

The 1¢ UN First Issue of 1951 And Its First Day - Solo Use

SYNOPSIS For UNEXPO 2023

PURPOSE & SCOPE: This is a 1-frame “Traditional” First Day exhibit of the 1¢ stamp of the first issue of the United Nations ... with a “twist.” *Only solo usages of the stamp, on First Day covers, or on commercial mail, will be shown.* While there were three printings of this stamp, this exhibit is concerned only with the initial printing. Thus, pre-production material and commercial use will be restricted to this printing. The topic is, in my humble opinion, most fitting for the single frame format, given the very small number of First Day, personal mail and commercial mail solo uses extant.

Note a solo use is defined for this exhibit as a single stamp, and no other stamps, used to pay the complete postage needed.

TREATMENT: Following the Traditional format, this exhibit starts with essays and proofs of the stamp and follows with production format and varieties. The body of the exhibit presents various First Day items: an (unofficial) announcement, a promotional brochure FDC, various cacheted FDCs, Maximum cards, personal mail and commercial FDCs. The exhibit concludes with commercial uses. Key and important items are highlighted with a blue border.

IMPORTANCE: The First Issue of the United Nations were the first stamps, and remain the only stamps, issued by a non-governmental organization accepted as legitimate by the Universal Postal Union. The 1¢ stamp served as the low-value regular issue, franking official and visitors’ mail for over 11 years. Initially, and quite briefly, it paid the domestic postcard rate, then for the remainder of its tenure it was used as a make-up rate stamp.

KNOWLEDGE, STUDY & RESEARCH: The material in the frame reflects almost 40 years of collecting and research. The primary catalogues and books that cover the U.N. First Issue (e.g. Gaines, Linder, Goodey) ignore the aspect of FDCs with the exception of official items. Thus, all information about the FDC postcards, including census data, is from original research by the exhibitor. References with information pertinent to the subject are provided later in the “References” section.

RARITY & CONDITION: When issued on October 24, 1951, the primary purpose of the 1¢ stamp was to pay the domestic postcard rate. Virtually all commercial first day covers were produced using the standard No. 6¾ envelopes. Only a couple of cachet makers seized the opportunity to create FDCs that reflected the purpose for which the stamp was intended. These were apparently published in very small quantities, as they are rarely found in dealers’ stock, on eBay, or in auctions. All cacheted First Day postcards, known to this exhibitor in almost 40 years of collecting United Nations, are presented.

The domestic postcard rate increased to 2¢ on January 1, 1952 - just 69 days after the stamp was issued - making commercial uses a challenge to acquire. All valid solo uses (versus single uses) of this stamp are shown. The 1¢ non-carrier “drop” rate did not apply within the U.N. compound.

REFERENCES:

“First Issues” by Anthony Dewey in *The Journal of the United Nations Philatelist*, Volume 19, Number 2, (April 1995) pages 9-11. The first part of this article deals with the solo use of the 1¢ stamp on FDC postcards and commercial mail, as then known.

United Nations Philately, Arleigh Gaines, ed. 1980, R&D Publications, Inc. w/supplements through October 1997. A massive, detailed U.N. catalog. Pertinent pages: First Issue & 1¢ stamp - pp. 1-6; FDCs - pp. 387-9, 545; Hand cancels - p.567.