presented.

7. PAPU TASK FORCE ROADMAP AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The PAPU General Secretariat presented **PAPU/SC/PTF/01/2024 - Doc No. 03** as an overview of the PAPU Task Force Roadmap and Achievements. The paper was structured as presented herein.

a) Introduction

PAPU was keen to play its role in developing a coordinated and well-informed African position during CA sessions and at the Extra Ordinary Congress on the Opening Up of the UPU, which was held in October 2023. Clear objectives were set up to encapsulate this broad mandate.

Thus, at its inaugural meeting from 15th to 17th February 2022, the Strategy Committee (SC) adopted the Terms of Reference for the Task Force on the Opening up of the UPU to Wider Sector Postal Players to map out the discussions on the subject.

The paper was therefore tabled to outline the Task Force's achievements against its objectives as per the ToRs and finally concluded with recommendations on the way forward.

b) Objectives

The following were the PAPU Task Force's objectives as per the Terms of Reference:

- i) Study resolution C11/2021, advise upon and prepare any relevant proposals in due consideration of policy, legal, regulatory, and operational point of view from the African perspective for further consideration by an Extraordinary Congress in 2023;
- ii) Examine the implications of Opening Up the Union to Wider Postal Sector Players in Africa Member States, particularly in the areas of sustainability, cooperation, and interaction among stakeholders, and in ensuring the satisfaction of customers' changing needs;
- iii) Study, advise upon, and prepare Congress proposal (s), where necessary, on the format of the opening Up of the Union to Wider Postal Sector Players also embracing areas such as labeling standards, data protection, and data storage;
- iv) Collate and co-ordinate the PAPU Member States' position on the subject of opening up the UPU to wider stakeholders;
- v) Conduct an impact assessment of any submitted proposals and prioritize such studies as far as Africa is concerned, as appropriate;
- vi) Ensure, per the relevant rules, the broadest possible participation and pooling of expert resources of PAPU Members;
- vii) Ensure that a detailed report with a draft resolution is submitted to the 40th Ordinary PAPU Administrative Council Session for consideration and approval before the S2 CA Session;
- viii) The Task Force's execution of work and delivery dates are guided and affected by the following deadlines:
 - a) By S1 (April 2022): the UPU Task Force will submit to the CA finalized conversion of the different elements contained in the Congress instructions.
 - b) By S2 (October 2022): Presentation of draft CA proposals for further submission to the fourth Extraordinary Congress on the further opening of the Union to wider postal sector players

c) Achievements

The Task Force's objectives, as outlined above, were accomplished through various means, including consultations with stakeholders during POC/CA Meetings, online meetings with Restricted Unions & Partners, online meetings with Member States, and participation and coordination at the fourth Extraordinary Congress held from 1st to 5th October 2023 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The General Secretariat also produced position papers and reports and made presentations to augment the output of other stakeholders.

These were synthesized as follows:

- i. PAPU Task Force Meetings on the Opening Up of the UPU;

- ii. African Forum on the Opening up of the UPU to Wider Postal Sector Players;
- iii. Participation in UPU Task Force activities;
- iv. Participation in the fourth UPU Extraordinary Congress in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

d) Recommendation to Wind Up the Task Force

Considering that the objectives for which the TF was created were duly accomplished, it is recommended that the TF be wound up and an appropriate report be made to the Strategy Committee in June 2024.

In general, the meeting expressed gratitude for the delivery of the Task Force during its tenure, considering that it worked hard and duly accomplished its mandate. Therefore, during deliberations, participants concluded that the Task Force's work should continue since reforms are ongoing. Thus, a follow-up will be needed.

Given the foregoing, it was proposed that the Task Force be turned into a fully-fledged Working Group with a Bureau to execute the work smoothly. It was also decided that the ToRs should be revisited and recast. Having taken this position, the General Secretariat was tasked to issue a circular to request the Task Force Members to provide their views on the following critical aspects, collate the information, and liaise with the following:

- i. Whether the Task Force should be maintained as a Task Force or it should be a Working Group within the Strategy Committee;
- ii. Stemming from item i) above, what should be the resultant body's name?
- iii. Review the Terms of Reference (ToRs) to ensure they align with the newly recommended mandate.

8. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date and venue of the next meeting will be communicated by the General Secretariat once consultations with the Chair and management are concluded. It is important to note that the report of the Task Force will be tabled to the Strategy Committee in June 2024 ahead of the 42nd PAPU Ordinary Session of the Administrative Council in Arusha, Tanzania.

It was further stressed that the Task Force should meet and review the revised Terms of Reference for the "would be" Working Group before tabling the same to the 42nd Ordinary Session of the PAPU Administrative Council.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were asked to share their contacts and forward their views and ideas to the general secretariat, which would benefit the Task Force or the Working Group.

10. CLOSING

10.1 Secretary General Closing Remarks

In his closing remarks, the Secretary General thanked the members and indicated that the PAPU Taskforce greatly benefited from Egypt and Algeria's contributions in attaining its objectives, as they shared their knowledge and experience stemming from their participation as the UPU Task Force on Opening Up Co-Chair (Algeria) and UPU CA C2 Co-Chair (Egypt). Furthermore, he thanked the Chair and the participants for joining the meeting.

10.2 Chairperson's Closing Remarks

In her remarks, the chairperson also thanked the participants for joining the meeting, the Members of the Bureau for their support, which made it possible for the Task Force to execute its work diligently, and the General Secretariat for effectively organizing the Task Force Meetings from its inception until the Riyadh Congress.

The Chair closed the meeting at **10:20 GMT**.