



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/7888
12 December 1969

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Twenty-fourth session
Agenda item 25

CELEBRATION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Note by the Secretary-General

In connexion with the discussion held at the 1820th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on 4 December 1969, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Members of the Assembly the following information regarding the commemorative stamps and medals for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

Commemorative stamps

1. Beginning in March 1969 designs for the stamps were solicited, and the final design was selected in June. The selection of a printer was carried out in September and a contract for the printing was entered into in October. The printer is now in the process of completing the design proofs of the stamps. Under the present schedule they are to be printed and delivered prior to 1 April in order to be available for the issuance date of 26 June 1970.
2. If the present arrangements are to be scrapped and the stamps (three denominations and one souvenir sheet) are to be redesigned it would involve the following consequences. New stamps cannot be designed and printed in time to be available for 26 June 1970. It will be necessary to change the issue date to late November 1970. This will bring about consequential changes in the issue dates of other United Nations stamps. In view of the publicity already given to the United Nations stamp schedule for 1970, it will have an adverse effect on the

sale of stamps and the consequential revenue. Furthermore, the United Nations would be required to pay damages in the amount of \$5,000 to \$10,000 to the printer with whom a contract has already been signed for the stamps already designed. The potential loss of revenue from the sale of stamps could amount to about \$600,000 (40 per cent of the anticipated revenue of \$1.5 million). The complete rescheduling of United Nations stamp issues for 1970 would also involve expenses for staff services and increase in contractual charges with regard to the printing of other stamps planned for issuance. The schedule of the stamps programme for 1970 was decided upon in order to coincide with various events of the year and taking into account the need for spacing intervals between different stamps issues. As a result of the rescheduling of United Nations stamps issues, the status of the United Nations Postal Administration would be adversely affected in the eyes of catalogue producers of various nations.

3. Incidentally, two countries have already issued commemorative stamps with the words "Peace and Progress".

Commemorative medals

4. Negotiations were conducted in October with a number of firms and a contract was entered into with a mint in November, providing for a minimum royalty of \$100,000 for licences to sell the medals on a world-wide basis, and with a possibility that the royalties may reach \$230,000. This contract was agreed to by the mint on the understanding that it would be able to strike the medals early in 1970 and that world-wide distribution of the medals could take place throughout that year.

5. The following consequences are anticipated if the medals are to be changed. Complete redesigning of the medals in their present form would be required since there is insufficient space to include the theme "Peace, Justice and Progress" in five languages. It may barely be possible to amend the theme to read "Peace, Justice, Progress" without an "and" in the five languages, but there is no guarantee whether the lettering of the medals in small sizes would be clear and legible. A redesigning would inevitably delay production and distribution. Furthermore, the attractiveness of the medal would be diminished and the guaranteed

minimum royalty reduced by a significant portion. In view of the reduced revenue from the sale of medals, the United Nations may encounter difficulty in finding a firm prepared to undertake the project. The medals could alternatively be redesigned using only two official languages but this would sacrifice some of the international character of the medals and their attractiveness in some areas of the world.

6. The implications of the three alternatives, namely (a) to scrap the stamp issues and medals already planned; (b) to call for new designs, and (c) to go ahead as originally envisaged, will be as follows:

(1) To scrap the stamp issues and medals as planned:

(a) Payment of damages to contractors: \$7,000-\$12,000;

(b) Loss in revenue of some \$1,730,000;

(c) Loss of publicity in the philatelic and numismatic circles around the world for the twenty-fifth anniversary;

(d) Embarrassment to the United Nations Postal Administration and possible damage to its stature.

(2) To call for new designs:

(a) Payment of damages to contractors: \$6,000-\$10,000;

(b) Loss in revenue of some \$700,000 from both the stamps and the medals;

(c) Embarrassment to Member Governments who have issued and are planning to issue stamps with the words "Peace and Progress";

(d) Delay in publicity and reduction in effectiveness of the promotional value of both the stamps and medals for the twenty-fifth anniversary;

(e) Adverse effect on stature and reputation of the United Nations Postal Administration.

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(3) To go ahead as planned:

- (a) Revenue from stamps and souvenir sheet estimated at \$1.5 million;
 - (b) Revenue from medals guaranteed minimum of \$100,000 with possible maximum of \$230,000;
 - (c) Adequate publicity on world-wide basis of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.
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