

## UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

*Convention and final protocol signed at Washington June 15, 1897*<sup>1</sup>  
*Ratified and approved by the Postmaster General of the United States*  
*November 16, 1897*  
*Approved by the President of the United States November 16, 1897*  
*Entered into force January 1, 1899*  
*Terminated by convention of May 26, 1906*<sup>2</sup>

30 Stat. 1629; Post Office Department print

[TRANSLATION]

*Universal Postal Convention concluded between Germany and the German Protectorates, The Greater Republic of Central America, the United States of America, the Argentine Republic, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, The Empire of China, the Republic of Colombia, the Independent State of Congo, the Kingdom of Korea, the Republic of Costa Rica, Denmark and the Danish Colonies, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ecuador, Spain and the Spanish Colonies, France, the French Colonies, Great Britain and various British Colonies, British India, the British Colonies of Australasia, Canada, the British Colonies of South Africa, Greece, Guatemala, the Republic of Haiti, the Republic of Hawaii, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Liberia, Luxemburg, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, the Orange Free State, Paraguay, the Netherlands, the Netherlands Colonies, Peru, Persia, Portugal and the Portuguese Colonies, Roumania, Russia, Servia, the Kingdom of Siam, the South African Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, the Regency of Tunis, Turkey, Uruguay, and the United States of Venezuela.*

The undersigned, plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the countries above enumerated, being assembled in Congress at Washington, by virtue of Article 25 of the Universal Postal Convention concluded at Vienna on

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<sup>1</sup> For text of regulations for execution of the convention, see 30 Stat. 1655.

<sup>2</sup> *Post*, p. 492.

the 4th of July 1891,<sup>3</sup> have by common consent, and subject to ratification, revised said Convention, in conformity with the following stipulations:

#### ARTICLE 1

The countries between which the present Convention is concluded, as well as those which may adhere to it hereafter, form, under the title of *Universal Postal Union*, a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of articles of correspondence between their post-offices.

#### ARTICLE 2

The stipulations of this Convention extend to letters, to single post-cards and post-cards with paid reply, prints of every kind, commercial papers and samples of merchandise originating in one of the countries of the Union, and intended for another of those countries. They also apply to the exchange by mail of the articles above mentioned between the countries of the Union and the countries foreign to the Union, whenever the services of two of the contracting parties at least are used for that exchange.

#### ARTICLE 3

1.—The Postal Administrations of neighboring countries, or countries able to correspond directly with each other without using the intermediary of the services of a third Administration, determine, by mutual agreement, the conditions of the conveyance of mails which they exchange across the frontier, or from one frontier to the other.

2.—Unless there be a contrary arrangement, the direct maritime-conveyance performed between two countries by means of packets or vessels depending upon one of them, shall be considered as a third service, and this conveyance, as well as that performed between two offices of the same country by the intermediary of maritime or territorial services depending upon another country, is regulated by the stipulations of the following Article.

#### ARTICLE 4

1.—The right of transit is guaranteed throughout the entire territory of the Union.

2.—Consequently, the several Postal Administrations of the Union may send reciprocally, through the intermediary of one or of several of them, as well closed mails as correspondence in open-mail according to the needs of the traffic, and the convenience of the postal service.

3.—The correspondence exchanged, whether in open-mail or in closed mails between two Administrations of the Union, by means of the services of one or several other Administrations of the Union, is subject to the following transit charges, to be paid to each of the countries traversed, or whose services participate in the conveyance, viz:

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<sup>3</sup> *Ante*, p. 188.

1st. For territorial conveyance, 2 francs per kilogram of letters and post-cards, and 25 centimes per kilogram of other articles;

2nd. For maritime conveyance:

a. the territorial transit rates, if the distance traversed does not exceed 300 nautical miles. Nevertheless, the maritime conveyance on a route not exceeding 300 nautical miles is gratuitous if the Administration interested receives already, on account of mails or correspondence conveyed, the remuneration applicable to territorial transit;

b. 5 francs per kilogram of letters and post cards and 50 centimes per kilogram of other articles, for exchanges effected on a route exceeding 300 nautical miles, between countries of Europe, between Europe and the ports of Africa and Asia on the Mediterranean and the Black Sea or between any of these ports, and between Europe and North America. The same rates are applicable to conveyances secured within the entire jurisdiction of the Union between two ports of one and the same State, as well as between the ports of two States served by the same line of steamers when the maritime conveyance does not exceed 1500 nautical miles;

c. 15 francs per kilogram of letters and post cards and 1 franc per kilogram of other articles, for all conveyances not coming under the categories mentioned under "a" and "b" above. In the case of maritime conveyance effected by two or several Administrations, the charges for the entire conveyance cannot exceed 15 francs per kilogram of letters and post cards and 1 franc per kilogram of other articles. The charges are, in such cases, divided between the Administrations participating in the service *pro rata* for the distances traversed, without prejudice to other arrangements which may be made between the parties interested.

4.—The transit rates specified in the present Article do not apply either to conveyance by means of services depending upon Administrations foreign to the Union, or to conveyance within the Union by means of extraordinary services specially established or maintained by one Administration, either in the interest, or at the request of one or several other Administrations. The conditions of the last mentioned category of conveyance are regulated by mutual agreement between the Administrations interested.

Moreover, wherever the transit, either territorial or maritime, is at present gratuitous or subject to more advantageous conditions, that state of affairs is maintained.

5.—It is however understood:

1st that the charges for territorial transit shall be reduced, viz:

5%, during the first two years of the application of the present Convention;

10%, during the two following years;

15%, after four years;

2nd that countries whose receipts and expenditure for territorial transit together do not exceed the sum of 5,000 francs per year and whose expenditure exceeds their receipts for that transit, are exempt from any payment on this score;

3d that the maritime transit rates of 15 francs per kilogram of letters and post cards provided under the letter c of section 3 preceding shall be reduced, as follows, viz:

to 14 francs during the first two years of the application of the present Convention;

to 12 francs during the two following years;

to 10 francs after four years.

6.—The expenses of transit are borne by the Administration of the country of origin.

7.—The general settlement of these expenses takes place under the conditions to be determined on in the Regulations of execution<sup>4</sup> referred to in Article 20 hereafter.

8.—The official correspondence mentioned in Section 2 of Article 11 hereafter, the reply halves of double post-cards returned to the country of origin, articles reforwarded or missent, undeliverable articles, return-receipts, money orders, and all other documents relative to the postal service, are exempt from all transit charges, whether territorial or maritime.

#### ARTICLE 5

1.—The rates of postage for the conveyance of postal articles throughout the entire extent of the Union, including their delivery at the residence of the addressees in the countries of the Union where a delivery service is or shall be organized, are fixed as follows:

1st. For letters, 25 centimes in case of prepayment, and double that amount in the contrary case, for each letter and for every weight of 15 grams or fraction of 15 grams;

2nd. For post-cards, in case of prepayment, 10 centimes for a single card, or for each of the two halves of a post-card with paid reply, and double that amount in the contrary case.

3d. For prints of every kind, commercial papers, and samples of merchandise, 5 centimes for each article or packet bearing a particular address, and for every weight of 50 grams or fraction of 50 grams, provided that such article or packet does not contain any letter or manuscript note having the character of actual and personal correspondence, and that it be made up in such a manner as to admit of its being easily examined.

The charge on commercial papers cannot be less than 25 centimes per

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 1, p. 206.

packet, and the charge on samples cannot be less than 10 centimes per packet.

2.—In addition to the rates fixed by the preceding section, there may be levied:

1st. For every article subject to maritime-transit charges of 15 francs per kilogram of letters or post-cards and 1 franc per kilogram of other articles, and in all the relations to which these transit charges are applicable, a uniform surtax which may not exceed 25 centimes per single rate for letters, 5 centimes per post-card, and 5 centimes per 50 grams or fraction of 50 grams for other articles;

2d. For every article conveyed by services depending on Administrations foreign to the Union, or by extraordinary services in the Union giving rise to special expenses, a surtax in proportion to these expenses.

When the rate of prepayment of a single post-card comprises one or the other of the surtaxes authorized by the two preceding sections, the same rate is applicable to each of the halves of a post-card with paid reply.

3.—In case of insufficient prepayment, articles of correspondence of every kind are liable to a charge equal to double the amount of the deficiency, to be paid by the addressees, which charge however may not exceed that which is levied in the country of destination on correspondence not prepaid, of the same nature, weight and origin.

4.—Articles other than letters and post-cards must be prepaid at least in part.

5.—Packets of samples of merchandise may not contain any article having a salable value; they must not exceed 350 grams in weight, or measure more than 30 centimeters in length, 20 centimeters in breadth and 10 centimeters in depth, or if they are in the form of a roll, 30 centimeters in length and 15 centimeters in diameter.

6.—Packets of commercial papers and prints may not exceed 2 kilograms in weight or measure more in any direction than 45 centimeters. Packets in the form of a roll may, however, be admitted to the mails provided they do not exceed 10 centimeters in diameter, and 75 centimeters in length.

#### ARTICLE 6

1.—The articles specified in Article 5 may be registered.

2.—Every registered article is liable, at the charge of the sender:

1st. To the ordinary prepaid rate of postage upon the article, according to its nature;

2nd. To a fixed registration fee of 25 centimes at the maximum, including the issue of a receipt to the sender.

3.—The sender of a registered article may obtain an acknowledgment of

the delivery of said article by paying at the moment of mailing a fixed fee of 25 centimes at the maximum. The same fee may be applied to requests for information relative to registered articles made subsequent to mailing, if the sender has not yet paid the special charge for obtaining a return receipt.

#### ARTICLE 7

1.—Registered articles marked with trade-charges, to be collected on delivery, may be sent, in the mails exchanged between the countries the Administrations of which agree to assure this service.

Articles marked with trade charges are subject to the formalities and rates applicable to registered articles.

The maximum trade charge is fixed, per article, at 1,000 francs, or the equivalent of that sum in the money of the country of destination. Each Administration, however, has the liberty to lower this maximum to 500 francs, per article or to the equivalent of that sum in its own currency.

2.—Unless there be a contrary arrangement, between the Administrations of the countries interested, the amount collected from the addressee must be transmitted to the sender by means of a money order, after deducting the fee for ordinary money orders and a charge of 10 centimes for the service of collection.

The amount of an undeliverable money order of this kind remains at the disposal of the Administration of the country of origin of the article marked with trade charges.

3.—For the loss of a registered article marked with trade charges the responsibility of the postal service is fixed under the conditions determined by Article 8 hereafter for registered articles not marked with trade charges. After the article has been delivered, the Administration of the country of destination is responsible for the amount of the trade charge and must, in case of complaint, prove that the sum collected has been transmitted to the sender, after deducting the fee and charge contemplated by Section 2.

#### ARTICLE 8

1.—In case of the loss of a registered article, and except in case of *force majeure*, the sender, or, at his request, the addressee, is entitled to an indemnity of 50 francs.

2.—The countries disposed to undertake risks arising from cases of *force majeure* are authorized to collect from the sender, on this account, a surtax not to exceed 25 centimes for each registered article.

3.—The obligation to pay the indemnity is incumbent on the Administration to which the dispatching office belongs. There is reserved to that Administration a remedy against the responsible Administration, that is to say, against the Administration on the territory or in the service of which the loss occurred.

In case of loss, under circumstances of *force majeure*, on the territory or in the service of a country undertaking the risks mentioned in the preceding section, of a registered article sent from another country, the country where the loss occurred is responsible for it to the dispatching Office, if the latter, on its part, undertakes risks in cases of *force majeure* over against its senders.

4.—Until the contrary be proved, the responsibility rests with the Administration which, having received the article without making any remark, cannot prove either the delivery to the addressee, or the regular transmission to the next Administration, as the case may be. As regards articles addressed *poste restante*, the responsibility ceases upon delivery to a person who has proved, according to the regulations in force in the country of destination, that his name and description correspond to those indicated in the address.

5.—The payment of the indemnity by the dispatching Office should be made as soon as possible, and at the latest within the period of one year dating from the day of the reclamation. The responsible Office is bound to refund to the dispatching Office without delay the amount of the indemnity paid by the latter.

The Office of origin is authorized to indemnify the sender on account of the intermediary Office or the Office of destination which, after regular application has been made, has allowed a year to elapse without attending to the matter. Moreover, in case an office whose responsibility has been duly established, has originally declined to pay the indemnity, it must take upon itself, in addition to the indemnity, the accessory charges resulting from the unwarranted delay in payment.

6.—It is understood that the application for an indemnity is entertained only if made within the period of one year from the time when the registered article was mailed; after this period has passed, the claimant has no right to any indemnity.

7.—If the loss has occurred during transportation, and it is impossible to ascertain on the territory or in the service of what country the loss took place, the Administrations concerned bear the loss in equal proportions.

8.—Administrations cease to be responsible for registered articles, for which the owners have given a receipt and have accepted them.

#### ARTICLE 9

1.—The sender of a letter or other article may cause it to be withdrawn from the mails, or cause the address to be changed, as long as the article has not been delivered to the addressee.

2.—The request to be formulated for this purpose is transmitted by mail or by telegraph, at the expense of the sender, who must pay, as follows:

1st for every request by mail the charge applicable to a registered single letter;

2nd for every request by telegraph, the charge for the telegram according to the ordinary tariff.

3.—The provisions of this Article are not obligatory in countries the legislation of which does not allow the sender to dispose of an article in course of transportation.

#### ARTICLE 10

Those countries of the Union which have not the franc for their monetary unit fix their postage rates at the equivalents, in their respective currencies, of the rates determined by the various Articles of the present Convention. Such countries have the option of rounding off the fractions in conformity with the Table inserted in the Regulations mentioned in Article 20 of the present Convention.

#### ARTICLE 11

1.—Prepayment of postage on every description of article can be effected only by means of postage-stamps valid in the country of origin for the correspondence of private individuals. It is not, however, permitted to make use, in the international service, of postage-stamps issued for a special and particular purpose, such as postage stamps called commemorative, of a temporary validity.

There are considered as duly prepaid reply post cards bearing postage stamps of the country which issued the cards, and the newspapers or packages of newspapers not bearing postage stamps but whose address shows the words "Abonnements-poste" ('postal subscription') and which are dispatched in virtue of the special arrangement for newspaper subscriptions, mentioned in Article 19 of the present Convention.

2.—Official correspondence relative to the postal service, exchanged between Postal Administrations, between these Administrations and the International Bureau, and between post offices of the countries of the Union, is exempt from prepayment by ordinary postage-stamps, and is alone admitted free.

3.—Correspondence mailed on the high seas in the letter-box of a vessel or by being handed to the captains of vessels may be prepaid by means of the postage-stamps and according to the postage-rates of the country to which said vessel belongs or on which it is dependent. If the mailing on board takes place during the stay of the vessel at one of the two terminal points of the voyage or at one of the intermediate ports of call, prepayment of postage can be effected only by means of the postage-stamps and according to the postage-rates of the country in waters of which the vessel happens to be.

#### ARTICLE 12

1.—Each Administration keeps the whole of the sums which it collects by virtue of the foregoing Articles 5, 6, 7, 10, and 11, except the payments due for the money orders provided by section 2 of Article 7.



2.—Consequently, there is no necessity under this head for any accounts between the several Administrations of the Union, except as regards the payments mentioned in section 1 of the present Article.

3.—Neither the senders nor the addressees of letters and other postal articles can be called upon to pay, either in the country of origin or in that of destination, any postage or any postal fee other than those contemplated by the Articles above-mentioned.

#### ARTICLE 13

1.—Articles of correspondence of every kind are, at the request of the senders, delivered at the residence of the addressees by a special messenger immediately on their arrival, in those countries of the Union which consent to undertake this service in their reciprocal relations.

2.—These articles, which are endorsed “express”, are subject to a special charge for delivery at the residence; this charge is fixed at 30 centimes, and must be paid in full and in advance, by the sender, in addition to the ordinary postage. It belongs to the Administration of the country of origin.

3.—When an article is destined for a locality where there is no post-office, the Postal Administration of the country of destination may levy an additional charge, up to the amount of the rate fixed for delivery by special messenger in its domestic service, a deduction being made of the fixed rate paid by the sender, or its equivalent in the money of the country which levies this additional charge.

4.—“Express” articles upon which the entire charges payable in advance have not been fully prepaid, are delivered by the ordinary means.

#### ARTICLE 14

1.—No additional charge is levied for the reforwarding of postal articles within the interior of the Union.

2.—Undelivered articles do not give rise to a restitution of the transit charges due to intermediary Administrations for the previous conveyance of said articles.

3.—Unpaid letters and post-cards, and insufficiently prepaid articles of every kind, which are returned to the country of origin, owing to their being reforwarded or because they have become undeliverable, are liable, at the expense of the addressees or senders, to the same rates as similar articles addressed directly from the country of the first destination to the country of origin.

#### ARTICLE 15

1.—Closed mails may be exchanged between the post offices of any one of the contracting countries and the commanders of naval squadrons or ships-of-war of the same country stationed abroad, through the intermediary of the territorial or maritime services depending on other countries.

2.—Articles of every kind enclosed in these mails must consist exclusively of those addressed to or sent by the officers and crews of the vessels for which the mails are destined or from which they are dispatched; the rates and conditions of dispatch applicable to them are determined by the Postal Administration of the country to which the vessels belong, in accordance with its domestic regulations.

3.—Unless there be a contrary arrangement between the Offices interested, the Post Office which dispatches or receives the mails in question is accountable to the intermediary Offices for the transit expenses calculated in conformity with the provisions of Article 4.

#### ARTICLE 16

1.—Circulation shall not be given to commercial papers, samples and prints which do not fulfill the conditions prescribed for articles of these categories by Article 5 of the present Convention and by the Regulations for its execution provided for in Article 20.

2.—If any of these articles be given circulation, they are sent back to the office of origin, and, if possible, returned to the sender.

3.—It is forbidden:

1st to send by mail:

- a) samples and other articles which, from their nature, may prove dangerous to the postal employés, soil or injure the correspondence;
- b) explosive, inflammable or dangerous substances; animals and insects, living or dead, excepting the cases provided for in the detailed Regulations.

2nd to insert in ordinary or registered articles placed in the mails:

- a) current coin;
- b) articles liable to customs duty;
- c) gold or silver bullion, precious stones, jewelry, and other precious articles, but only in case their insertion or transmission is prohibited by the legislation of the countries concerned.

4.—Articles coming under the prohibition of section 3 preceding which have been forwarded erroneously, should be returned to the office of origin, except in cases where the Administration of the country of destination is authorized by its legislation or by its domestic regulations to dispose of them otherwise.

Explosive, inflammable or dangerous substances, however, are not returned to the office of origin; they are destroyed on the spot under the direction of the Administration which detects their presence.

5.—There is, moreover, reserved to the Government of every country of the Union the right to refuse to convey over its territory, or to deliver, as well articles liable to the reduced rate in regard to which the laws, ordinances

or decrees which regulate the conditions of their publication or circulation in that country have not been complied with, as correspondence of every kind which bears ostensibly inscriptions, designs, etc. forbidden by the legal enactments or regulations in force in the same country.

#### ARTICLE 17

1.—The Offices of the Union which have relations with countries situated outside the Union must lend their aid to all the other Offices of the Union for the transmission in open mail, through their intermediary, of articles of correspondence destined for or originating in such countries.

2.—As regards the transit charges on articles of every kind and responsibility in the matter of registered articles, the articles of correspondence in question are treated :

relative to their conveyance within the jurisdiction of the Union, in accordance with the stipulations of the present Convention;

relative to their conveyance outside the limits of the Union, in accordance with the conditions notified by the Office of the Union which serves as intermediary.

Nevertheless, the charges for the entire maritime conveyance, within and without the Union, may not exceed 20 francs per kilogram of letters and post cards and 1 franc per kilogram of other articles; if necessary, these charges are divided, *pro rata* for the distances, between the Offices participating in the maritime conveyance.

The transit charges, territorial or maritime, outside as well as within the limits of the Union on the articles of correspondence to which the present Article applies, are ascertained in the same manner as the transit charges relative to articles of correspondence exchanged between countries of the Union.

3.—The transit charges on articles of correspondence destined for countries outside the Union are payable by the Office of the country of origin, which fixes the postage rates of prepayment in its service on said articles; these rates, however, may not be lower than the normal Union rates.

4.—The transit charges on articles of correspondence originating in countries outside the Union are not payable by the Office of the country of destination. That Office delivers without charge the articles which it has received fully prepaid; on the unpaid articles it levies a charge equal to double the prepaid rate applicable in its own service to similar articles destined for the country where said articles originate; and on insufficiently prepaid articles it levies a charge equal to double the amount of the insufficiency; the charge, however, may not exceed that which is levied on unpaid articles of the same nature, weight and origin.

5.—Articles dispatched from one country of the Union to a country outside the Union and vice-versa, through the intermediary of an Office of the

Union, may be transmitted, in both directions, in closed mails, if that mode of transmission is agreed to by the Offices of origin and destination of the mails, with the assent of the intermediary Office.

#### ARTICLE 18

The high contracting parties engage to adopt, or to propose to their respective legislatures, the necessary measures for punishing the fraudulent use, for the prepayment of postal articles, of counterfeit postage-stamps, or postage-stamps which have already been used. They likewise engage to adopt, or to propose to their respective legislatures, the necessary measures for prohibiting and suppressing the fraudulent manufacture, sale, offering for sale, or distribution of embossed and adhesive stamps in use in the postal service, counterfeited or imitated in such a manner as to be mistakable for the embossed and adhesive stamps issued by the Administration of any one of the contracting countries.

#### ARTICLE 19

The services concerning letters and boxes with declared value, and those of money-orders, postal parcels, collection of bills and drafts, books of identity, subscriptions to newspapers, etc., form the subject of special arrangements between the various countries or groups of countries of the Union.

#### ARTICLE 20

1.—The Postal Administrations of the various countries composing the Union are competent to establish by mutual agreement, in Regulations of execution, all the measures of order and detail which are judged necessary.

2.—The several Administrations may, moreover, make among themselves the necessary arrangements on the subject of questions which do not concern the Union generally, provided that those arrangements are not contrary to the present Convention.

3.—The Administrations interested are, however, permitted to conclude mutual agreements for the adoption of lower rates of postage within a radius of 30 kilometers.

#### ARTICLE 21

1.—The present Convention involves no alteration in the legislation of any country as regards anything which is not provided for by the stipulations contained in this Convention.

2.—It does not restrict the right of the contracting parties to maintain and to conclude treaties, as well as to maintain and establish more restricted Unions, with a view to the reduction of postage rates or any other improvement of the postal relations.

## ARTICLE 22

1.—There is maintained, under the name of the *International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union*, a central office, which is conducted under the supervision of the Swiss Postal Administration; the expenses of which are borne by all the Administrations of the Union.

2.—This Bureau continues to be charged with the duty of collecting, collating, publishing and distributing information of every kind which concerns the international postal service; of giving, at the request of the parties concerned, an opinion upon questions in dispute; of making known propositions for modifying the acts of the Congress; of giving notice of the changes adopted, and, in general, of taking up such researches and labors as may be entrusted to it in the interest of the Postal Union.

## ARTICLE 23

1.—In case of disagreement between two or more members of the Union, as to the interpretation of the present Convention or as to the responsibility of an Administration in case of the loss of a registered article, the question in dispute is decided by arbitration. To that end, each of the Administrations concerned chooses another member of the Union not directly interested in the matter.

2.—The decision of the arbitrators is given by an absolute majority of the votes.

3.—In case the votes are equally divided, the arbitrators choose, in order to settle the difference, another Administration equally disinterested in the disputed question.

4.—The provisions of the present Article apply equally to all the Agreements concluded by virtue of Article 19, preceding.

## ARTICLE 24

1.—Countries which have not taken part in the present Convention are admitted to adhere thereto upon their demand.

2.—This adhesion is notified through the diplomatic channel, to the Government of the Swiss Confederation, and by that Government to all the countries of the Union.

3.—It implies, as a right, accession to all the clauses and admission to all the advantages stipulated by the present Convention.

4.—It devolves upon the Government of the Swiss Confederation to determine, by mutual agreement with the Government of the country interested, the share to be contributed by the Administration of this latter country toward the expenses of the International Bureau, and, if necessary, the rates to be levied by that Administration in conformity with Article 10, preceding.

## ARTICLE 25

1.—Congresses of plenipotentiaries of the contracting countries, or simple administrative conferences, according to the importance of the questions to be solved, are held when a demand for them is made or approved by two-thirds, at least, of the Governments or Administrations, as the case may be.

2.—Nevertheless, a Congress must be held at least once every five years.

3.—Each country may be represented either by one or several delegates, or by the delegation of another country. But it is understood that the delegate or delegates of one country can be charged with the representation of two countries only, including the country which they represent.

4.—In the deliberations each country has one vote only.

5.—Each Congress fixes the place of meeting for the next Congress.

6.—For Conferences, the Administrations fix the places of meeting upon the proposal of the International Bureau.

## ARTICLE 26

1.—In the interval which elapses between the meetings, any Postal Administration of a country of the Union has the right to address to the other Administrations belonging to it, through the intermediary of the International Bureau, propositions concerning the regimen of the Union.

In order to be considered, each proposition must be supported by at least 2 Administrations, not counting the one from which the proposition emanates. When the International Bureau does not receive at the same time as the proposition, the necessary number of declarations of support, no notice is taken of the proposition.

2.—Every proposition is subject to the following procedure:

A period of six months is allowed to the Administrations of the Union to examine the propositions, and to transmit to the International Bureau their observations, if any. Amendments are not admitted. The replies are tabulated by the International Bureau and communicated to the Administrations with an invitation to pronounce either for or against the proposition. Those Administrations which have not transmitted their vote within a period of six months, counting from the date of the second circular of the International Bureau notifying them of the observations made, are considered as abstaining from voting.

3.—In order to become binding the propositions must obtain, as follows:

1st. Unanimity of votes, if they involve the addition of new provisions or any modification of the stipulations of the present Article and of Articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 18, 27, 28 and 29;

2nd. Two-thirds of the votes if they involve a modification of stipulations of the Convention other than those of Articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 18, 26, 27, 28 and 29;

3d. Simply an absolute majority, if they affect the interpretation of the stipulations of the Convention, except in the case of dispute contemplated in Article 23 preceding.

4.—Resolutions adopted are sanctioned, in the first two cases, by a diplomatic declaration, which the Government of the Swiss Confederation is charged to prepare and transmit to all the Governments of the contracting countries, and, in the third case, by a simple notification from the International Bureau to all the Administrations of the Union.

5.—No modification or resolution adopted is binding until at least three months after its notification.

#### ARTICLE 27

For the application of Articles 22, 25 and 26 preceding, the following are considered as forming a single country, or a single Administration, as the case may be:

- 1st. The whole of the German Colonies;
- 2nd. The Empire of British India;
- 3d. The Dominion of Canada;
- 4th. The whole of the British Colonies of Australasia;
- 5th. The whole of the other British Colonies;
- 6th. The whole of the Danish Colonies;
- 7th. The whole of the Spanish Colonies;
- 8th. The French Colonies and Protectorates in Indo-China;
- 9th. The whole of the other French Colonies;
- 10th. The whole of the Netherlands Colonies;
- 11th. The whole of the Portuguese Colonies.

#### ARTICLE 28

The present Convention shall be put into execution on the 1st of January, 1899, and shall remain in force during an indefinite period; but each contracting party has the right to withdraw from the Union, by means of a notice given one year in advance by its Government to the Government of the Swiss Confederation.

#### ARTICLE 29

1.—From the date on which the present Convention takes effect, all the stipulations of the Treaties, Conventions, Arrangements, or other Acts previously concluded between the various countries or Administrations, in so far as those stipulations are not in accordance with the terms of the present Convention, are abrogated, without prejudice to the rights reserved by Article 21 preceding.

2.—The present Convention shall be ratified as soon as possible. The Acts of ratification shall be exchanged at Washington.

3.—In faith of which, the plenipotentiaries of the above named countries have signed the present Convention at Washington on the fifteenth of June, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven.

For Germany and the German Protectorates

FRITSCH  
NEUMANN

For the Greater Republic of Central America

N. BOLET PERAZA

For the United States of America

GEORGE S. BATCHELLER  
EDWARD ROSEWATER  
JAS. N. TYNER  
N. M. BROOKS  
A. D. HAZEN

For the Argentine Republic

M. GARCIA MEROU

For Austria

DR. NEUBAUER  
HABBERGER  
STIBRAL

For Belgium

LICHTERVELDE  
STERPIN  
A. LAMBIN

For Bolivia

T. ALEJANDRO SANTOS

For Bosnia-Herzegovina

DR. KAMLER

For Brazil

A. FONTOURA XAVIER

For Bulgaria

IV. STOYANOVITCH

For Chile

R. L. IRARRÁZAVAL

For the Empire of China

For the Republic of Colombia

CLIMACO CALDERON

For the Independent State of the Congo

LICHTERVELDE  
STERPIN  
A. LAMBIN

For the Kingdom of Korea

CHIN POM YE  
For Colonel Ho Sang Min:  
JOHN W. HOYT  
JOHN W. HOYT

For the Republic of Costa Rica

J. B. CALVO

For Denmark and the Danish colonies

C. SVENDSEN

For the Dominican Republic

For Egypt

Y. SABA

For Ecuador

L. F. CARBO

For Spain and the Spanish colonies

ADOLFO ROZABAL  
CARLOS FLOREZ

For France

ANSAULT

For the French colonies

ED. DALMAS

For Great Britain and various British colonies

S. WALPOLE  
H. BUXTON FORMAN  
C. A. KING

For British India

H. M. KISCH

For the British colonies of Australasia

JOHN GAVAN DUFFY

For Canada

WM. WHITE

For the British colonies of South Africa

S. R. FRENCH  
SPENCER TODD

For Greece

ED. HÖHN

For Guatemala

J. NOVELLA

For the Republic of Haiti

J. N. LEGER

For the Republic of Hawaii

For Hungary

PIERRE DE SZALAY  
G. DE HENNYEY



For Italy	For Persia
E. CHIARADIA	MIRZA ALINAGHI KHAN
G. C. VINCI	MUSTECHARUL-VEZAREH
E. DELMATI	For Portugal and the Portuguese colonies
For Japan	SANTO-THYRSO
KENJIRO KOMATSU	For Roumania
KWANKICHI YUKAWA	C. CHIRU
For the Republic of Liberia	R. PREDA
CHAS. HALL ADAMS	For Russia
For Luxemburg	SÉVASTIANOF
For Mr. Havelaar:	For Servia
VAN DER VEEN	PIERRE DE SZALAY
For Mexico	G. DE HENNYEY
A. M. CHAVEZ	For the Kingdom of Siam
I. GARFÍAS	ISAAC TOWNSEND SMITH
M. ZAPATA-VERA	For the South African Republic
For Montenegro	ISAAC VAN ALPHEN
DR. NEUBAUER	For Sweden
HABBERGER	F. H. SCHLYTERN
STIBRAL	For Switzerland
For Norway	J. B. PIDDA
THB. HEYERDAHL	A. STÄGER
For the Orange Free State	C. DELESSERT
For Paraguay	For the Regency of Tunis
JOHN STEWART	THIÉBAUT
For the Netherlands	For Turkey
For Mr. Havelaar:	MOUSTAPHA
VAN DER VEEN	A. FAHRI
VAN DER VEEN	For Uruguay
For the Netherlands colonies	PRUDENCIO DE MURGUIONDO
JOHS. J. PERK	For the United States of Venezuela
For Peru	JOSÉ ANDRADE
ALBERTO FALCON	ALEJANDRO YBARRA

## FINAL PROTOCOL

At the moment of proceeding to sign the Conventions concluded by the Universal Postal Congress of Washington, the undersigned plenipotentiaries have agreed as follows:

### I

Official notice is taken of the declaration made by the British delegation, in the name of its Government, to the effect that it has assigned to the British Colonies and Protectorates of South Africa the vote which Article 27, 5th, of the Convention attributes to the whole of the other British Colonies.

### II

In modification of the stipulation of Article 6 of the Convention, which fixes the maximum registration-fee at 25 centimes, it is agreed that the States

outside of Europe are authorized to maintain this maximum at 50 centimes, including a receipt given to the sender.

### III

In modification of the stipulations of Article 8 of the Convention, it is agreed that, as a temporary measure, the Administrations of the countries outside of Europe, whose legislation is at present opposed to the principle of responsibility, retain the option of postponing the application of that principle until they shall have been able to obtain from the legislative power the authority to introduce it. Up to that time, the other Administrations of the Union are not bound to pay an indemnity for the loss, in their respective services, of registered articles addressed to or originating in the said countries.

### IV

The Dominican Republic, which forms part of the Postal Union, not having been represented at the Congress, the protocol remains open to it in order that it may adhere to the Conventions which have been concluded at the Congress, or only to one or the other of them.

The protocol likewise remains open to the Empire of China, whose delegates at the Congress have declared the intention of that country to enter the Universal Postal Union on a date to be fixed hereafter.

It also remains open to the Orange Free State, whose representative has declared the intention of that country to adhere to the Universal Postal Union.

### V

The protocol remains open to those countries whose representatives have signed this day the principal Convention only or only a certain number of the Conventions concluded by the Congress, for the purpose of allowing them to adhere to the other Conventions signed this day, or to one or the other of them.

### VI

The adhesions contemplated by Article IV preceding, must be notified to the Government of the United States of America by the respective Governments, in diplomatic form. The term accorded to them for that notification will expire on the 1st of October 1898.

### VII

In case one or more of the contracting parties to the Postal Conventions signed this day at Washington, shall not ratify one or the other of those Conventions, this Convention shall be none the less valid for the States which shall have ratified it.

In faith of which, the undersigned plenipotentiaries have drawn up the present final protocol, which shall have the same force and value as if its provisions were inserted in the text itself of the Conventions to which it relates, and they have signed it on a single copy which shall remain in the Archives of the Government of the United States of America, and a copy of which shall be delivered to each party.

Done at Washington the fifteenth of June one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven.

For Germany and the German  
Protectorates

FRICTSCH  
NEUMANN

For the Greater Republic of Central  
America

N. BOLET PERAZA

For the United States of America

GEORGE S. BATCHELLER  
EDWARD ROSEWATER  
JAS. N. TYNER  
N. M. BROOKS  
A. D. HAZEN

For the Argentine Republic

M. GARCIA MEROU

For Austria

DR. NEUBAUER  
HABBERGER  
STIBRAL

For Belgium

LICHTERVELDE  
STERPIN  
A. LAMBIN

For Bolivia

T. ALEJANDRO SANTOS

For Bosnia-Herzegovina

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For Brazil

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For Bulgaria

IV. STOYANOVITCH

For Chile

R. L. IRARRÁZVAL

For the Empire of China

For the Republic of Colombia

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J. NOVELLA

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PIERRE DE SZALAY  
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For Italy  
E. CHIARADIA  
G. C. VINCI  
E. DELMATI

For Japan  
KENJIRO KOMATSU  
KWANKICHI YUKAWA

For the Republic of Liberia  
CHAS. HALL ADAMS

For Luxemburg  
For Mr. Havelaar:  
VAN DER VEEN

For Mexico  
A. M. CHAVEZ  
I. GARFÍAS  
M. ZAPATA-VERA

For Montenegro  
DR. NEUBAUER  
HABBERGER  
STIBRAL

For Norway  
THB. HEYERDAHL

For the Orange Free State

For Paraguay  
JOHN STEWART

For the Netherlands  
For Mr. Havelaar:  
VAN DER VEEN  
VAN DER VEEN

For the Netherlands colonies  
JOHS. J. PERK

For Peru  
ALBERTO FALCON

For Persia  
MIRZA ALINAGHI KHAN  
MUSTECHARUL-VEZAREH

For Portugal and the Portuguese  
colonies  
SANTO-THYRSO

For Roumania  
C. CHIRU  
R. PREDA

For Russia  
SÉVASTIANOF

For Servia  
PIERRE DE SZALAY  
G. DE HENNYEY

For the Kingdom of Siam  
ISAAC TOWNSEND SMITH

For the South African Republic  
ISAAC VAN ALPHEN

For Sweden  
F. H. SCHLYTERN

For Switzerland  
J. B. PIODA  
A. STÄGER  
C. DELESSERT

For the Regency of Tunis  
THIÉBAUT

For Turkey  
MOUSTAPHA  
A. FAHRI

For Uruguay  
PRUDENCIO DE MURGOIONDO

For the United States of Venezuela  
JOSÉ ANDRADE  
ALEJANDRO YBARRA

[For text of regulations for execution of the convention, see 30 Stat. 1655.]