



PRESS INFORMATION

A promising future for the postal banking model

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Brussels – Postal savings banks from various parts of the world are meeting this week to discuss the financial crisis, market developments, and the role of postal banking in the coming years. Postal savings institutions have historically been involved in the provision of financial services to the broad public – particularly through the mobilization of savings and the provision of basic payment services through their close proximity to customers throughout the countries they serve. This role has been enhanced during the crisis, with consumers in search of security and stability.

Amine BENJELLOUN TOUIMI, the Director General of the Moroccan Post and this year's president of WSBI's Postal Savings Banks Forum said *“the postal savings banks have benefited from an increase in confidence among the public. In some countries, the deposits and the number of accounts have increased significantly.”*

Over the past two decades, many postal savings institutions have undergone institutional reorganization, moving away from being a part of the post offices' operations. These changes allow for the expansion of the scope of postal financial services, with some postal savings institutions embracing new activities and transforming into fully-fledged savings and retail banks. Clearly, further unleashing the potential of postal banking would provide more financial services to the people and businesses currently un-served or underserved.

Chris DE NOOSE, the Managing Director of WSBI, said *“the postal network contains approximately 660,000 post offices – the largest distribution network with proximity to clients throughout the world – and it is already partially mobilized to offer financial services to the public. We are confident that the combination of the postal banking model, with innovation and diversification of the range of products offered, will result in further progress in our market position.”*

At the Postal Savings Banks Forum, being held for the 12th time, representatives from postal savings banks from around the world will review the current challenges and opportunities for postal banking, brought by the fast-changing business environment. The topics which will specifically be focused on will include:

- The global financial crisis and market developments;
- Regulation and supervision of postal savings banks;
- Challenges and opportunities inherent to the expansion of products and activities; and
- Using technology and innovation to enhance the competitiveness of postal savings banks.

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About WSBI:

WSBI (World Savings Banks Institute) is the only global representative of savings and retail banks. Founded in 1924, it represents savings and retail banks and associations thereof in 92 countries (Asia-Pacific, the Americas, Africa and Europe – via the European Savings Banks Group). One third of its members are postal savings institutions, especially in Africa and Asia. As the international voice of savings and retail banking, WSBI works closely with international financial institutions and donor agencies. It thereby represents savings and retail banks' interests at an international level while also facilitating the provision of access to financial sectors worldwide, e.g., through training, consultancy services, etc., be it in developing or developed regions.

WSBI members are typically savings and retail banks or associations thereof. They are often organised in decentralised networks and offer their services throughout their region. WSBI member banks have reinvested responsibly in their region for many decades and are one distinct benchmark for corporate social responsibility activities throughout the world.

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