

UN to open international year of volunteers

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The United Nations will open the International Year of Volunteers 2001 next week to recognize and honour the achievements and contributions of millions of volunteers all over the world.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will deliver a keynote speech at the opening ceremony, scheduled for 28 November at the UN headquarters, to be followed by an exhibit on the United Nations Volunteers and International Year of Volunteers 2001, which will remain on display at the headquarters until February 28.

In connection with the exhibit, the UN Postal Administration will unveil new postage stamps in honour of the Year.

Volunteering has been part of virtually every civilization and society, and the need for increased voluntary action is greater than ever. In this connection, the UN General Assembly has declared the year of 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers, and designated the UN Volunteers programme as the Year's focal point.

The official launch is expected to take place in about 100 countries on December 5.
– Vientiane Times