

POSTAL NEWS

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1. Cuba Re-elected to Two Universal Postal Union Councils

HAVANA, Cuba, August 13 (acn) Cuba has just been re-elected to serve as a member of two bodies of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). The designation was made during the 24th congress of the organization, held in Bern, Switzerland.

Cuban News Agency

The island's re-election as a member of the organization's Administrative Council and its Postal Operations Council corroborates its prestige at the most diverse levels of international cooperation.

Cuba has carried out a systematic work within the UPU, which aims at finding solutions to the complex challenges posed to postal services around the world, aggravated under the conditions of globalization under the standards of neo-liberalism, reported the Cuban Foreign Ministry's website.

Created in 1874, the UPU is the United Nations organization specialized in coordinating cooperation in the postal sector around the world. With a total of 191 members, its Administrative Council guarantees the continuity of its work between congresses, executes the union's activities, and examines regulatory, managerial and legal issues.

According to the source, Cuba will continue contributing to the effective coordination of technical assistance between member countries, which benefits less developed nations.

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2. UPU adopts new world postal strategy

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GENEVA, Aug. 12 (Xinhua) -- The 24th congress of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) closed here Tuesday with the adoption of a new world postal strategy and the election of a new leadership.

The strategy focuses on modernizing global postal services at all levels, whether in terms of institutional reform or quality of service improvement, postal security and universal postal service, or raising awareness of the impact of postal services on the environment and climate change, according to a UPU press release.

The congress also adopted the new Postal Payment Service Agreement, which is expected to enable postal operators to move more quickly towards offering faster, more secure and more accessible electronic money transfer services to unbanked populations in regions that are poorly served by formal money transfer networks.

Edouard Dayan was re-elected director-general of the UPU. His deputy, Huang Guozhong, from China, was likewise re-elected.

The quadrennial UPU event brought together over 2,500 representatives from 179 of the UPU's total 191 members.

Established in 1874 and headquartered in Switzerland's Berne, the UPU is a specialized UN agency that coordinates postal policies between members and hence the worldwide postal system.

Editor: Yao

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3. Business Scene

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

IT HAS not been ascertained whether there was a gremlin in the works or whether a typographical error was made by a copy editor, but either way, Yitz Raab, the financial officer of KCPS & Company, a Tel Aviv based investment, management and private equity firm was most disconcerted to read that only 8 per cent of the funds it manages is foreign money. The correct percentage is 80%, which indicates just how big a difference a zero can make.

KCPS wasted little time in contacting the reporter who had interviewed him. The reporter who had in fact quoted him correctly and was not responsible for the error, had thought to relax on Friday, but had been roused from sleep because of the missing zero, and had spent the weekend brooding about it.

KCPS which has been able to attract a number of investment professionals, immigrants and returning Israelis from top-tier international investment firms is encouraging the Treasury and the Israel Tax Authority to enforce tax incentives to attract talent from the finance world to Israel .

In the interview that he gave to the Post last week, Raab said that it was a good time to bring back Israelis and encourage aliyah of top-tier finance professionals and investment managers, especially at time when finance professionals were being laid off work in other parts of the world. Raab added that the firm was getting 5 to 10 calls a week from finance professionals overseas looking to come to Israel on a permanent basis.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY for the communities in which they are headquartered or for the weaker sectors of society has increasingly become a hallmark of major Israeli companies, several of which have more than one project to which they make monetary or hands on contributions or both.

One such example is Office Depot, which inter alia supports Aleh Israel 's largest network of residential facilities for children with severe physical and cognitive disabilities and Haim, another non-profit organization that cares for children with cancer. But Israel, perhaps more than most other countries is a place in which people with disabilities are encouraged to focus more on their abilities and to keep setting new challenges for themselves to prove their untapped potential.

Thus the youngsters of these two organizations - or at least some of them - are capable of making stick pins and cards which can be sold to help pay for their treatment and the maintenance of their facilities. But somebody has to sell these items, which is exactly what Office Depot CEO Nissim Memo did when he visited the Office Depot branch in the Dan Design Center . Office Depot owes its success in part to the community, and must therefore return something to the community, said Memo.

"It is a privilege to help a special child," he said, adding that Office Depot branches throughout the country were committed to helping Aleh and Haim. Before leaving the branch in the Dan Design Center, Memo purchased several pins and cards for which he paid from his own pocket.

CHANCES ARE high that if you're buying an apartment in one of the residential projects being built by leading Israeli construction companies such as A. Dori, Malibu, Africa Israel, Kardin or Rassco, that your kitchen has been manufactured and designed by Regba. Israel's veteran producer of kitchens of all shapes and sizes, has signed a NIS 10 million contract to supply high quality kitchens in residential projects of the above mentioned companies all over Israel.

KUPAT HOLIM Meuhedet has chosen eminent cardiologist Professor Yehuda Adler to manage its Misgav Ladach hospital in Jerusalem. According to Meuhedet director-general Shmuel Mualem, Adler's achievements as a talented physician and an efficient administrator make him the ideal person to transform Misgav Ladach into one of the leading hospitals in the capital. Adler, 45, married and the father of three also serves as the secretary of the heart rehabilitation division of the Israel Association of Cardiologists.

HOD HASHARON-based Net Post is on the verge of signing a contract with a Romanian distributor who will bring the company's services to the attention of thousands of Romanian business enterprises and help to boost the company's income to approximately NIS 8m. per year. Established in 1998, Net Post specializes in computerized multi-faceted sales point programs, and is jointly owned by Avi Kaminsky and Hagai Bar, who have recently expanded the company's presence in Romania through its entry into pharmacies and Pharm stores.

In Israel it counts SuperPharm among its clients along with mini markets, super markets, major tourist sites, restaurants and fast food outlets. All in all it covers some 4,000 sales points in Israel and its market strategy is now directed at Europe .

IT MAY have absolutely nothing to do with the fact that this is Israel's 60th anniversary year, but it's taken nearly all of those six decades for the Israel Postal Company to be elected to the Postal Operations Council on the Universal Postal Union. Israel has been a member of the UPU since December, 1949, but it was only at the 24th Universal Postal Congress currently being held in Geneva, that Israel finally got to be part of the decision-making process through its election to the POC.

The UPU by the way, is older than the United Nations, and today is a UN agency with some 200 countries among its members. Israel Postal Company director-general Avi Hochman said that Israel had been working diligently towards international recognition and direct influence in all its activities in the international community.

According to Israel's Foreign Affairs Ministry, Israel's election to international bodies is hampered by the anti-Israel attitudes that permeate so many UN institutions and many of the UN's member states. Every vote that Israel wins is the result of a complex process of bilateral negotiations in the multilateral context. Israel's election by almost 90 votes is the result of some of four years of work and of cooperative efforts between the Foreign Ministry, the Postal Company and the Communications Ministry. "This is a significant achievement for Israel in the framework of the UN institutions. We do not enjoy many such events and this success leaves me hopeful for the future," said Itzhak Levanon, Israel's ambassador to the UN in Geneva .

THE FACT that the Ramat Aviv Mall is up for sale has not unduly affected traffic, sales or new ventures within the mall itself. The Madina Milano cosmetics company is opening up its new flagship store in the Ramat Aviv Mall next Sunday, August 17 and is simultaneously launching its new fall-winter collection "Fall into Beau".

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4. ISRAEL HONORED AT WORLD POSTAL BODY

WASHINGTON (JTA) August 15, 2008. — Israel was elected to the executive board of a United Nations-regulated international postal organization. The Universal Postal Union, convening this month in Geneva, voted to include Israel on its Postal Operations Council. The decision means that, for the next four years, the Israel Postal Company will have a say in setting policies for international postal services, financial issues and standards in quality of service. Israel has been a member of the Universal Postal Union, which is under the aegis of the United Nations, since December 1949, but was never elected to serve on the Operations Council. The election of Israel to such international organizations is virtually impossible due to the anti-Israeli atmosphere generally prevailing in U.N. institutions.

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Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

E-mail address : chairulanwar49@operamail.com, uyungchairul@plasa.com.