United Nations - The First Issues

UNITED NATIONS POSTAL ADMINISTRATION

The idea of United Nations postage stamps originated in 1947, when José Arce of Argentina proposed that the UN create its own postal service to symbolise its authority, generate revenue, and promote its mission worldwide. After several General Assembly resolutions, the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) was formally established in 1950. An agreement with the United States Post Office Department in March 1951 allowed the UN to issue stamps denominated in U.S. currency, valid only at the UN Headquarters in New York. The UN Postal Service was inaugurated on United Nations Day, 24 October 1951, when the first set of UN stamps was released. These stamps could be used only on mail posted at the UN's New York office, a restriction that remains a defining feature of UN postal issues. Later offices in Geneva and Vienna would eventually issue their own stamps in local currencies, but the 1951 issue belongs exclusively to the New York system. Collectors showed strong interest in the early UN issues, with many selling over a million copies. The first decade of UN philately established the organisation as a unique presence in the stamp world—the only postal authority to issue stamps in multiple currencies and one whose purpose extended beyond mail delivery to promoting international cooperation and the ideals of the United Nations.

UNITED NATIONS OFFICES IN NEW YORK - FIRST ISSUES (October 24, 1951)

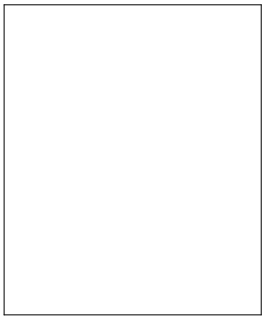
Unwatermarked. Engraved & Photo (Joh. Enschedé & De La Rue & Co. Ltd.). Perforation 13 X 12½, 12½ X 13, 12½ X 13½(2c, 5c).

Peoples of the World



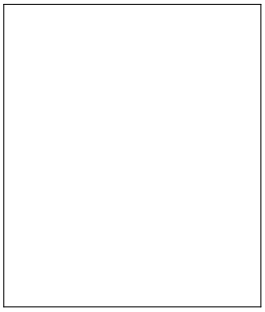
magenta *1c* *A1*
SG#NY1 SC#1

UN Headquarters Building



blue green *1½c* *A2*
SG#NY2 SC#2

Peace, Justice, Security



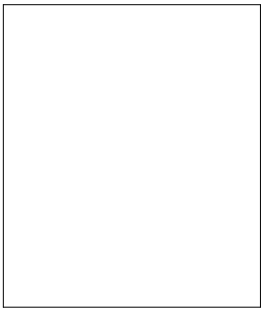
purple *2c* *A3*
SG#NY3 SC#3

UN Flag



magenta & blue *3c* *A4*
SG#NY4 SC#4

UN Children's Fund



blue *5c* *A5*
SG#5 SC#NY5

Peoples of the World



chocolate *10c* *A1*
SG#NY6 SC#6

UN Flag



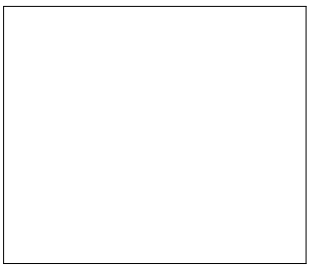
violet & blue *15c* *A4*
SG#NY7 SC#7

World Unity



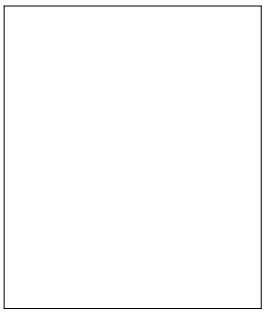
dark brown *20c* *A6*
SG#NY8 SC#8

UN Flag



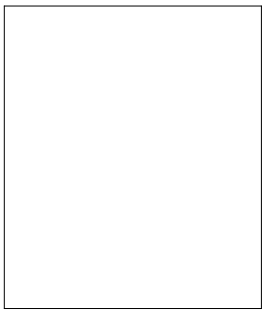
olive gray & blue *25c* *A6*
SG#NY9 SC#9

UN Headquarters Building



indigo *50c* *A2*
SG#NY10 SC#10

Peace, Justice, Security



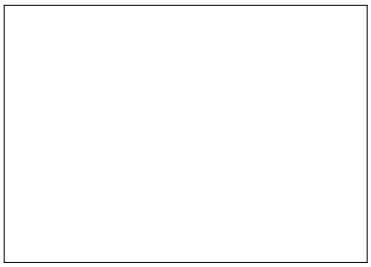
red *$1* *A3*
SG#NY11 SC11

United Nations - The First Issues

UNITED NATIONS OFFICES IN NEW YORK - FIRST AIR POST ISSUES (December 14, 1951)

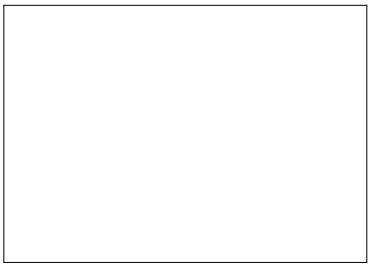
Unwatermarked. Engraved (De La Rue & Co. Ltd.). Perforation 14

Plane and Gull



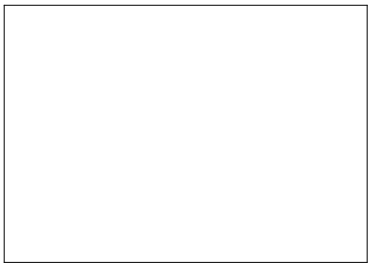
henna brown *6c* *AP1*
SG#NYA12, SC#C1

Plane and Gull



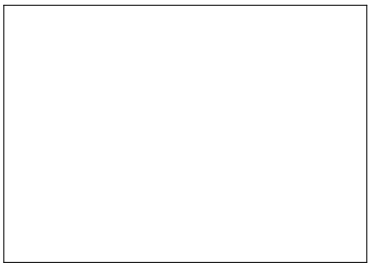
bright blue green *10c* *AP1*
SG#NYA13, SC#C2

Swallows and UN Emblem



deep blue *15c* *AP2*
SG#NYA14, SC#C3

Swallows and UN Emblem



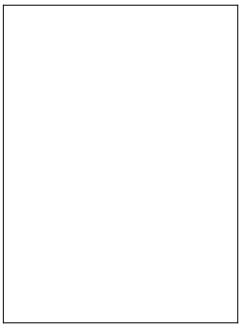
grey black *25c* *AP2*
SG#NYA15, SC#C4

UNITED NATIONS OFFICES IN NEW YORK - MONTREAL EXPO ISSUES (1967)

Under special agreement with the Canadian Government SC Nos. 170-174 were valid for postage only on mail posted at the UN pavilion during the April 28th - October 27th, Montreal World's Fair, EXPO 1967. The denominations are expressed in Canadian currency.

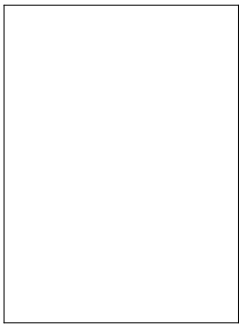
Lithographed(8c) & Engraved (British American Bank Note Co.). Perforation 11

PAX



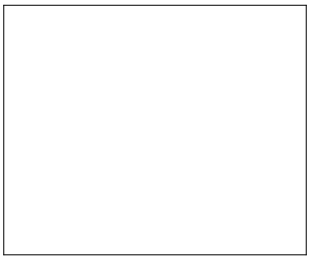
dark brown *4c* *A90*
orange & pink red
SG#NY172, SC#170

Justitia



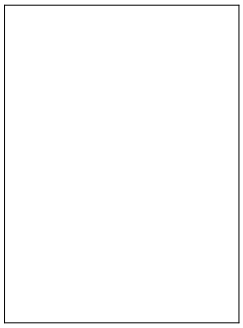
dark brown *5c* *A90*
orange & blue
SG#NY173, SC#171

Pavilion-United Nations Expo 67



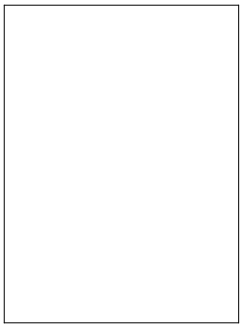
multicolour *8c* *A91*
SG#NY174, SC#172

Fraternitas

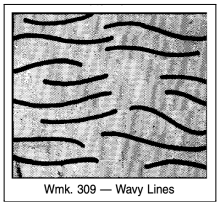


dark brown *10c* *A90*
orange & green yellow
SG#NY175, SC#173

Veritas



dark brown *15c* *A90*
orange & black brown
SG#NY176, SC#174



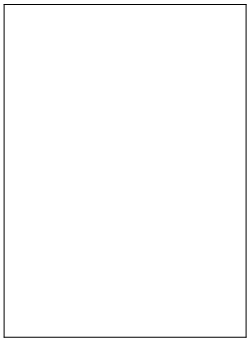
United Nations - The First Issues

UNITED NATIONS OFFICES IN GENEVA - FIRST ISSUES

In 1968, the UNPA made an agreement with Swiss postal authorities, and on 4 October 1969 began to issue stamps in franc denominations for use at the Geneva offices. The stamps were for use only on mail posted at the Palais des Nations (UN European Office), Geneva. 100 Centimes = 1 Swiss Franc.

Unwatermarked. Photogravure; Lithographed & Embossed(1Fr); Engraved(10Fr).
Perf. 13 (5c, 70c, 90c); Perf. 12½ X 12(10c); Perf. 11½(20c-60c, 3Fr); Perf. 11¾ (40c); Perf. 11½ X 12(75c); Perf. 13½ X 14(80c); Perf. 14(1Fr); Perf. 12 X 11½(2Fr); Perf. 12(10Fr)

UN Hdqrtrs. New York, and World Map



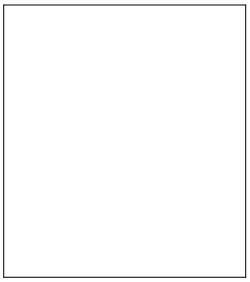
purple & multi *5c* *A88*
SG#G1 SC#1 *October 4, 1969*

UN Flag



salmon & multi *10c* *A52*
SG#G2 SC#2 *October 4, 1969*

Three Men United Before Globe



black & multi *20c* *A66*
SG#G3 SC#3 *October 4, 1969*

Palais Des Nations, Geneva



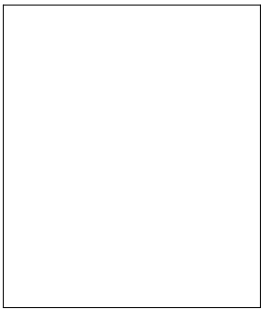
dark blue & multi *30c* *G1*
SG#G4 SC#4 *October 4, 1969*

Palais Des Nations, Geneva



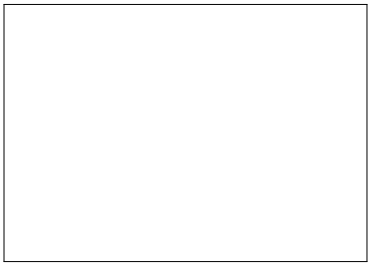
olive & multi *40c* *G2*
SG#G5 SC#22 *January 5, 1972*

Opening Words of UN Charter



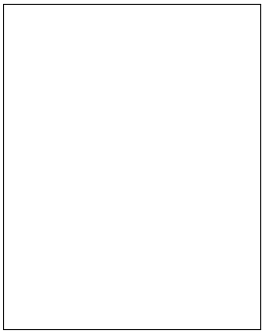
ultra & multi *50c* *A77*
SG#G6 SC#5 *October 4, 1969*

UN Emblem over Globe



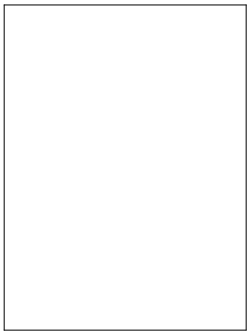
dark brown, salmon & gold *60c* *A54*
SG#G7 SC#6 *September 22, 1970*

"UN" and UN Emblem



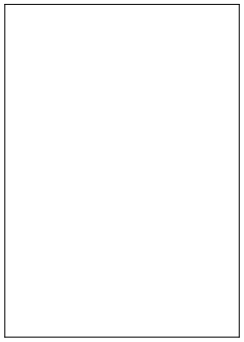
red, black & gold *70c* *A104*
SG#G8 SC#7 *September 22, 1970*

Fligth across Globe



carmine ros& multi *75c* *AP8*
SG#G9 SC#8 *October 4, 1969*

UN Headquarters and Emblem



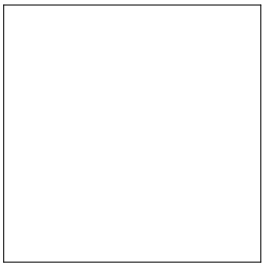
blue, green red & yellow *80c* *A78*
SG#G10 SC#9 *September 22, 1970*

UN Headquarters and Emblem



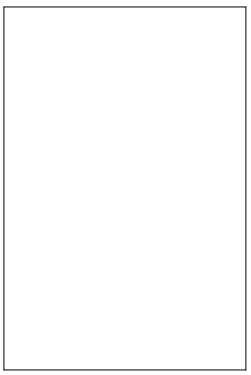
blue & multi *90c* *A45*
SG#G11 SC#10 *September 22, 1970*

UN Headquarters and Emblem



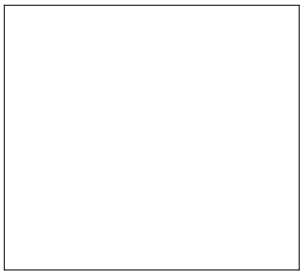
light & dark green *1Fr* *A79*
SG#G12 SC#11 *October 4, 1969*

Statue of Henrik Starcke



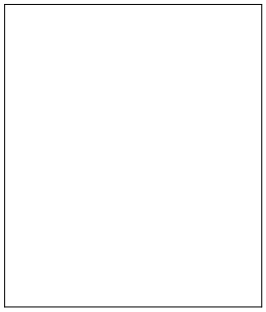
olive & multi *3Fr* *A97*
SG#G14 SC#13 *October 4, 1969*

Stylised Globe and Weather vane



blue & multi *2Fr* *A67*
SG#G13 SC#12 *September 22, 1970*

Peace, Justice, Security



deep blue *10Fr* *A3*
SG#G15 SC#14 *September 22, 1970*

United Nations - The First Issues

UNITED NATIONS OFFICES IN VIENNA - FIRST ISSUES

A 1979 agreement with Austria led to similar stamps for Vienna.
*****100 Centimes = 1 Swiss Franc.*