

PAN AFRICAN POSTAL UNION (PAPU) DAY COMMEMORATIONS

18TH JANUARY 2026

Theme: *"The Post, Harnessing Partnerships and Innovation to Power Inclusive E-commerce and Sustainable Growth in Africa"*

MESSAGE FROM THE PAPU SECRETARY GENERAL

On 18th January 2026 the Pan African Postal Union will celebrate PAPU Day in commemoration of the formation of this continental body that spearheads and coordinates postal development in Africa. This annual observance represents our shared moment to take stock, renew our commitment to the ideals of the Pan-Africanism and sharpen our collective purpose, as we chaperon the African Post on its path in this digital era.

The PAPU Day Theme for the Year 2026 is a launchpad for the alignment of the Africa Postal Strategy to the UPU Dubai World Postal Strategy in order to strengthen coherence and enhance Africa's effectiveness in global postal matters, while ensuring that our regional priorities are harmoniously advanced.

The upcoming PAPU Day Theme is **"The Post, Harnessing Partnerships and Innovation to Power Inclusive E-Commerce and Sustainable Growth in Africa"**. Africa's digital marketplace is expanding, and so are the expectations for it to deliver global products to domestic consumers within Africa. In the e-commerce ecosystem, postal customers want speed, reliability, visibility and fairness in service provision. Corporate clients and business enterprises require predictable cross-border logistics, trusted payments, efficient returns and fewer delays at the border. Governments expect the Post to promote trade that creates jobs, grows small businesses and strengthens economic resilience. Yet the e-commerce 'cake' remains unevenly shared as too many communities are still excluded by distance, cost, cyber threats, an absence of technology-enabling systems which leads to their elimination from participating in global trade.

However, the existence of these gaps underscores the role that the modern Post should play and answers to the question on precisely why the Post matters. A properly enabled Post becomes the bridge between the digital marketplace and the physical world as an institution with a public mandate to serve everyone and a commercial authorization to unleash its network capable of reaching everywhere within the country and connected to elsewhere in the world. The Post carries opportunities to the last mile and brings trust to the digital frontier. Thus, inclusive e-commerce is not an abstract ambition, but it is the practical work of ensuring that entrepreneurs, rural communities, women-led businesses, young innovators and under-served regions can participate in domestic and international trade on fair and affordable terms.

In order to power inclusive e-commerce and sustainable growth, two forces must work as one, namely, innovation and partnerships.

The modernized Post must regard innovation as its operating system, and not as a mere accessory. Across Africa, advances and improvements on track-and-trace systems, upgrading of customer interfaces, consolidation of operational planning, modernization of retail networks, deployment of digital solutions along with reforms to professionalize service delivery have been noted. These steps build reliability, which is the first currency of e-commerce. Innovation also entails modern governance, stronger performance culture, upskilling of employees, and leadership that rewards

results and rebukes inertia. To complete the transformation circuit, the Post must blend people programs with technology, processes and purpose.

Postal ecosystems cannot thrive in isolation as no single actor can unlock inclusive e-commerce alone, hence the need for Partnerships that serve as a business growth multiplier. An efficient postal system tailored for successful e-commerce requires aligned standards, interoperable networks, efficient customs processes, reliable transport links, accessible financial services, robust consumer protection and trust-building mechanisms. This demands practical collaboration between Posts and Customs authorities, e-commerce platforms, airlines and logistics providers, fintech innovators, Regulators, Standards bodies and Development Partners. Partnerships unlock scale, reduce risk, accelerate technology transfer and create shared wins. The African Posts are urged to identify and pursue partnerships that enable regional value chains that keep more value within Africa while opening wider doors to global markets.

Sustainable development issues have taken center stage in both national and international forums, where the goal is to strike the right balance between economic development, environmental conservation and social advancement. Various initiatives are being undertaken by States both individually and collectively with collaboration of international organizations to meet sustainable development goals.

To achieve sustainable growth in Africa, at the national level, the call to action is for the raising of awareness, promotion of renewable energy and pursuit of paperless administrative formalities, use of environmentally friendly materials in construction of buildings as done in the case of the PAPU Tower construction. Designated Operators are encouraged to contribute to the sustainable development agenda while also aiming for economic viability and sustainability. In this regard, the Designated Operators need to keep an eye on growing their turnover and productivity, while being mindful of the impact of their decisions on social development and environmental protection.

The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that deal with sustainable development, namely, Goal 7 "Affordable and Clean Energy"; Goal 11 "Sustainable Cities and Communities"; Goal 12 "Responsible Consumption and African Production"; and Goal 13 "Climate Action" need to be given due consideration by the Designated Operators. At the continental level this is done in pursuance of the aspirations of the African Union's Agenda 2063 centred on "A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development," with emphasis to the adopted African Union Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources on 11th July 2023.

I therefore implore our Member States to continuously implement reforms that modernize the postal sector and strengthen the performance of Designated Operators. In the same vein I encourage Regulatory Authorities to enable innovation while safeguarding service quality and consumer trust. Our Partners are invited to deepen collaboration with the African postal network as a channel for inclusion and delivery at scale.

As this message also carries the spirit of the new season, I extend to our esteemed Member States and valued Partners my sincere best wishes for peace, good health and renewed progress in the year ahead. Let us, together, deepen our partnerships, accelerate innovation and make our shared work deliver practical results that improve the daily lives of our fellow citizens.

We salute our Postal leaders and their Teams for the daily professional execution of work that turns strategy into service and service into national values. As we pay tribute to all our committed and

dedicated Postmen and Women of Africa who unfailingly keep our African citizens connected to each other and also to the rest of the world, I urge us all, to continue to promote and uphold PAPU unity and solidarity as we position Africa's Post as an indispensable platform for inclusive trade, digital transformation and sustainable growth.

I wish you all a Happy PAPU Day 2026 and a prosperous Year ahead!!!

Long live Africa!

Long live the Pan African Postal Union!

Long live Africa's Postal fraternity!



Dr. Sifundo Chief Moyo
Secretary General
Pan African Postal Union



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