



UNOstamps Newsletter

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edited by Maxim van Ooijen

Introduction

This is the eleventh issue of the UNOstamps Newsletter. It contains the newest additions to the UNOstamps website, news from the UN and the monthly quiz. There is also room for your comments.

Don't hesitate to give me your opinion on the Newsletter. Please send in comments, suggestions or even compliments. Remember you don't have to wait for the next issue to visit UNOstamps at www.unostamps.nl.

This month just a short Newsletter. It has been a busy month and most new additions were already mentioned in the last edition. Sorry for this. I hope to give you more next month.



New additions to UNOstamps in May 2008

Since the last Newsletter I have added two countries (bringing the total to 68), two new subjects, and stamp data from Niger to the UNOstamps website.



Madeira

The group of islands that make up the Autonomous Region of Madeira are in the Atlantic Ocean. This Portuguese territory is a famous tourist destination. Since 1980, together with the Azores, stamps have been issued again. There is one series on the website, for the World Tourism Conference in 1980.

South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

Until 1985, both South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands were dependencies of the Falkland Islands, but from that date were constituted as a separate colony of the UK. There is no permanent human population on South Georgia. However, there is a team of scientists from the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) based at the research station at the administrative centre of King Edward Point. In 2008 the territory issued its first UN related stamp series, for the International Polar Year.

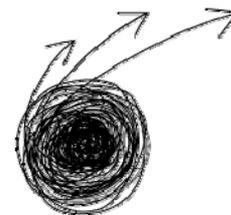


International Year of Rice

The theme of the IYR 2004 - "Rice is life"- reflected the importance of rice as a primary food source, and was drawn from an understanding that rice-based systems are essential for food security, poverty alleviation and improved livelihoods. Rice is the staple food of over half of the world's population.

International Year of Microcredit

The United Nations launched the International Year of Microcredit 2005, as part of an effort to build support for making financial services more accessible to poor and low-income people. The Year aimed to raise public awareness about microcredit and microfinance, and promote innovative partnerships among governments, donors, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and microfinance clients.



UN Year of Microcredit 2005

Quick links to all new additions can be found on the page 'New on this website'.

Recent finds



Among the stamps that I added to my collection this month was this really beautiful sheet from Australia.

It commemorates the China 1999 philatelic exhibition that was held for the 22nd UPU Congress in Beijing.

It is a good example to show that in my UN collection almost every theme, from animals to illnesses, from boats to space rockets, from religion to 18th Century Italian paintings, can be found.

United Nations News

The Netherlands pledges extra funding for human rights

6 May 2008 - Over the next two years the Netherlands will be investing an extra 7,5 million euros in promoting human rights. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' human rights fund, from which it supports human rights defenders and related projects, will gradually be raised, from 22,5 million euros this year to 25 million in 2009 and, ultimately, 27,5 million in 2010.



At the end of 2007 foreign minister Maxime Verhagen announced more than a hundred concrete measures to promote global human rights. One of these was setting up a national human rights fund. "I am delighted that we can offer support to the people who make a real difference," said Verhagen.

Human rights defenders are in acute need of financial aid. This year the 22,5 million euros in the fund have already been earmarked for human rights projects in more than 50 different countries, covering a wide range of activities. Examples include campaigning against torture and the death penalty, promoting

freedom of religion or belief and protecting religious minorities, and the rights of women, children and homosexuals.

On top of the human rights fund, the ministry invests an additional 24 million euros each year in supporting other human rights activities, for example through the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Human rights are central to Dutch foreign policy. The Netherlands believes that human rights apply at all times, in all places and to all people, and aims to reverse the growing tendency to use cultural and religious differences as an excuse for denying people their rights. Equally, human rights are inextricably linked with development, as noted in the policy memorandum 'Our Common Concern'. Only if they have freedom of speech, association and assembly can people actively pursue their economic, social and cultural rights.

(source: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, photo: Department Building, The Hague, MFA)

UN court rules in maritime dispute between Singapore and Malaysia

23 May 2008 - Singapore has won sovereignty over a disputed island and Malaysia has been awarded control over a series of permanently above-water rocks in a ruling issued today by the United Nations principal judicial organ in a maritime dispute between the Asian neighbours.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) said it had found by 12 votes to four that Pedra Blanca/Pulau Batu Puteh, a granite island in the Straits of Singapore on which a lighthouse stands, belongs to Singapore and has done so since at least 1980, when the dispute between the two countries crystallized.

In the case of Middle Rocks, which consist of a group of rocks that are permanently above water, the ICJ - which sits in The Hague in the Netherlands - ruled 15 to one that it belongs to Malaysia.



The court also noted that South Ledge, a nearby low-tide elevation, falls within the apparently overlapping territorial waters generated by Pedra Blanca/Pulau Batu Puteh and by Middle Rocks. Given that the two countries have not asked the court to draw the line of delimitation, the judges said, by 15 to one, that sovereignty belongs to the State in the territorial waters of which it is located.

Also known as the World Court, the ICJ hears disputes between States and its decisions are binding and without appeal.

(source: United Nations Press Release, photo: ICJ, Peace Palace, The Hague/Jeroen Bouman)

Quiz

The tenth quiz was not as easy as I thought. Only eight people from seven different countries sent in an answer. The question was: where is this stamp from?

Two contestants answered Germany and Switzerland. The right answer, however, is Liechtenstein.



This is the way you could find the right answer. The stamp was issued for World Communications Year. On the website go to the 'subject catalogue', look for the page 'World Communications Year' in the alphabetical list or the chronological list and you will see that stamps from 14 countries are listed on the WCY page. Every link leads directly to a stamp or souvenir sheet. Each month the answer can be found in a similar way.

And the winner is: Jodie Scott from New Zealand.
The mint stamps are already in the mail.

The quiz for June is all about football. In a few days the European Championships start in Switzerland and Austria and the Netherlands is participating. Many streets in my country are decorated with orange flags and lions. People have painted their house orange in the hope it helps becoming champion again, like in 1988 when 'we' beat the Soviet Union in the final. I'm glad I know nothing about football...

This stamp from one of the 68 countries on the website is the only one that has a football player on it. It was issued for an international year in 2005. I have erased the name of the issuing country almost completely, so the very easy question is:

Where is this stamp from?

E-mail your answer to info@unostamps.nl before 29 June 2008. All correct answers will be entered in the draw. The lucky winner will receive a special philatelic prize.

The prize consists of mint stamps from Ghana (Freedom from Hunger), Guatemala (UPU Centenary), Surinam (WHO 20th anniversary) and Tunisia (Human Rights Day 2003).



These beautiful stamps can be yours! Good luck! You can see the complete prize on the website.

United Nations Agenda June 2008

- 1 World Milk Day
- 4 International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
- 5 World Environment Day
- 12 World Day Against Child Labour
- 17 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- 20 World Refugee Day
- 23 United Nations Public Service Day
- 26 International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
- 26 United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

Visitors count

Up to 31 May 2008 UNOstamps has been seen by 1.069 visitors other than myself. 10 of these visitors came from an unknown country. For the first time there was a visitor from Barbados. This brings the total at 94 countries. In 2008 people from 71 countries have already passed by the website.

The top ten countries are (between brackets the results of 30 April 2008):

1. (1)	United States	180	6. (5)	United Kingdom	52
2. (2)	Netherlands	148	7. (7)	Germany	44
3. (3)	France	84	8. (8)	Lithuania	41
4. (5)	India	69	9. (10)	Belgium	31
5. (4)	Canada	55	10. (9)	Italy	29

Next issue

Newsletter nr. 12 will be issued on 6 July 2008. If you have a comment that you would like to share with the other readers, please send it before 29 June 2008. To unsubscribe from the Newsletter, just send an e-mail to info@unostamps.nl with the subject 'unsubscribe'.