



UNIVERSAL  
POSTAL UNION

Berne, 28 April 2003

International Bureau Circular

**161**

Mauritania – Illegal postage stamp issues

Dear Sir/Madam

The postal administration of the **ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA** asks me to inform you of the following:

"Kindly inform all Union member countries and all our philatelic partners within the World Association for the Development of Philately that we are greatly concerned by the continuing proliferation of illegal postage stamps, a phenomenon of which our postal administration is a victim.

"We have just learnt of the appearance of a whole series of fraudulent postage stamps inscribed "REPUBLIQUE ISLAMIQUE DE MAURITANIE" on various websites and in philatelic promotional publications. We have recorded no fewer than 95 illegal stamps.

"We therefore wish to protest in the strongest terms against these illegal postage stamps. The deceitful advertising goes so far as to state that "the origin of these stamps may be questionable and may be listed as illegals. We therefore suggest that you buy them only because you like them. We offer them because they are on the market". As well as having face values in UM and a rather high selling price, most of these stamps are sold in perforated and imperforate formats. Worse still, the imperforate versions sell for double the price of perforate ones.

"The negative publicity these illegal postage stamps generate for our country amounts to a serious attack on the moral, religious and economic integrity of Mauritania, its postal service and the Universal Postal Union as a whole. It is a serious and flagrant violation of article 6 of the Universal Postal Convention and the associated provisions of the Letter Post Regulations. It is, in particular, a violation of the national legislation of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, and in particular its law on the Post and its provisions on counterfeit postage stamps.

"Under the terms of this law, the Mauritanian Postal Corporation alone is authorized to issue and disseminate postage stamps in the name of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

"This situation is further aggravated by the fact that the logos of various organizations are reproduced on most of the illegal postage stamps. These organizations may be led to believe that we have used their logos without permission and these organizations could take legal action against us for breach of copyright.

"We call upon all parties to redouble their efforts to combat the scourge of illegal postage stamps and to exercise increased vigilance with regard to the production and distribution of such stamps in their respective countries. We are counting on the cooperation of all to help identify and track down the criminals responsible.

"We would take this opportunity to state that our postal administration has not issued any postage stamps since the end of 2000. Legally valid postage stamps may be purchased directly from the following address:

MAURIPOST  
Service philatélique  
Direction générale  
B.P. 10000  
NOUAKCHOTT  
MAURITANIA  
Fax: (+222) 525 51 74

"A list of the illegal postage stamps identified to date is annexed."

Yours faithfully,

K.J.S. McKEOWN  
Director of Markets

*Annex***Illegal postage stamp issues produced in the name of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania**

- Eleven miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting a different type of bird (including birds of prey, ducks, pheasants, field birds and sea birds). The value shown on each stamp is 80 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the Scout emblem. The name of each species is inscribed vertically along the edge of each stamp. (Certain miniature sheets also exist in a pre-cancelled format).
- Four miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting a different species of owl. The value shown on each stamp is 80 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the Scout emblem. The name of each species is inscribed vertically along the edge of each stamp. (Certain miniature sheets also exist in a pre-cancelled format).
- Two miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting various penguin scenes. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the International Rotary emblem.
- Two miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting various cats playing together. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the International Rotary emblem.
- Two miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting various elephant scenes. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the International Rotary emblem.
- Two miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting various polar bear scenes. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the International Rotary emblem.
- Two miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting a different lighthouse. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the International Rotary emblem.
- Two miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting various types of firearm. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002. On one miniature sheet, each stamp features the International Rotary emblem, while on the other each stamp features the Scout emblem.

- A souvenir sheet\* for the Sydney Olympics, depicting various sports (football, cycling, gymnastics and horse-riding), with a satellite in the margin.
- Two se-tenant sets\* of four stamps each illustrating various sports (tennis, horse-riding, swimming, volleyball, table tennis, fencing, judo and cycling).
- One miniature sheet\* containing four stamps, each stamp depicting a different sport: tennis, horse-riding, swimming and volleyball.
- One miniature sheet\* for the Sydney Olympics containing four stamps, each stamp depicting a different sport: judo, table tennis, cycling and fencing.
- Five miniature sheets\* each containing six stamps, each stamp depicting a different train. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002 and the emblem of a certain organization.
- One miniature sheet\*\* containing six stamps, each stamp featuring a different portrait of Pope John Paul II. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2001. The miniature sheet is inscribed at the top in English "His Holiness John Paul II".
- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each depicting a different actress; the name of each actress is inscribed vertically alongside each picture. The miniature sheet is inscribed "CLASSIC ACTRESSES" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- One miniature sheet containing six stamps, each stamp featuring a different scene from the Harry Potter films. The title of the film "Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone" is inscribed at the top of the miniature sheet; "Harry Potter and The Chambers of Secrets" is inscribed at the bottom. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each stamp featuring a different portrait of the singer Elvis Presley. The miniature sheet is inscribed "ELVIS PRESLEY" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each stamp featuring a different portrait of Walt Disney. The miniature sheet is inscribed "WALT DISNEY" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.

- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each stamp featuring a different portrait of the group Queen. The miniature sheet is inscribed "QUEEN" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- Two miniature sheets each containing nine stamps, each depicting a different actress; the name of each actress is inscribed vertically alongside each picture. The miniature sheet is inscribed "FAMOUS ACTRESSES" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each stamp featuring a different scene from the television series "The Simpsons". The miniature sheet is inscribed "THE SIMPSONS" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each stamp featuring a different scene from a series or film on teddy bears. The miniature sheet is inscribed "TEDDY BEARS" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- One miniature sheet containing six stamps, each stamp featuring a different scene from the film "Scooby Doo". The miniature sheet is inscribed "SCOOBY-DOO" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2002.
- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each stamp featuring a different portrait of the actress Marilyn Monroe. The miniature sheet is inscribed "MARILYN MONROE" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.
- One miniature sheet containing nine stamps, each stamp featuring a different portrait of members of The Beatles. The miniature sheet is inscribed "THE BEATLES" at the top. The value shown on each stamp is 60 UM, and each stamp is inscribed with the year 2003.

\* This issue also exists in imperforate format.

\*\* This issue also exists in pre-cancelled format.