



## The Tenth International Postal Conference, Egypt, 1934

Enas Fares Yehia<sup>1,3</sup>, Mariam Magdy Boshra<sup>1</sup>, Doaa Abdel-Motaal Ahmed<sup>1</sup>, and Mohamed Atef Abdelmaqsood<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>. Tourism and Hotels Faculty, Minia University.

<sup>2</sup>. Faculty of Arts, Minia University.

<sup>3</sup>. Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University-Community College.

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### ABSTRACT

Mail has a long and vivid history. As postal services evolved in the nineteenth century, numerous bilateral treaties were enacted to regulate postal procedures. However, as the great number of these bilateral treaties complicated such affairs, a succession of international conferences to discuss postal problems were held, first in Paris and then other cities. Egypt had been represented at all postal conferences, and it was decided that it would host the Tenth Postal Conference in 1934, which was also the year that the Postal Museum opened in Cairo. This article discusses the details of the Tenth Conference for the first time. It further discusses the representation of Egypt in the postal conferences before this event. The article relies primarily on a set of original documents kept in the archives of the National Archives in Cairo that will soon be published for the first time. It is evident that Egypt has made notable contributions to all postal conferences. In addition, it managed and organized the conference that it was mandated to host in its territories in a professional manner.

### Introduction

Egypt was a pioneer in developing means of transportation and communication in Africa and the Middle East. Its postal service was initially privately managed, but by 1864–65 the government played a major role in these processes. The conference itself addressed some significant issues in international communications by mail. Khedive Ismail<sup>1</sup> was the founder of the Egyptian Post, as he purchased the European Post Company in 1865, occupying the same place as it does today in Al-Attaba Square in

<sup>1</sup> Khedive Ismail ruled Egypt from 1863 to 1879 and was the grandson of Mohamed Ali, widely recognized

as the founder of modern Egypt. Khedive Ismail sought to modernize Egypt, which thus underwent significant transformations during his rule. For further information see Hussein Kafafy, *Al Khedive Ismail wa Maashoqatoh Masr* (Cairo: Al Heah Al Masrria Al Amah Liketab, 1997).

central Cairo. However, its main headquarters was in Alexandria, because of its proximity to the Khedive Post Company in Alexandria.<sup>2</sup> It remained there until 1931 when King Fuad<sup>3</sup> ordered the transfer of the main administration of postal services from Alexandria to Cairo with the outbreak of the First World War<sup>4</sup> due to his interest in continuing the transportation of correspondence without disruption. He then decided to establish a postal museum<sup>5</sup> at Attaba Square in Cairo, located in the middle of Cairo.<sup>6</sup>

This article argues that as Egypt had a distinctive representation in postal conferences, it was thus chosen to be the center of the Tenth Postal Conference and organized the conference proficiently. It further discusses the Tenth International Postal Congress, which was organized by the Egyptian government in Egypt. Egypt had taken part in all International Postal Congresses since their inception as it was well aware of their importance, and so it was very keen to attend. The role of Egypt was evident during its mandate to organize the Tenth Universal Postal Congress on its territory in its preparations for the event and the committees formed by the state to organize the conference and its sessions.

Fuad's rule witnessed many political developments, starting with the outbreak of the 1919 Revolution.<sup>7</sup> Britain announced the Unilateral Declaration of Egyptian

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<sup>2</sup> The Egyptian National Archives, Cairo, (unpublished): Portfolio 1, File 3, Conservation Unit 281 (Archival code 000003-4024), Papers regarding the concession contract for postal transportation on ships of the Khedive Post Company in 1934 (January 24, 1934: October 15, 1953).

<sup>3</sup> King Fouad was born in 1868, and died in 1936. He mastered the principles of science and education at the age of 10 in 1878, after joining the private school in Abdin Palace. However, after replacing his father Ismail as the ruler of Egypt in 1879, he traveled with him to Italy and enrolled in a school there to complete his study. He then joined the military academy and became a lieutenant in the Italian army, and was then delegated to work in the state embassy in the Austrian capital as a military attaché until he returned to Egypt in 1890 during the reign of Khedive Abbas Hilmi II. He assumed many positions during Hilmi's reign and was promoted until he became an advisor to the Khedive. He settled in Egypt until the death of his brother Sultan Hussein Kamel. When his son Prince Kamal al-Din Hussein refused to rule Egypt, Sultan Fouad ascended to the throne of Egypt instead on October 9, 1917. For further information see: Zaki Fahmi, *Safwat Alasr fi Tarekh wa Resoom Mashaheer Rejal Masr* (Cairo: Maktabet Madbooly, 1995), pp. 9–12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibrahim Marzouk, *Tarekh Tawabec Al Bareed: Al Bedaiah wa Al Nehia*, (Cairo: Aldar Althaqfia Lnasher, 2004), p. 12. The First World War started in 1914, and ended in 1918.

<sup>5</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 1, File 3, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000003-4015), Papers related to historical documents for the Postal Authority and the Egyptian government contract of purchasing the Poste Européenne Company: The Postal Authority in 1933 (12/5/1932–7/15/1933).

<sup>6</sup> *Al Ahram Newspaper*, Issue 19886, January 19, 1940.

<sup>7</sup> Britain was apprehensive of the turmoil in Egypt and informed the Sultan on February 26, 1921, of the British aspiration to conclude a treaty between Egypt and Britain. For further information on the intensification of disputes inside Egypt and the arrest of Saad and his companions, see Abd Elrahman El Rafcy, *Thawrat 1919*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Cairo: Dar Ghareeb, 1988).

Independence on February 28, 1922,<sup>8</sup> and based on this declaration the title of Sultan was changed to the “King of Egypt.” On April 13, 1922, King Fuad issued a royal rescript declaring the throne hereditary and establishing the succession of kings in Egypt in the direct male line by primogeniture.<sup>9</sup> On April 19, 1923, he issued a decree to his government to prepare a constitution to separate the executive, legislative, and judicial powers in Egypt. In addition, King Fuad inaugurated the first Egyptian parliament on March 15, 1924.<sup>10</sup>

It is worth noting that these successive events of political change did not cause the king to overlook culture and education. His reign witnessed the largest cultural renaissance in the contemporary history of Egypt, and he made many undeniable contributions. For example, his reign witnessed the inauguration of the “Banque Misr”<sup>11</sup> bank in 1920, and in 1922 the famous tomb of Tutankhamen was discovered in Luxor and its treasures were transferred to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.<sup>12</sup> In 1925, King Fuad I University<sup>13</sup> was founded. In addition, he decided in 1929 to separate the Egyptian Antiquities Authority, with its museums, from the Ministry of Public Works, and join it with the Ministry of Education.<sup>14</sup>

His era witnessed the holding of many conferences in many fields, for example:

- The International Geographical Congress in Cairo, April 1925<sup>15</sup>
- The International Navigation Congress in Cairo, December 1926<sup>16</sup>
- The International Medical Congress in Cairo, December 1928<sup>17</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Mohamed Hammaed, *Qesat Al Destoor Al Masry* (Cairo: Maktabet Jazerat Al Ward, 2011), pp. 50–54.

<sup>9</sup> Mohamed Oadah, *Kaef Saqtat Al Malakea fi Masr? Farouk Bedaia wa Nehia* (Cairo: Matwbcaat Dar Elkhaeal, 2000), p. 27.

<sup>10</sup> Safa Shaker, *Al Kharjea Al Masria 1937–1953* (Cairo: Dar Al Ktob Wa Al Wathaq Al Qwamia, 2006), p. 19

<sup>11</sup> Eric Dives, Translated by Hesham Seliman Abd Elghafar, *Talat Harb wa Tahdi El Estamar. Dor Bank Masr Fi El Tasneec 1920–1940* (Cairo: Maktabat El Sherook, 2009), p. 25.

<sup>12</sup> For further information see: Howard Carter, Arthur Cruttenden, *The Discovery of Tutankhamen's Tomb* (London: E-Artnow, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> For further information see: Donald Malcolm Reid, *Cairo University and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1990).

<sup>14</sup> *El Waqeeec Al Masria Newspaper*, issue 32, April 11, 1929. An article on the affiliation of the Egyptian Antiquities Authority and the Royal Opera House to the Ministry of Education.

<sup>15</sup> Omnia El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory. Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt* (California: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 114.

<sup>16</sup> The Misr Transport and Navigation Company was established in 1925. See: [http://modernegypt.bibalex.org/NewTextViewer.aspx?TextID=AR\\_5275&keyword=%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%8%A9%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%201926](http://modernegypt.bibalex.org/NewTextViewer.aspx?TextID=AR_5275&keyword=%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%8%A9%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%201926), accessed Tuesday, May 15, 2020.

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- The first International Music Congress in 1932<sup>18</sup>
  - The International Aviation Congress, December 1933<sup>19</sup>
  - The International Railways Congress, January 1933<sup>20</sup>
  - The Tenth Universal Postal Congress in Cairo in March 1934, which is our topic.

It is worth mentioning that King Fuad was a prominent stamp collector,<sup>21</sup> one of a large group of kings, princes, presidents, and wealthy people from all over the world. This in fact inspired his interest in postal services. King Fuad appreciated the importance of the choice of Egypt as the host of the Tenth International Postal Congress in 1934,<sup>22</sup> the ninth having been held in London in 1929.<sup>23</sup> He ordered the establishment of a postal museum, the first in Africa and the Middle East. The Postal Authority began preparations for establishing the museum by compiling and searching for all documents related to the history of mail for display in the historical section within the prospective museum. These procedures took place in preparation for inaugurating the museum simultaneously with the Tenth Postal Congress.<sup>24</sup>

Fuad issued a decree to establish a postal museum to display the treasures of the past, wanting to emphasize that Egypt was a pioneer in postal services. The museum was to include everything related to mail, collecting letters, ancient manuscripts, and documents related to the purchase of the European Post Company. After Fuad ordered the establishment of the museum, the Postal Authority allocated a section for him on the upper floor of its administrative building, consisting of two halls and a large

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<sup>17</sup> <http://arsco.org/article-detail-1279-8-0> accessed Tuesday June 17, 2020.

<sup>18</sup> AlMamlaka Al Masria, Wezart El Macaref El Omomia, *Ketab Motamer El Mosiqa al Arbia* (Cairo: El Matabec Al America, 1932).

<sup>19</sup> Ahmed Hussien Hafez; El Housseini Mady, *Soaran Tahkey El Tarekh* (Cairo: Al Manhel, 2014), p. 22.

<sup>20</sup> *Al Wagec Al Masria Newspaper*, issue 96, October 16, 1930. Royal Decree No. 68 of 1930 for forming a local committee to take charge of the second meeting of the International Assembly of the Railroad Congress to be held in Cairo, 1933.

<sup>21</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 78, File 9, Conservation Unit 199 (Archival code 001717-0069), A correspondence to His Majesty's Special Secretary, King Fouad, regarding His Majesty's interest in collecting stamps on February 8, 1930.

<sup>22</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): (Archival code -0069-001443), Special papers on the 1933 Universal Postal Congress, French documents.

<sup>23</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 8, File 1, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000151-4015), Concerning the General Postal Treaty and the agreements annexed to it: The 1929 London Conference.

<sup>24</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 1, File 3, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000003-4015), Papers related to historical documents for the Postal Authority and the Egyptian government purchase contract of the Poste Européenne Company: The Postal Authority in 1933 (12/5/1932–7/15/1933).

showroom to be decorated with a statue of Khedive Ismail. The museum's furniture was later coordinated and organized chronologically to refer to the history of the Egyptian Post.<sup>25</sup> Several ministries, directors, and officials offered to provide aid to the museum that was to be established, including both ministers of Egypt in London and Berlin, the directors of the London, Brussels, and Berlin museums, the staff of the School of Applied Arts, the Amiri Press, the Railways and Survey Authority, directors of air and sea navigation companies, and the union office in Switzerland.<sup>26</sup> This support is evident in a document related to the Postal Authority dated back to July 15, 1933 in a correspondence from the Director General of the Postal Service to "His Excellency, the Head of His Majesty's Court in Ras El Tin Palace in Alexandria." It stated the following<sup>27</sup>:

I have the honor to inform your Excellency regarding the search in the Postal Authority for the Egyptian government treaty of purchasing the Poste Européenne Company. I have been informed by the Department of Finance that all books and documents required to search for the said treaty, as well as the papers of the Purchasing Registry were sent from the Public Archives House to His Majesty's Court. Therefore, I would be grateful if your Excellency issued an order to search for the aforementioned treaty within the said documents as it is important to display them in the Postal Museum upon its establishment. Please, inform us with information, if any, with the utmost Gratitude to Your Highness.

Considering this document, it can be seen how seriously the Authority was in establishing a museum befitting the great history of the Egyptian Post.

In addition, the Postal Authority was keen to accomplish the necessary arrangements for the museum before the Tenth Universal Postal Congress in Cairo in 1934, so that the delegates of other countries could see the museum as evidence of the regularity of the postal service in Egypt. It aimed to emphasize the cultural role of the museum in furthering cultural awareness. The establishment of the museum was also a clear acknowledgement of heritage and national history to deepen the intellectual and sentimental spirit. In general, museums had proven to be cultural and educational institutions as well as clear standards of the degree of development and progress of a civilization.

Here, this article is mainly concerned with the Conferences Department, which is the ninth and final section within the Great Hall or main hall of the Egyptian Postal Museum. The Great Hall contains nine sections, in each of which is a large guide

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<sup>25</sup> Ibrahim Marzouk, *Tarekh Tawabec Al Bareed: Al Bedaiah wa Al Nehia*, p. 127.

<sup>26</sup> Abd Elhaleem Abu Seer, *Jawlah Dakhel Mathaf El Bareed* (Cairo: El Heah Al Amah Llestalamat, 1999); Wezart Elmoslat, Maslaht Elbareed, *Daleel Mathaf El bared Elmasry* (Cairo: El Matbah El Ameriah, 1934).

<sup>27</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000052-4015), Papers from the Ministry of Transport regarding Postal Authority and Telegraphs (Egyptian-English Agreement) 7/12/1874.

board and indicative panels on the artifacts in Arabic and French. The Great Hall contains the sections:

**Table 1**

The Great Hall in the Postal Museum in Cairo (source: Authors).

First section	Historical section <sup>28</sup>
Second section	Mail tools section containing bags, keys, letter boxes, and scales
Third section	Clothes worn by postal employees
Fourth section	Statistics and charts
Fifth section	Transportation section <sup>29</sup>
Sixth section	Old and new seals section
Seventh section	Air Mail Department
Eighth section	Conference section

The ninth section lists the history of international postal conferences up to 1939. A separate section has been devoted to it in the Postal Museum in Cairo due to its historic and international importance in recording the process of development of the postal service worldwide. It is evident that a large number of countries managed to take part in each conference by sending delegates. In so doing, they aimed to determine the most important issues and present the latest developments to advance the international postal service, and upon their delegates' return, the participating countries would implement them, whether by raising the value of the service, developing new means of transportation, or by imposing fines on those violating regulations. In addition, the participants recommended new regulations that were organized during the conference to protect postal items from being damaged, stolen, or lost. Moreover, they managed to agree on imposing international sanctions on the countries violating postal regulations worldwide.

There were in fact several bilateral treaties to organize postal services before the organization of international conferences. For example, the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty regarding their mutual postal correspondence was reached in 1873. It stated the following:<sup>30</sup>

In treaty with Her Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and the government of the Greatest Khedive of Egypt, both expressed their desire to organize and facilitate correspondence relations between the two governments. Both parties agreed to conclude a treaty concerning the post and each appointed their representative to do so. For this purpose, Queen Victoria appointed the British Consul in Egypt on behalf of Britain. Khedive Ismail appointed Cherif Pasha<sup>31</sup>, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs on behalf of Egypt.

<sup>28</sup> Contains a set of papyrus papers, documents, old letters, mail transport contracts, and postal lists.

<sup>29</sup> Contains all types of transportation used in the transport of mail.

<sup>30</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000052-4015), Papers from the Ministry of Transport regarding Postal Authority Correspondence and Telegraphs (Anglo-Egyptian Agreement), 7/12/1874.

<sup>31</sup> Muhammad Sharif Pasha 1823-1887 was the second best prime minister in Egypt before 1919 after Mahmoud Sami Al-Baroudi Pasha 1839-1904, who was preceded, of course, not by his achievements

Both parties agreed on a set of items<sup>32</sup> to regulate the movement of mail for both countries, which can be summarized as follows:

- The exchanges and delivery of correspondence between the two governments have to take place regularly between the Egyptian and British post offices in Alexandria and Suez.
- The British Post Office located in Alexandria has to hand over to the Egyptian Post Office in Alexandria all the incoming and outgoing correspondence within the British Post, and vice versa with the Egyptian government.
- Both parties undertake payment of the costs of correspondence in accordance with the provisions of the treaty, and that their correspondence carry stamps indicating full payment of the fees in Upper Egypt.
- Also, the distance between the Egyptian and English post offices should not be such that road travel exceeds sixteen hours from the date of receipt. Despite the terms of the treaty and its provisions binding both parties, it ended with the phrase “the treaty may be amended and deleted at any time,”<sup>33</sup> which indicates a lack of seriousness in commitment, as it could have been dissolved at any time if either party was dissatisfied.

### **Egyptian Representation in International Postal Conferences before the Tenth Congress**

The first conference was held in Bern, Switzerland, from September 15 to October 9, 1874.<sup>34</sup> With regard to Egypt, it was represented by Senior “Muzzi Bey,”<sup>35</sup> the first director general of the Postal Authority. There was no significant contribution from the Egyptian side. Regarding the Second Universal Postal Congress, it was held in

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or policies, but by his patriotic, revolutionary, intellectual and literary standing, even though he did not survive in his position as prime minister much.

<sup>32</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000052-4015), Papers from the Ministry of Transport regarding Postal Authority Correspondence and Telegraphs (Anglo-Egyptian Agreement), 7/12/1874.

<sup>33</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000052-4015), Papers from the Ministry of Transport regarding Postal Authority Correspondence and Telegraphs (Anglo-Egyptian Agreement) 7/12/1874.

<sup>34</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress. The countries represented were: Germany, Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Egypt, France, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Austria, and the United States.

<sup>35</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MASry*, (Cairo: Al Haeah Al Masria Llbreed, 2010), pp. 33–36.

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Paris from May 2 to June 4, 1878,<sup>36</sup> with Egypt represented by Senior “Caillard Pasha,” Director General of the Postal Authority. During the Second Universal Postal Congress, it was renamed the “Union” again, to become the “World Postal Union” instead of “the Universal Postal Union,” in 1878. The Second International Postal Congress discussed the Khedive’s postal affairs. The conference, from Egypt’s point of view, touched on three important aspects of the Egyptian government. These were listed in a memorandum submitted by the deputy director of the Egyptian Post Service to the Minister of Finance on July 1, 1881.<sup>37</sup> The results of this conference were analyzed in this study relation to three aspects: managerial, financial, and administrative. It concluded the following.

Regarding the administrative aspect, it aimed at the interests of people and the government directly. It maintained that the postal service in Egypt was necessary for the exchange of relations on the national level and abroad. Hence, this would result in new business for the benefit of trade and industry, as well as intellectual development.

Regarding the financial aspect, despite the postal service initially being a source of loss of the treasury of the Authority, it should have been noted that the postal services were supposed to be arranged to provide regular and complete returns that met all their requirements. In addition, the postal circle had to be expanded and organized gradually to increase the percentage of transactions and revenue in order to guarantee the improvement of its financial output.

Regarding the managerial aspect, it was intended to establish new relations between the postal service and the people on the one hand, and between them and the railway on the other. It aimed at establishing a non-governmental postal service with specific regulations determined by this public administration. Regarding the railway, it was intended that provisions would be arranged with the railway authority when urgently needed.

This reflects the importance of international postal conferences to revitalize the commercial and intellectual circles of Egypt. It also reflects Egypt’s awareness of the importance of these conferences, which it was keen to attend. The government documents always referred to these conferences’ importance for the Egyptian Post in particular and for Egypt in general.

The Third International Congress was held in Lisbon from February 4 to March 21, 1885.<sup>38</sup> Egypt was represented by W.F. Halton Pasha,<sup>39</sup> the Director General of the Postal Authority.

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<sup>36</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress.

<sup>37</sup>The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 4, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 018851-0075) Regarding the results of the conference held in Paris to discuss the Khedival postal affairs from December 2, 1880, to July 1, 1881.

<sup>38</sup> The participating countries were: Germany, Argentina, Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Ecuador, Spain, the United States, France, Great Britain, India, Canada, Greece, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, the

At this time, the numbers of countries participating in the Union were increasing. In the first conference, there were representatives of twenty-three countries of the Union, while in the second this reached fifty-four countries and in the third it became fifty-seven countries. This noticeable increase in participation resulted from the success of these conferences, which achieved regularity in correspondence and development of services by following the terms and regulations of treaties that guaranteed the rights of all parties.

Mr. Yusuf Saba Pasha,<sup>40</sup> Director General of the Postal Service, represented Egypt in the fourth conference held in Vienna in 1891,<sup>41</sup> the fifth conference held in Washington in 1897,<sup>42</sup> and the sixth held in Rome in 1906,<sup>43</sup> thus attending three successive international conferences during his long tenure as head of the Egyptian Postal Authority, which lasted for twenty years.<sup>44</sup> The number of countries increased from seventy-four to eighty-six in the fifth conference and to 107 in the sixth conference, held in Rome. It is notable that the Egyptian representative in all postal conferences was the general manager of the postal service, as he was entrusted with attending the conferences and submitting reports on them.

### **The Swiss Government's Invitation to the Egyptian Government to participate in a Celebration Commemorating the Union in 1909**

The Sixth International Postal Congress was held in Rome in 1906 and the seventh in Madrid in 1920. This long period between the two conferences was due to the outbreak of World War I. During this interval, on May 13, 1909, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a correspondence from the Swiss government to its Egyptian counterpart on the memorial that the International Postal Congress held in Berne in 1900, expressing intent to commemorate the establishment of the Universal Postal Union Memorial in 1874. Therefore, the government of Switzerland invited the countries that helped to establish this memorial to delegate their representatives to the ceremony to be held for its celebration.

It was necessary to know whether the Egyptian government would respond to this invitation or not,<sup>45</sup> because Egypt did not attend this conference and therefore did not

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Netherlands and its occupied provinces, Peru, Paris, Portugal and its occupied provinces, Romania, Russia, Uruguay, Switzerland, Sweden, and Venezuela.

<sup>39</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MAsry*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>40</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MAsry*, pp. 61–64.

<sup>41</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress, 1933.

<sup>42</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress, 1933.

<sup>43</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress, 1933.

<sup>44</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MAsry*, pp. 61–64.

<sup>45</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 380, File 17 (Archival code 18866-0075), Regarding an invitation from the Swiss government to the Egyptian government to attend the opening ceremony

express an opinion on establishing this memorial. This correspondence indicates respect to the International Postal Union of Egypt. Despite Egypt not being represented in this conference, the Swiss government informed it about the decisions that were taken, including the establishment of a memorial to the union. This indicates the interest of the Swiss government in the presence of representation of the Egyptian government in this memorial ceremony celebrating the establishment of the international Postal Union, which reflects the effective Egyptian role in international postal conferences in general.

Egypt managed to participate in all succeeding international postal conferences. For example, it attended the Seventh Universal Postal Congress in Madrid in 1920,<sup>46</sup> where it was represented by Mr. Burton Pasha,<sup>47</sup> Director General of the Postal Authority. In addition, it took part in the Eighth Congress of the Universal Postal Union in Stockholm in 1924,<sup>48</sup> where it was represented by Mr. Hassan Mazloun Pasha,<sup>49</sup> Director General of the Postal Authority, followed by the Ninth Universal Postal Congress held in London in 1929,<sup>50</sup> where it was also represented by Mr. Hassan Mazloun Pasha. This important conference saw the signing of the General Postal Treaty.<sup>51</sup>

Considering the conferences leading up to the tenth, and according to all the documents in the National Archives, the Egyptian government was keen to record all the details of the aforementioned conferences. Those interested can refer to the archive of the aforementioned documents to obtain all the details of these conferences in terms of the countries represented, their delegates, and the decisions and

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of the memorial commemorating the establishment of the Postal Union in 1909 (May 20, 1909: May 24, 1909).

<sup>46</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress, 1933.

<sup>47</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MASry*, pp. 77–80.

<sup>48</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress, 1933.

<sup>49</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MASry*, pp. 87–88.

<sup>50</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress, 1933.

<sup>51</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 8, File 1, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000151-4015), special papers about the Universal Postal Congress, 1933. The General Postal Treaty and the agreements annexed thereto concerning the London Conference 1929. Among its stipulations: "Delegates of the countries of the Union shall meet in a general conference after five years at the most from the date of enforcing the conventions of the previous conference for reviewing or supplementing them. A delegate or more can be deputized by the state and each state can authorize the representative of another, when necessary. However, the delegates of one of the countries are not allowed to represent more than two countries, one of which is the state on which they were delegated. Each state has only one vote. Each universal congress decides the venue of the next conference. The government of the chosen country assumes inviting other countries to take part in the prospected conference, after agreeing with the International Bureau. This government must also communicate the decisions taken by this conference to all governments of the countries of the Union."

recommendations of each conference. The Egyptian government recorded all details to document the conference in every aspect. Egypt had not marginalized in the previous conferences, but had consistently offered suggestions, formed partnerships, and indicated its desire to participate. In addition, these conferences played a major role in organizing postal correspondence and establishing the relevant laws.

### **Egypt's Preparations for the Tenth Postal Conference**

The year of 1933 was a special one for the Egyptian government, as the International Railways Congress was held that year in Egypt. Alongside the conference, it was decided to inaugurate the Railway Museum in Cairo. The museum was built during the reign of King Fuad, on October 26, 1932, to chronicle the history of trains and to pave the way for establishing a technical scientific museum in Egypt, on the then occasion of the Universal Railway Congress. It was opened to visitors on January 15, 1933. The aim was to make it a timeless masterpiece and a technical institute that encouraged research and studies on the means of transport in the modern era and in past ages.<sup>52</sup>

The establishment of the Postal Museum was one of the preparations made by Egypt for holding the Tenth Universal Congress in 1934 to provide a chance for delegates of countries to see the best proof of the regularity of mail in Egypt.<sup>53</sup>

The Authority began arranging exhibits and collecting all documents related to the post for display in the historical section inside the museum. This is evident in a document related to the Postal Authority dated July 15, 1933, in correspondence from the Director General of the Postal Service to "His Excellency, Head of His Majesty's Court in Ras Al-Tin Palace in Alexandria." It stated the following:<sup>54</sup>

I have the honor to inform your Excellency regarding searching the Postal Authority for a contract for purchasing the European Post by the Egyptian government. I was informed by the Finance Department that all registers and papers required to search for the said contract, as well as the documents of the Purchasing Registry, were sent from the Public Archives of His Majesty's Court. I would be grateful if your Excellency issued the order to search for the aforementioned contract within the aforementioned documents due to its importance to be displayed in the Postal Museum to be established. And please, kindly provide us with any information, if any. All our gratitude.

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<sup>52</sup> <https://al-ain.com/article/egypt-railways-trains-museum> accessed Tuesday May 17, 2020. The "Egypt Railways" museum was the first in the Arab world and the second in the world after the British Museum. It has displayed rare railway holdings from the inception of operating trains in Egypt until the present.

<sup>53</sup> Abd Elhaleem Abu Seer, *Jawlah Dakhel Mathaf El Bareed* (Cairo: El Heah Al Amah Llestalamat, 1999); Wezart Elmoslat, Maslaht Elbareed, *Daleel Mathaf El bared Elmasry* (Cairo: El Matbah El Ameriah, 1934).

<sup>54</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 5, File 2, Conservation Unit 309 (Archival code 000052-4015), Papers from the Ministry of Transport regarding Postal Authority Correspondence and Telegraphs (Anglo-Egyptian Treaty), 7/12/1874 .

Viewing the contents of the document, it can be seen how seriously the Authority viewed preparing a museum befitting the great history of the Egyptian Post.

This background shows the great importance of the Tenth Postal Congress, which, thanks to the Postal Museum, was held in Egypt. Hence, the establishment of the museum was only a part of Egypt's preparations to receive its delegations for the Tenth Postal Congress.

The congress was held in Cairo from February 1 to March 20, 1934.<sup>55</sup>

**Number of delegates:** 121

**Table 2**

Represented Countries in the 10<sup>th</sup> postal conference (Source Authors)

<b>The represented countries according to continent</b>				
<b>Europe</b>	<b>South America</b>	<b>North America</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Africa</b>
Luxemburg	Argentina	Mexico	Japan	Liberia
Crete	Bolivia	Canada	Siam	Tunisia
Germany	Brazil		Philippines	South Africa
Austria	Chile		China	Ethiopia
Hungary	Peru		India	Algeria
Belgium	Uruguay			Morocco
Bulgaria	Honduras			Congo
Norway	El Salvador			
Netherlands	Venezuela			
France	Colombia			
Portugal	Ecuador			
Romania				
Russia				
Switzerland				
Sweden				
Serbia				
Denmark				
Albania				
Spain				
Great Britain				
Greece				
Italy				
Turkey				

Regarding the above table, it is clear that most of the participants were from the continent of Europe, and this indicates that it is the most important continent for the history of the post. For Egypt, it was an important milestone to be chosen as the

<sup>55</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished) (Archival code 001443-0096), special papers about the postal congress, 1934.

center of all these contributors, which reflected the development of the Egyptian postal service during the era of King Fuad I. Another important point here is that although Egypt was still under British occupation during the conference, both countries were represented, and Egypt was the host country, meaning that although Egypt was under British control, it had made significant contributions to postal history. Egypt was represented by Mohamed Shararah Bey, Director General of the Postal Authority.<sup>56</sup>



**Fig.1.** A photograph symbolizing the “Universal Postal Union” as a gift presented by the Heliopolis Palace Hotel to the Museum on the occasion of the Tenth Postal Congress in Cairo, 1934

**Source:** Al-Attaba Postal Museum. Photograph by the Authors

His Royal Highness Prince Farouk<sup>57</sup> honored the Tenth International Postal Congress in Cairo on behalf of King Fouad, as the king was ill. All delegates met for the conference and the inauguration inside the Royal Opera House,<sup>58</sup> making it a historic

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<sup>56</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MASry*, p. 110.

<sup>57</sup> He ruled Egypt after the death of King Fuad from 1936 till the outbreak of July revolution 1952.

<sup>58</sup> This was not the first time a conference was held in the Royal Opera House, as many dignitaries visited it on many occasions such as lectures, celebrations, and conferences. These included the reception of the largest and greatest event in the history of Egypt, the Second Universal Archaeological Congress, held at the Opera House in 1909 after its first session in Athens. This was followed by the Fourth International Conference to Improve the Conditions of the Blind at the Opera House in 1911. On May 1, 1920, the House witnessed a special conference on the establishment of Banque Misr headed by Talaat Harb. The First International Music Conference was held in 1932, and in the same year the House witnessed the opening of the Universal Railway Congress in the presence of King Fouad and some princes, ministers, and men of the diplomatic corps. In the same year, it saw the Universal Tourism Congress, which was attended by the King as well. In 1934, the House witnessed the opening ceremony of the Universal Postal Congress in the presence of Prince Farouk, and in 1935 the most important event in Egypt’s cultural history: the transmission of concerts on Egyptian radio. Moreover, it witnessed the coronation of King Farouk in 1937. This illustrates that the House was not limited to art alone, but also had a strong relationship with all the political, artistic, economic, and social events that were taking place in Egypt. For further information, see: Mariam Magdy Boshra, *Khedival Opera House from 1869 to 1971*, unpublished master’s thesis (Minia: Minia University, 2017).

event.<sup>59</sup> The royal prince's procession arrived at the Opera House on Thursday, February 1, 1934, minutes before eleven o'clock. It was received by the ministers, senior men of the palace, head of the conference Mohamed Shararah Bey, the head of the Universal Union Monsieur Le Bon, Le Bon's secretary, members, and the congress organizing committee. The Prince shook hands with them and told them in French, "In the name of His Majesty the King, my father, I greet you and greet all members of the congress. I wish you success in your work and contentment with your stay in Egypt." At eleven o'clock, His Highness entered the royal compartment at the Opera House, and all those present stood to applaud. The prince then waved with his hand as a greeting.<sup>60</sup>

Prince Farouk sat in the far left of the royal compartment on behalf of his father, the King, at the inauguration of the Tenth Universal Postal Congress. The ministers sat to the left of him. Some ninety-three countries were invited to the conference, government representatives of seventy-two of which arrived inside the Opera House to sit at the podium: in the middle, the Minister of Communications, and to his right, Director of the French Post Authority and supervisor of the Postal Congress Monsieur Le Bon. To his left sat His Excellency Mohamed Shararah Bey, and on both sides the head of the Universal Postal Union, his secretary, members of his office, two Egyptian delegates, and the remaining seats were assigned to the members organizing the conference.

The royal palace entourage sat in the second cabin next to that of Prince Farouk, including al-Ibrashi Pasha,<sup>61</sup> Murad Mohsen,<sup>62</sup> Shawqi Pasha,<sup>63</sup> Ahmed Mohamed Hassanein Bey,<sup>64</sup> Muhammad Hussein Bey,<sup>65</sup> and Taymour Bey.<sup>66</sup> In the third baignoire, the head of the House of Representatives and Ismail Serri Pasha<sup>67</sup> sat, while in the fourth, the Sheikh of Al-Azhar Mosque and Ali Jamal Al-Din Pasha<sup>68</sup> sat. The last baignoire on the left was designated for the financial and judicial adviser, and

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<sup>59</sup> Saleh Abdoon, *Khamson Caman mn Al Mosiqa wa Al Opera* (Cairo: Dar Al Shrooq, 1998), p. 177.

<sup>60</sup> *Al Ahram Newspaper*, issue 176560, February 2, 1934.

<sup>61</sup> Mohamed Zaki Al-Ibrashi, the head of the Royal entourage in the era of King Fouad, had considerable influence in the royal palace.

<sup>62</sup> Mahmoud Shawky Pasha was the Secretary of King Fouad.

<sup>63</sup> Murad Muhsin Pasha was acting head of the royal entourage during the era of King Fouad.

<sup>64</sup> An Egyptian politician, traveler, and athlete, he reached the position of head of the royal entourage during the rule of King Farouk.

<sup>65</sup> An Egyptian poet, literati, and politician. He was a member of the committee that developed the first Egyptian constitution in 1923.

<sup>66</sup> Ahmed Taymur, an Egyptian scholar and writer of Kurdish origin, was a member of the House of Representatives during the reign of King Fouad.

<sup>67</sup> Head of the Works Committee of Majlis Al-Chouyoukh, an Egyptian parliamentary body. He held various positions including Minister of Public Works.

<sup>68</sup> Ali Jamal Al-Din Pasha was Minister of War and Maritime.

on the right, the Acting High Commissioner and the Political Corps. During the opening ceremony, the Minister of Communications delivered his speech in French and the attendees applauded him at the end.<sup>69</sup> He said,

Your Majesty, being the representative of the Royal Highness of his father in the official opening of the Universal Postal Congress in its tenth conference in Cairo, I pay homage to your interest to the postal service, especially the universal postal service, whose representatives convened today in our country to conclude treaties to be followed to achieve perfection. We hope that you will raise to His Highness our sincere wishes and sincere calls for his soon full recovery, God willing.

This appreciation from the Minister of Communications reflects the efforts made by the king and his interest in the works of the conference. The Tenth Postal Congress, the first to be held on Egyptian territory, was not an incidental event, but one holding great significance, despite historians' inattention to it. He continued:

Ladies and gentlemen, in the name of King Fuad and in the name of his government, I welcome the representatives of the Universal Postal Union countries for coming to the capital of our country, as Egypt is one of the founding members of the Union and has been chosen to be the seat of your tenth conference. Therefore, the post services must be in ongoing progress, and the fees that your conferences claim to estimate are within the reach of everyone. I know the hardship on your shoulders, so be sure that the King's government appreciate and consider your improvements in the universal postal service and to the new facilities that you will provide to the public. All people will thank and acknowledge your efforts gratefully. Please, hold your sessions from one time to another so that we can show you the historical places and monuments spreading in our country.<sup>70</sup>

This important speech merits careful consideration, as the Egyptian Minister of Transportation focused his attention on the desire of the Egyptian government to take the guests to archaeological sites in Egypt. This shows another goal of the tenth conference, that of promoting Egypt as a tourist destination with its many monuments from the ancient era up to contemporary times. This confirms the importance of holding the event on Egyptian soil.

**Speech of the Head of Conference:** The Head of the Congress then delivered the following speech:

I extend my thanks to His Highness the King and the gentlemen, for the careful preparation and full vigilance with which the Egyptian Postal Authority provided all the means and media that will come together to implement our actions and achieve them successfully. We cannot forget that Egypt is a mother of all civilizations. As King Fuad pleases, he will receive

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<sup>69</sup> *Al Ahram Newspaper*, issue 176560, February 2, 1934.

<sup>70</sup> *Al Ahram Newspaper*, issue 176560, February 2, 1934.

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the following correspondence from all parts of the Kingdom to be ready to discuss all matters. And now I have the honor to ask Your Honors to please open the Tenth Congress of the Universal Postal Union.

Prince Farouk stood up to open the conference, saying in French, “In the name of His Majesty, the Tenth Congress of the General Universal Postal Union is declared open.” All the attendees applauded the prince, who waved with his hand twice to acknowledge them. He then exited, followed by the ministers, and was accompanied by his procession to the royal palace.

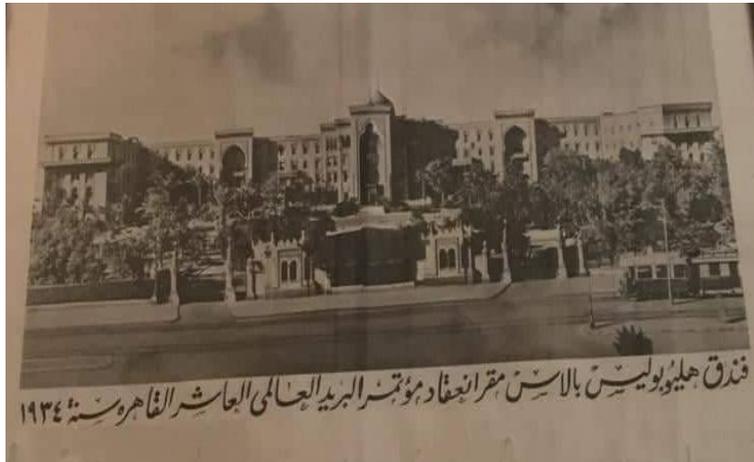
After opening the conference on Thursday, February 1, 1934 at the Opera House, the conference held its first session on the morning of Friday, February 2, 1934, in the grand hall of the Heliopolis Palace Hotel.<sup>71</sup> Four committees were elected to prepare the conference’s work. The delegates of the Egyptian government were elected to participate in three of them. These four committees held successive meetings until they finished their work. The general conference was held on March 7 to consider the actions of the committees, lasting until March 12. The closing session was then held in Saray Al-Zafran on March 20 under the chairmanship of the Minister of Communications. The delegates signed the stipulations of treaties and the attached provisions.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> In 1908, Khedive Abbas Hilmi II decided to establish a large hotel called “Heliopolis Palace” in the suburb of Heliopolis, which was then uninhabitable desert and had no accommodations or urbanization. The Belgian architect Ernest Gaspar was entrusted to the engineering and architectural design of the hotel and the construction lasted three years. It was opened by the French company that was its official owner on December 1, 1910. Since the opening of the palace, it has become a popular destination for tourists and ministers from all over the world, and the Western newspapers at the time called it “Taj Mahal al-Sahara” in reference to the Taj Mahal Palace in India. It witnessed a large number of conferences. In addition, in 1914, at the outbreak of World War I, the palace served as a British military hospital for British and allied soldiers, as occurred also during World War II in 1939.

After the revolution of July 1952 and Egypt’s transformation from monarchy to republic, the palace was nationalized, then became the seat of the unified government of Egypt and Syria in 1958. During the period of the late President Mohamed Anwar al-Sadat in January 1972, it became the headquarters of what was known as the Union of the Arab Republic, which included Egypt, Syria, and Libya. Therefore, it was called Qasr Al-Ittihadiya (Palace of Unity). In the eighties, it became the seat of Egyptian rule. The palace witnessed demonstrations of anger against the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood on January 25, 2011, then the siege of the ousted president Mohamed Morsi in November 2012, and the revolution of June 30, 2013. Now it is the presidential residence of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, and it has been registered within the framework of Islamic and Coptic monuments by decision No. 420 of 2018.

<sup>72</sup> Convention with final protocol and provisions concerning transportation of regular mail by air, with the final protocol signed at Cairo March 20, 1934. <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/m-ust000003-0163.pdf>



**Fig.2.** A Photo of Heliopolis Hotel Palace, the venue of the Postal Congress in Cairo, 1934. It is now known as al-Ittihadia Presidential Palace

Source: Al-Attaba Postal Museum. Photograph by Authors

The costs incurred in holding this conference reached 20,000 pounds, including accommodations, trips, and parties held for the authorized delegates.<sup>73</sup> During the Cairo Conference in 1934, it was decided to cancel the Preparation Committee for many reasons, the most important of which was the extravagance and costs incurred in sending delegates from different countries and the incurred costs, especially since the committee was to meet in a country other than that where the conference would be held. Regarding the fourth committee, concerned with the credentials examination, its members were elected at the first session of the conference.<sup>74</sup>

Some amendments were added to the provisions of the Postal Treaty held in London during the Postal Congress in Cairo. These amended articles included the following:<sup>75</sup>

**Article 34:** Letters must not contain banknotes, coins, gold, silver, platinum, precious stones, or jewelry.

**Article 56:** Postal services bear no responsibility for correspondence confiscated by customs due to fraud in clarifying their contents.

**Article 75:** Reducing the fees for land and sea transportation by 20%.

<sup>73</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished) (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the International Congress, 1934.

<sup>74</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 61, File 12, Conservation Unit 198 (Archival code 001449-0069), At the World Postal Conference, which was held in Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina, from April 1 to May 23, 1939, on the work of the conference and its results.

<sup>75</sup> Francis Lyall, *International Communications. International Telecommunications and Universal Postal* (Rutledge, New York, 2016), p. 255; Convention with final protocol and provisions concerning transportation of regular mail by air with final protocol signed at Cairo March 20, 1934. <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/m-ust000003-0163.pdf>

**The Final Protocol:**

**Article 2:** The maximum allowable limit to be added to the correspondence fees is 40% instead of 50%.

**Article 12:** Specifying the first of January 1935 to notify the acceptance of activating the treaty or joining it.

**Congress By-Law:**

**Article 113:** Postage stamps or clearance stamps must be placed on individual mail tickets in the manner designated for the address.

**Article 118:** It is permissible to attach to all print matters a ticket or envelope with the address of the message sender and a letter stamped with the postal stamps of the recipient with the fee designated for its return.

**Article 135:** Taking necessary measures regarding the use of counterfeit or previously used postage stamps.



Fig.3. A Memorandum on the Treaties and Conventions concluded in the Tenth Universal Postal Congress in Cairo, 1934.

Source: Al-Attaba Postal Museum. Photograph by the Authors.

Fortunately, the Tenth Congress of the Universal Postal Union in Cairo coincided with the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Egyptian Postal Authority by Khedive Ismail in 1865. This conference was a great success in terms of organization and arrangement, as the committee prepared all accommodations and trips to visit the most prominent archaeological sites and ports. This was in addition to its arrangements to facilitate the conference and the meetings of its committees.<sup>76</sup>

Egypt had proven its efficiency in organizing the conference professionally. However, it is surprising to find that the writings of Egyptian historians have not mentioned this important conference, despite its great significance. This researcher disagrees with Prof. Francis Lyall, who indicated that this conference introduced limited changes to

<sup>76</sup> Mohamed Fawzy Abdelqader, Vector Anton Ibrahim, *Rwaad El Bareed Al MAsry*, pp. 104–105.

postal laws. It can be seen that this conference added a substantial amount to the Egyptian post and preserved its heritage, as it was the main driver for establishing the Postal Museum in Egypt. At the time, it was sufficient for the guests to thank those in charge of organizing the conference and the accompanying tourist excursions.<sup>77</sup>

The conferences continued later, with the eleventh Universal Postal Congress being held on April 1, 1939, opening with an official ceremony in the National Congress of Argentina. It was honored by the attendance of the President of Argentina, who opened the conference and wished it success. On April 3, the conference held its first session and formed committees to consider the proposals submitted and make preliminary decisions. Muhammad Wajih, Deputy Director General of the Postal Authority and the delegate of Egypt, also gave a speech at this conference<sup>78</sup> and expressed his gratitude, welcoming and appreciating Egypt during the conference. He was elected as an agent of the committee and head of the meeting of delegates of Asia, Africa, and Australia. In addition, a full set of new documents approved by the conference and other applicable documents from the Postal Congress in 1934 were included, along with the amendments introduced by the Buenos Aires conference to take effect on the specified date of July 1, 1940.

Therefore, it can be seen that multiple countries were keen to participate in the conferences, sending two to six representatives who could be trained to participate in in-depth discussions with their counterparts from other countries. Most of the delegates were scholars who held doctorates in the legal or economic sciences, and additionally had practical experience in the postal business. It was believed that postal jobs should be occupied by those with theoretical and practical ability, and that the postal administration must be entrusted to highly educated people who could perform various jobs until assuming positions in senior management.

The Egyptian delegate put forward some suggestions that would facilitate the conferences, including:<sup>79</sup>

- 1- Postal services should submit their suggestions a sufficient amount of time before the specified date of the conference.
- 2- Postal services groups should unite and agree with each other to submit joint suggestions to facilitate the work of the conference committees.
- 3- Granting newspapers and periodicals 50% off of the prescribed fees.
- 4- Generalizing the method of distributing express mail in all countries, as the countries that had implemented this type of mail indicated its benefit to the public.

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<sup>77</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished), (Archival code 001443-0069), special papers about the International Congress, 1934.

<sup>78</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 61, File 12, Conservation Unit 198 (Archival code 001449-0069), A copy of the report of Muhammad Wajih Bey, Undersecretary of the Post Authority and the delegate of Egypt at the Universal Postal Conference that was held in Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina from April 1 to May 23, 1939. It documented the actions of the conference and their results (1/4 / 1939-23 / 5/1939).

<sup>79</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 61, File 12, Conservation Unit 198.

The conference rejected the suggestion to grant newspapers 50% reductions in fees, for such reasons as the desire not to enable political advertising, and the lack of funds needed to fully extend this offer. Hence, Egypt withdrew this suggestion after its strong rejection. There was a suggestion similar to Egypt's submitted by Russia that was also rejected after voting. Regarding the second suggestion, it was opposed by the countries that had no facilities for distributing express mail due to their specific circumstances, so it was withdrawn due to a lack of support.

Egypt suggested that the air correspondence that its senders wanted not be sent by air except in certain initial stages of the route. In this regard, the treaty stipulated that the exchange office, at the last stage of air export, be obliged to cross out the phrase "by air mail" written on the correspondence. Egypt suggested that this work had to be assigned to the last former exchange office so that the sender did not fall into the error of continuing to send the correspondence by air. This entailed many claims of accountability, but the majority did not hold this opinion, believing that the present text was sufficient and valid.<sup>80</sup>

The dates of the universal postal conferences make it clear that there was no fixed period between them, with the interval ranging from four to seven years. However, the seventh conference was held in 1920, fourteen years after the sixth conference in 1906. This was due to the outbreak of World War I, during which delegates of countries could not travel to conferences. The head of the Buenos Aires Conference in 1939 maintained that it was highly appropriate to hold conferences frequently because the exchange of opinions and discussions helped determine the best means to improve the global postal service in order to optimize all amenities for the public. The conferences taught their attendees how to manage the postal system by reviewing the long history of postage and its developments over time. This was followed by several international postal conferences of the Universal Postal Union, such as the Twelfth International Postal Congress in Paris, 1947; the Thirteenth International Postal Congress in Brussels, 1952<sup>81</sup>; the Fourteenth International Postal Congress in Ottawa, 1957<sup>82</sup>; and the Fifteenth International Postal Congress in Vienna, 1964. This was in addition to other universal postal conferences that demonstrated how important it was

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<sup>80</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): Portfolio 61, File 12, Conservation Unit 198.

<sup>81</sup> The Egyptian Archives (unpublished): (Archival code 010595-0069), Index of Issue No. 76 of the monthly magazine issued by the Universal Bureau of the Universal Postal Union in 1951 on the Thirteenth Universal Postal Congress in Brussels.

<sup>82</sup> The suggestions of the Fourteenth Universal Postal Congress in Ottawa in 1957 included the following:

- 1- Postcards must be made of cardboard or of solid paper in order not to be affected by their handling.
- 2- Postcards are similar to folded and glued paper and its inner faces are fully stuck in order not to allow other materials to leak inside.
- 3- The postal side of the postcard must appear upwards in French or its equivalent address in another language.
- 4- Postcards must be sent openly without ties or inside an envelope.

5- At least half of its right face shall be allocated to the address of the addressee, and postage stamps shall be stuck to its face on the right side as far as possible. For further information see: Wezarat El Mwaslat, *Iffaqat Al Bareed Al Alameah Itawa 1957* (Cairo: Ithad Al Bareed Al Araby, 1971).

to hold such conferences and the vital role of the Egyptian participation in such events.

### **Conclusion**

Egypt took part in all International Postal Conference since their inception, as it was well aware of their importance and very keen to attend. The role of Egypt was evident during its mandate to organize the Tenth Universal Postal conference on its territories, as it prepared well for the event and committees were formed by the state to organize the conference and its sessions. The most prominent preparations of Egypt in this regard included the establishment of the Postal Museum in Cairo to display the treasures and holdings of the Egyptian Post to the Egyptian guests during the conference. When King Fuad I decided to establish a postal museum under the Authority, several ministries, managers, and officials provided aid to do so. These included the ministers of Egypt in London and Berlin, the directors of the London, Brussels, and Berlin museums, the staff of the School of Applied Arts, the Amiri Press, the Railways and Survey Authority, directors of air and sea navigation companies, and the union office in Switzerland. They offered every support to assist the Egyptian Postal Authority in the establishment of its new museum. The ninth section of the museum was dedicated to the postal conferences held up to 1934, that is, the year the museum was officially opened to visitors.

Work began with as much effort as possible devoted to highlighting the civil and archaeological aspects of Egypt during the conference. The conference was of great significance to Egypt, as shown by the fact that all the senior officials of the state attended, headed by Crown Prince Farouk, who later became the king. It was clear from the speech of the Minister of Communications that King Fuad spared no effort in providing facilities for domestic and universal mail. In addition, the said minister affirmed in his speech the desire of the Egyptian government to provide all accommodations to the guests to visit the archaeological sites in Egypt. This highlights another goal of the Tenth International Postal Congress, namely promoting Egypt as a tourist destination with its wonderfully luxuriant monuments from antiquity up to the modern era. Egypt was interested not only in attending the succession of universal postal congresses, but in presenting views and suggestions to develop laws governing the postal services worldwide as well. Therefore, the Egyptian state should commemorate this by organizing a tribute inside the Postal Museum showing how Egypt succeeded in organizing an important conference on its soil.

## مؤتمر البريد العاشر بالقاهرة 1934

إيناس فارس يحيى<sup>1,3</sup>، مريم مجدي بشري<sup>1</sup>، دعاء عبد المتعال أحمد<sup>1</sup>، محمد عاطف عبد المقصود<sup>2</sup>

1. قسم الإرشاد السياحي، كلية السياحة والفنادق، جامعة المنيا

2. قسم التاريخ، كلية الآداب، جامعة المنيا.

3. جامعة الأميرة نوره بنت عبدالرحمن، كلية المجتمع

### المخلص

للبريد تاريخ طويل وحيوي، ومع تطور الخدمات البريدية في القرن التاسع عشر تم سن العديد من المعاهدات الثنائية لتنظيم الإجراءات البريدية. ولزيادة تلك المعاهدات فقد عُقدت سلسلة من المؤتمرات الدولية لمناقشة المشاكل البريدية، أولاً في باريس ثم تلاها في مدن عديدة أخرى. كانت مصر ممثلة في جميع المؤتمرات البريدية الدولية، وتقرر أنها ستستضيف المؤتمر البريدي العاشر عام 1934 لأول مرة علي أرضها، وهو أيضاً العام الذي افتتح فيه متحف البريد في القاهرة. تتناول هذه المقالة تفاصيل المؤتمر العاشر والتي تنشر لأول مرة. كما يناقش تمثيل مصر في المؤتمرات البريدية قبل هذا الحدث. يعتمد المقال بشكل أساسي على مجموعة من الوثائق الأصلية المحفوظة في دار الوثائق القومية في القاهرة. ويتضح جليا من تلك الوثائق أن مصر قد قدمت مساهمات ملحوظة في جميع المؤتمرات البريدية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، قامت بإدارة وتنظيم المؤتمر الذي تم تكليفها باستضافته في أراضيها بطريقة مهنية ومحترفة وكانت تقوم بالترويج لمعالمها الأثرية والسياحية علي هامش هذا المؤتمر.

### معلومات المقالة

#### الكلمات المفتاحية

مصر؛ مؤتمر البريد؛  
متحف البريد؛ الملك  
فؤاد.

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