

Postal Convention between the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

April 4, 1887.

For the purpose of facilitating the intercourse springing from the friendly relations existing between the people of the two countries, their closer neighborhood and increasing commercial and personal dealings, by better and more intimate postal arrangements, the United States of America by William F. Vilas, the Postmaster-General, thereto duly authorized by law, and the United Mexican States by Matias Romero, their Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Washington, thereto duly empowered by the President of the United Mexican States, have agreed upon the following articles:

Preamble.

ARTICLE 1.

(a) Articles of every kind or nature, which are admitted to the domestic mails of either country, except as herein prohibited, shall be admitted to the mails exchanged under this Convention; subject however to such regulations as the Postal Administration of the country of destination may deem necessary to protect its custom revenues. But articles other than letters in their usual and ordinary form, must never be closed against inspection but must be so wrapped or enclosed that they may be readily and thoroughly examined by postmasters or Customs Officers.

Articles admitted to the mails.

The following articles are prohibited admission to the mails exchanged under this Convention:

Publications which violate the copy-right laws of the country of destination; packets, except single volumes of printed books, the weight of which exceeds two kilograms; liquids, poisons, explosive or inflammable substances, fatty substances, those which easily liquefy, live or dead animals, not dried, insects and reptiles, confections, pastes, fruits and vegetables which will easily decompose, and substances which exhale a bad odor, lottery tickets or circulars, all obscene and immoral articles, other articles which may destroy or in any way damage the mails, or injure the persons handling them.

Articles prohibited.

(b) Except as required by the regulations of the country of destination for the collection of its customs duties, all admissible matter mailed in one country for the other, or received in one country from the other, whether by land or sea conveyance, shall be free from any detention or inspection whatever, and shall in the first case be forwarded by the most speedy means to its destination, and in the latter be promptly delivered to the respective persons to whom it is addressed, being subject in its transmission to the laws and regulations of each country respectively.

Delivery.

(c) The classification of, and the rates of postage and the registration fee to be levied and collected upon mail-matter originating in either country and addressed to the other, shall be in accordance with the domestic laws and regulations of the country of origin; provided that the rates of postage and registration fees so levied shall not exceed in either country the minimum rates of postage and registration fees prescribed for articles of like nature by Articles 5 and 6 of the Universal Postal Union Convention of Paris of June 1878, as amended by the Additional Act of Lisbon of March 21, 1885.

Classification.

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ARTICLE 2.

Payment of postage.

(a) Each Administration shall retain to its own use the whole of the postages and registration fees it collects on postal articles exchanged with the other, including deficient postage. Consequently, there will be no postage accounts between the two countries.

(b) Full prepayment of postage shall be required in both countries upon correspondence of all kinds, except letters upon which prepayment of at least one full rate shall be compulsory. Payment of postage and registration fees shall be certified by affixing the appropriate stamps of the country of origin.

(c) Each insufficiently prepaid letter shall have stamped on its cover the capital letter T, and shall have indicated plainly thereon, in figures, on the upper left-hand corner of the address, by the postal officials of the country of origin, the amount of the deficient postage, and only the amount so indicated shall be collected of addressees on delivery, except in cases of obvious error.

ARTICLE 3.

Prepaid matter.

No postage charges shall be levied in either country on fully prepaid correspondence originating in the other, nor shall any charge be made in the country of destination upon official correspondence which under the postal regulations of the country of origin is entitled to freedom from postage; but the country of destination will receive, forward and deliver the same free of charge.

Official correspondence.

ARTICLE 4.

Evasions.

In case any correspondence is tendered for mailing in either country obviously with the intention to evade the higher postage rates applicable to it in the other country, it shall be refused, unless payment be made of such higher rates.

ARTICLE 5.

Exchanges of mails.

(a) Exchanges of mails under this convention, whether by sea or overland, shall be effected through the post-offices of both countries already designated as exchange post-offices, or through such others as may be hereafter agreed upon, under such regulations relative to the details of the exchanges as may be mutually determined to be essential to the security and expedition of the mails and the protection of the customs revenues.

Expense of conveyance.

(b) Each country shall provide for and bear the expense of the conveyance of its mails to the other; or if by agreement the conveyance in both directions in overland exchanges, other than by railway, is provided by one of them, the expense of transportation shall be shared between them in proportion to the distance traveled over the territory of each.

ARTICLE 6.

Transit of closed mails to be free.

(a) The United States of America and the United Mexican States each grants to the other, free of any charges, detention, or examination whatsoever, the transit across its territory, or by means of maritime services subsidized by either country to ply between the ports of the two countries, of *closed* mails made up by any authorized exchange office of either country, addressed to any other exchange office of the same country, or to any exchange office of the other country or of a foreign country; and a mail agent of either country shall be permitted to accompany the closed mails in transit across

the territory of the other, but his transportation and other expenses shall be paid by the country to which the closed mails belong.

(b) But correspondence forwarded from either country to the other, in *open mail* for despatch to countries beyond, shall be liable for Mexican or United States transit to the following rates, viz :

Charges for transit of open mails.

For maritime transit, five francs per kilogram of letters and post cards, and fifty centimes per kilogram of other articles.

For territorial transit, two francs per kilogram of letters and post cards, and twenty-five centimes per kilogram of other articles.

And settlements therefor shall be made according to Articles 4 and 12 of the Universal Postal Union Convention, as amended by the Additional Act of Lisbon.

ARTICLE 7.

(a) Any packet of mailable correspondence may be registered upon payment of the rate of postage and the registration fee applicable thereto in the country of origin.

Registry.

(b) An acknowledgment of the delivery of a registered article shall be returned to the sender when requested ; but either country may require of the sender prepayment of a fee therefor not exceeding five cents.

ARTICLE 8.

(a) Overland exchanges of ordinary international correspondence may be effected without the use of letter-bills, but registered correspondence must be accompanied by a descriptive list thereof, by means of which the registered articles may be identified for the purpose of acknowledgment by the receiving offices.

Way bills.

(b) If a registered article advised shall not be found in the mails by the receiving office its absence shall be immediately reported by the receiving to the sending office.

ARTICLE 9

Ordinary and registered exchanges, unless the latter be made in through registered pouches, shall be effected in properly sealed sacks.

Exchanges.

ARTICLE 10.

(a) All registered articles, ordinary letters, postal cards, and other manuscript matter, business or commercial papers, books (bound or stitched), proofs of printing, engravings, photographs, drawings, maps, and other articles manifestly of value to the sender, which are not delivered from any cause, shall be reciprocally returned monthly without charge, through the central administrations of the two countries, in special packets or sacks marked "Rebuts," after the expiration of the period for their retention required by the laws or regulations of the country of destination ; the returned registered articles to be accompanied by a descriptive list, and the special packets or sacks used for returning undelivered matter to be forwarded under registration when registered articles are returned in them.

Return of undelivered matter.

(b) Fully prepaid letters which bear requests by the senders for their return in case of non-delivery by a certain date, or within a specified time, shall be reciprocally returned, without charge, directly to the despatching exchange office, at the expiration of the period for their retention indicated in the requests.

Return requests.

(c) Fully prepaid letters bearing on the covers the business cards, the names and addresses of the senders, or designation of places to which they may be returned, as post-office box, street and number, &c., without requests for their return in case of non-delivery within

a specified time, shall be reciprocally returned without charge, directly to the despatching exchange office, at the expiration of thirty days from the date of their receipt at the office of destination.

ARTICLE 11.

Change of address.

The sender of any article of admissible matter may cause its return, or the address to be changed, before its delivery to the addressee. The request therefor must be made by the Post-Office Department of the country of origin, at the cost of the sender.

ARTICLE 12.

Rules of Universal Postal Union to govern.

All matters connected with the exchange of mails between the two countries, which are not herein provided for, shall be governed by the provisions of the Universal Postal Union Convention and Regulations now in force, or which may hereafter be enacted, for the governance of such matters in the exchanges of mails between countries of the Universal Postal Union generally; so far as the articles of such Universal Postal Union Convention shall be obligatory upon both of the contracting parties.

ARTICLE 13.

Further regulations.

The Postmaster-General of the United States of America, and the Director-General of Posts of the United Mexican States, shall have authority to jointly make such further regulations of order and detail as may be found necessary to carry out the present Convention from time to time; and may by agreement prescribe conditions for the admission to the mails of any of the articles prohibited by Article 1.

ARTICLE 14.

Mail service in case of war.

In case of the misfortune of war between the two nations, the mail-service of the two post-offices shall continue, without impediment or molestation, until six weeks after a notification shall have been made on the part of either of the two Governments and delivered to the other, that the service is to be discontinued; and in such case the mail-packets of the two countries shall be permitted to return freely and under special protection to their respective ports.

ARTICLE 15.

Abrogation of former convention.

This Convention abrogates the special postal convention between the two countries signed at the city of Mexico, December 11, 1861. It shall be ratified by the contracting countries in accordance with their respective laws, and its ratification shall be exchanged at the city of Washington as early as possible, not later than three months from this date. It shall take effect on the 1st day of July, 1887, and shall continue in force until terminated by mutual agreement, or annulled at the instance of the Post-Office Department of either country, upon six months previous notice given to the other.

Done in duplicate and signed at Washington the fourth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven.

[SEAL.]

WM. F. VILAS,
Postmaster-General.

[SEAL.]

M. ROMERO,
*Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
from the United Mexican States to the United States of America.*

The foregoing Convention between the United States of America and the United Mexican States has been negotiated and concluded with my advice and consent, and is hereby approved and ratified. Approval.

In testimony whereof, I have caused the Great Seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed.

[SEAL.]

GROVER CLEVELAND

By the President:

T. F. BAYARD,

Secretary of State,

Washington, June 21, 1887.

The undersigned, William F. Vilas, Postmaster General of the United States of America, and Matias Romero, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United Mexican States at Washington, having met together for the purpose of exchanging the ratifications of the Postal Convention, concluded between the United States of America and the United Mexican States and signed at Washington April 4th 1887, and having carefully compared the ratifications of said Convention and found them exactly conformable to each other, the exchange took place this day in the usual form. Exchange of ratifications.

In witness whereof, they have signed the present protocol of exchange and have affixed thereto the seals of their arms.

Done at Washington this twenty-first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven

[SEAL.]

WM. F. VILAS

Postmaster General.

[SEAL.]

M. ROMERO

*Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
from the United Mexican States to the United States of America*