

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Centara Grand Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand  
17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2019

### Minutes

#### 1. Welcome and Opening

##### 1.1 President's opening remarks

The ITTF President, Mr Thomas Weikert, welcomed everyone and thanked the Table Tennis Association of Thailand (TTAT) for hosting the EC Meeting for the first time in Bangkok. Mr Weikert then praised the fantastic hospitality and expressed his enthusiasm towards the future meetings and events to be hosted in Bangkok.

##### 1.2 Local organizers welcome

The President of the TTAT, Mr Piradej Pruttiprung, welcomed everyone and thanked the ITTF for selecting Bangkok to be the host city for this EC meeting. Mr Pruttiprung expressed his sincere gratitude towards the ITTF for the continuous support and for giving TTAT the opportunity to host major world ITTF events such as WJTTC in 2019 and Uncle Pop Women's World Cup in 2020. On behalf of the TTAT, Mr Pruttiprung wished the participants a nice stay and a very productive meeting in Bangkok.

##### 1.3 Roll call

Thomas Weikert	ITTF President
Khalil Al-Mohannadi	Deputy President
Petra Sörling	Executive Vice-President
Bruce Burton	Executive Vice-President
Masahiro Maehara	Executive Vice-President
Shi Zhihao	Executive Vice-President
Alaa Meshref	Executive Vice-President
James Morris	Executive Vice-President
Nestor Tenca	Executive Vice-President
Zoran Primorac	Athletes Commission Chair

In attendance	
Steve Dainton	CEO
Raul Calin	Secretary General
Iulia Necula	Executive Assistant to the CEO
Ryu Seungmin	IOC Member
Claudia Herweg	Equipment Manager – only for the Equipment part
Michael Brown	CFO – only for the Financial part
Matt Pound	Marketing Director – only for the Marketing part
Vicky Eleftheriade	Competition Director – only for the Competition part
Graeme Ireland	Technical Commissioner
Alan Switzer	Deloitte Project Manager – only for the Future WTTTC and Marketing Part
Annabel Pennefather	Withers KhattarWong LLP – only for the Marketing Part
Anthony Indaimo	Withers KhattarWong LLP – only for the Marketing Part

##### 1.4 Adoption of the agenda

The Agenda was adopted by the EC without any additions.

## **2. Minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting**

### **2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of the previous meeting (13<sup>th</sup> of December 2018)**

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved and signed by the ITTF President, Mr Thomas Weikert and the Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin.

### **2.2 Business arising from the Minutes**

Mr Calin, informed the group that no other business arose from the previous Minutes, adding that an update regarding the Merit Award criteria and procedure for application should be expected in the following weeks, once the Nomination Committee members finalise the process.

## **3. CEO Update**

### **3.1 Staff update**

The ITTF CEO, Mr Steve Dainton, updated the EC on the Staff Chart, highlighting some key positions that are needed within ITTF in order to achieve the strategic plan goals:

- Technical Officials Manager
- IT – Web Developer & Data Base Administrator
- International Relations / Protocol
- Competitions - support for the stages of the new WTTC

The CEO stressed the shortage of staff members in the Competition Department.

He presented the new Staff Chart as of 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2019 and informed the EC about the ongoing process to improve the procedures and ensure a better onboarding process for the new staff joining the ITTF.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, informed the EC about the exit interviews conducted with the two staff members whose contracts weren't renewed.

The CEO reported that, together with the CFO and HR, Mr Michael Brown, conducted for the first time ever, performance reviews for the 50 ITTF staff. The CEO stated that it was a good and positive process and a normal practice to manage the staff in a professional manner.

### **3.2 Strategic Plan update**

The CEO updated the EC on the Strategic Plan and Operational Plan, and praised the work done by Mr Michael Brown in this project.

The CFO stated that working on the Operational Plan was a challenge as currently the ITTF Staff is under resourced, but the goal is to have the Operational Plan delivered and presented during the 2019 AGM in Budapest.

### **3.3 Future Events Working Group (FEWG)**

#### **3.3.1 New Chair**

The CEO presented the facts of the current situation of the FEWG, informing that the current Chair, Mr Tony Kiesenhofer, resigned once he became a full time ITTF staff as the regional director of ITTF North America.

The EC decided that the EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, will be the new Chair of the FEWG.

#### **01-EC-20190217**

The Executive Committee decided that the EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, will be the new Chair of the FEWG.

### 3.3.2 Deloitte Report - presentation

The CEO reported to the EC the outcome of the FEWG meeting held in September 2018 in Alicante, with the technical continental representatives, the EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, and the ITTF staff. The CEO noted that there were many discussions and debates regarding the continental quotas at the final stage of the WTTC, and it was very difficult to get to a final conclusion.

Following the FEWG recommendation, the Competition Director, Mrs Vicky Eleftheriade, entrusted Deloitte to develop a dynamic formula to be used as a base for the continental quota, and to determine the best system and structure that would be acceptable for all stakeholders.

The Deloitte Project Manager, Mr Alan Switzer, presented an overview of the discussions held with the continental representatives' members of the FEWG, and the final report to determine the overall structure for both Individual and Team WTTC.

The report included detailed information regarding:

- WTTC Stages Regional / Continental / Intercontinental / WTTC Finals
- Method of qualification and continental quota allocation
- Playing system and competition format
- Commercial structure
- Financial structure

The qualification system and continental quota allocation is based on a dynamic formula that takes into consideration 3 key elements:

- Universality
- Performance
- Active participation in the WTTC's, from regional stage Events to the WTTC Finals

Several discussions were held among the members of the EC regarding the different options and potential variations and amendments of the system. Given the complexity of such a project, it was agreed that the EC members should forward their feedback to the new Chair of the FEWG, Mr Bruce Burton, who will then share with the rest of the FEWG.

The President reminded of the need for a correct procedure and the corresponding responsible body to be addressed in regard to the propositions referring to the WTTC system. Based on the decision taken in 2018 in Halmstad, the BoD has the responsibility to create and approve a competition system through a voting process during the 2019 BoD Meeting in Budapest.

### 3.4 Equipment Presentation

The Equipment Manager, Mrs Claudia Herweg, presented to the EC the propositions and resolutions on behalf of the Equipment Committee, and discussions were held with the aim to ensure that they could be formulated as such to the 2019 AGM/BoD. Mrs Herweg reported that discussions were held with different stakeholders.

The Equipment Manager updated the EC regarding the boosting matters and presented the different options and studies that should be conducted in order to identify and overcome the after-treatment issues. Given the complexity of this topic, she requested more time to work on this study and expressed a clear ITTF statement against after treatments.

The Equipment Manager presented the main aspects and elements to take into consideration for the creation of a modern Equipment Department such as:

- Sport development - Research projects
- Business chances - Innovations Workshops & Research Projects
- ITTF Approved Equipment fees & Standard ITTF laboratory

The Equipment Manager stated that one of the objectives is to give the industry more value and improve the system by adopting a more successful method in the market.

Mrs Petra Sörling, congratulated Mrs Claudia Herweg for the great work, appreciating and supporting the approach taken.

The ITTF President stated that he was very happy to see that the Equipment department is heading towards professionalization.

### 3.5 Home of Table Tennis update

The CEO reported that the Expression of Interest phase for the Headquarters / Home of Table Tennis bid, was opened. He informed the EC that the details of the process were published on the website and a Press Release was sent to all the stakeholders and potential hosts.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, updated the EC on the process of negotiation of the agreement on selling the property in Lausanne, confirming that the chosen real estate company is the right organization. Mrs Sörling highlighted that it is very important to confirm a formal process in the case of the sale of the Lausanne property, and considered that it is a unique project and a very good business opportunity.

### 3.6 Pan-Am

The CEO updated the EC on the PanAm situation informing about the very positive outcome of the meeting held on the previous day between Mr Weikert, Mr Burton, Mr Tenca, Mr Calin and himself.

He reported that in Cancun in June, during the Pan Am Junior Championships, the objective is to move forward and establish the Pan American Confederation. The focus of that meeting will be the ratification of the Constitution, for which all stakeholders will receive the draft in advance, having time enough to study and provide feedback.

The EVP, Mr Nestor Tenca, expressed his satisfaction regarding the positive outcome of the meeting, and highlighted the fact that it is everyone's responsibility to work hard towards a successful model.

### 3.7 2020 Unified Korea

The IOC Member, Mr Ryu Seungmin, updated the EC in regard to the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> of February between the IOC, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea National Olympic Committee and the Republic of Korea National Olympic Committee. Mr Ryu reported that there was no agreement reached yet regarding the participation of a unified team in the Mixed Doubles Olympic Qualification.

Mr Ryu noted that further discussions will be held between the two NOC's with the objective to negotiate a potential unification of the two teams and hoped that a final answer will be given in the following weeks.

The ITTF President stated that the ITTF encourages and fully supports the establishment and participation of the "Unified Korea" Team in line with the regulations, as agreed with the IOC, and hopes that all necessary actions are taken in order to ensure that Table Tennis will be a part of the Unified Korea team at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

### 3.8 Strategic Investments

The CEO updated the EC on the Strategic Investments and agreements done with different continents and regions across the world.

Mr Dainton mentioned that in the case of Africa, the situation is much better compared to the last year, and thanked the EVP, Dr Alaa Meshref, for the important contribution in the area. The CEO stated that the intention of the ITTF is to sign Regional Agreements within Africa, as it is important to push the sport forward in terms of future WTTC's and for development in a region that needs a lot of support from ITTF.

The CEO reported that in the case of Latin America, an agreement was reached on how to best move forward with their strategic investment. Mr Dainton reported that they were currently in the process of hiring a Regional Director, which will help develop events and start to move forward.

#### **4. Athlete's Commission**

##### **4.1 Athletes Commission update**

The AC Chair, Mr Zoran Primorac, updated the EC on the Athlete's Commission activities, and informed the EC that the current members are really motivated and ready to work to improve the conditions for the players.

Mr Primorac stated that the Players are constantly complaining about the poor conditions at the ITTF events, while the expenses and participation costs are increasing from year to year.

He stressed about the importance of the implementation of the Event Directives as it is perceived as one of the ITTF weaknesses.

The AC Chair requested an immediate reaction to quickly solve the issues that can be fixed and recommended improvements in the area of:

- Excess of entries at events
- Competition schedule
- Accommodation
- Meals
- Transportation
- Players services

The EC acknowledged the current situation and agreed on the need for special attention from the Competition Department on the highlighted items.

It was announced that the ITTF senior staff, together with the AC, will organize a players' meeting in Doha, during the 2019 Seamaster ITTF World Tour Platinum Qatar Open, with the purpose to update the athletes about the new ITTF marketing strategies and the new commercial vehicle.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, gave the positive example of the European Cup Top 16 in Montreaux. Mrs Sörling stated that it is very important to take care of the players and mentioned that sometimes the special services aren't necessarily related to finances.

The AC Chair also brought to attention the complaints regarding the T2 events and the clashes with the ETTU Champions League matches. The ITTF President, informed the EC about the discussion held with ETTU Representatives regarding requested financial support from the ETTU in order to change the dates.

Mr Primorac, updated the EC on the case of the AC member, Ms Jasna Rather, who was hired in the position of ITTF North America High Performance Manager, and asked about the procedure to be followed in this case.

Mr Weikert, informed the EC that according to the new approach that ITTF decided to follow as an organization, an official should not also act in the role of a position of staff and vice versa.

The EC acknowledge the situation and will take a decision in the following weeks.

Mr Primorac also informed about the importance of the Athletes Education and Dual Career programs and requested that future events should be held with that purpose. He also requested a stand at the players' lounge during the 2019 WTTC in Budapest, where the AC can be easily approached by the players.

The CEO mentioned that for the ITTF it is very constructive to hear the voice of the athletes and to be informed about the reality that the players are confronting.

## 5. Operations Program

### 5.1 Finances

The ITTF CFO, Mr. Michael Brown, updated the EC on the ongoing audits preparation for 2018. Mr Brown reported that the accounts are now ready for the audit. They show a very positive result, with more than double the surplus, compared to the budget presented at the 2018 AGM in Halmstad.

The CFO listed some of the major financial statements such as:

- 9% Increase in Media (Broadcast) and Marketing (Sponsorship) revenues
- For the first time ever, the ITTF generated over USD 20m in revenue.
- The increase revenues, also saw a decrease in expenses
- 25% increased investment into competitions, corresponding to increased prize money and sport presentation
- 13% increased investment into High Performance & Development activities

The CFO reported that the audit will be carried out in the following weeks in Lausanne and it is estimated to end towards the end of March. Mr Brown stated that the Financial Audit will be ready to be presented during the upcoming 2019 AGM in Budapest.

He also informed that the Singapore Office audit has taken longer than expected to finalise, due to the increased number of staff and turnover, as well as the recent move to a new office.

Mrs Sörling informed that as originally made in Halmstad in 2018, a Financial Forum will be held on the first day of the 2019 WTTC in Budapest.

Mrs Sörling, reminded about the formation of the new Finance & Audit Committee, which now shall include independent members, and noted that a first meeting of the committee should take place prior to the AGM.

The EC agreed to electronically approve the formation of the Finance & Audit Committee and the appointment of the members in the following weeks.

#### **02-EC-20190217**

The Executive Committee agreed to electronically approve the formation of the Financial & Audit Committee group and the appointment of the members.

#### 5.1.1 Annual Report

The CFO, Mr Michael Brown, informed that, in order to further professionalise the ITTF from a corporate image point of view, 2018 Financial Statements will be incorporated in an Annual Report to be presented in a form of a professional booklet during the 2019 AGM. The EVP,

Mrs Petra Sörling, stated that given the continued expansion of ITTF and the increased amount of work, it is necessary to hire more staff within the financial department.

## 5.2 2019 AGM

### 5.2.1 Propositions and Resolutions

The Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, presented to the EC all the propositions and resolutions received, with the aim to ensure that that they could be formulated as such to the 2019 AGM.

The EC considered that some of the resolutions submitted were questionable and asked the Secretary General to double check with the Rules Committee Chair, Mr Rudolf Sporrer, if they should be presented to the AGM or not. Mr Weikert, noted that the members shall be informed by the ITTF Secretariat about the proper procedure once the situation will be clarified together with the Rules Committee Chair.

## 5.3 BoD

### 5.3.1 Propositions and Resolutions

Similarly, to what was done with the AGM Propositions and Resolutions, the Secretary General, presented to the EC those addressed to the BoD for consideration.

The Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, and the EVP, Dr Alaa Meshref, wanted to express their explicit opposition to the Chilean TTA proposition to allow advertisement of alcoholic drinks in the countries where it is allowed (the Chilean TTA explained that the rationale of this proposition is to maximize sponsorship opportunities for our sport, as currently those companies are sponsoring other sport events).

## 5.4 Lausanne Office

The Secretary General updated the EC on the Lausanne Office situation. The EC noted that, with the relocation of the Secretary General to Singapore offices, currently there are only three staff members present at the Lausanne Office, with limited workload there.

The Secretary General gave the historic background, particularly for those EC members elected in 2017 and 2018, about the decision to move from the ITTF property in Renens/Lausanne to the new offices adjacent to the Maison du Sport. This was seen as an appropriate step in 2014 in order to ensure the ITTF staff was having more interaction with other IFs staff. The process was long and became effective in 2017. However, with the very positive changes and significant evolution the ITTF has been experimenting since the AGM held in 2017, it is clear that the main "hub" of ITTF activities is currently in Singapore, and the offices in Lausanne are too big and expensive for only three staff.

In order to be more effective in the way the ITTF operates, the CEO, together with the Secretary General, the CFO and the EVP of Finances, proposed to the EC that the staff working in Lausanne should move to a smaller and more cost-effective office. The estimation is to save around 67% of the current cost. The ITTF Secretary General was entrusted to find alternatives for relocation, together with the Head of Operations, Mr Jordi Serra.

## 5.5 Membership Recognition issues

The Secretary General updated the EC on the ongoing process regarding the membership recognition issues of Kuwait TTA. Mr Calin explained that a request has been received from Kuwait asking to grant their participation at the 2019 WTTC. Mr Calin highlighted that Kuwait was not eligible to compete in the Asian Games due to the suspension of the NOC at the time, but now the suspension has been lifted.

The EC requested the Secretary General to check the situation according to the rules, together with the Technical Commissioner and once clarified, the EC will decide electronically.

## 5.6 Governance Working Group – Approval of members

The CEO reminded about the decision taken during the last EC meeting in Incheon, Korea, regarding the formation of a Governance Working Group, and noted that in order to move forward it is important to finalize the process of appointment of the members.

Mr Dainton stated that there are a lot of areas within ITTF that need to be improved. He highlighted that it would be wise to include an independent professional person to lead this process and recommended Mrs Annabel Pennefather, due to her experience in sport governance.

The EC agreed to approve Mrs Annabel Pennefather as an independent member of the working group.

### **03-EC-20190217**

The Executive Committee agreed to appoint Mrs Annabel Pennefather as an independent member of the Governance working group.

## 5.7 Sport Science matters

The Secretary General updated the EC on the two projects proposed by the Chair of the Sport Science and Medical Committee, Prof. Miran Kondric.

The CEO recommended that, besides dealing during the meeting with the two projects proposed, a meeting with the Chair of the Sport Science and Medical Committee, Prof. Miran Kondric, should be scheduled in Budapest, in order to establish the strategic direction of the Committee.

The AC Chair, Mr Zoran Primorac, specified that the scientific approach was not a priority in the past and it would be good to invest in research and projects involving the athletes.

The project "Analysis of the 3D translational motion of a ball in World Championships and ITTF World Tour" was deferred for discussion between the SSMC and the ITTF Equipment Manager, Ms Herweg. The project "ITTF Table Tennis Injuries Study Project" was approved.

### **04-EC-20190217**

The Executive Committee, on recommendation of the SSMC Chair, Prof. Kondric, approved the project "ITTF Table Tennis Injuries Study Project".

## 5.8 Good Governance Issues

### 5.8.1 Decisions regarding ITTF Honorary President Mr Adham Sharara

The Executive Committee discussed at length the situation in regard to the former ITTF President and Chair, and current Honorary President, Mr Adham Sharara. After deliberations and after analysing all the correspondence held between the ITTF Executive Committee, its legal advisors, Mr Adham Sharara, and his legal advisor, the ITTF Executive Committee decided unanimously to give a final opportunity for Mr Sharara to clarify the matters being investigated through a formal hearing to be held in Doha, Qatar, on 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019, and in addition it was decided that prior to the formal hearing he would have the chance to settle the matters with a pre "without prejudice" settlement meeting with predefined topics that were confirmed in the Executive Committee meeting. If Mr Sharara would not accept

such hearing and settlement meeting, the Executive Committee agreed to suspend him for a period of four years. This decision was unanimous.

#### **05-EC-20190217**

The Executive Committee discussed and agreed on the process to be implemented in the decision against the ITTF Honorary President, Mr Adham Sharara. The Executive Committee decided unanimously to propose a formal hearing with a pre "without prejudice" settlement meeting in Doha, Qatar, on 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> March. If Mr Sharara would not accept, the Executive Committee unanimously agreed to suspend him for four years.

#### **5.8.2 TMS dissolution**

The EC was informed about the Dissolution of TMS International.

The EC unanimously agreed to seek further legal counsel in order to establish if the TMS dissolution is of any relevance to the ITTF according to the terms and conditions of the termination contract between ITTF and TMS International.

#### **5.8.3 ASOIF Governance Support & Monitoring Unit**

The ITTF President informed that the result of the ASOIF Governance Support & Monitoring Unit Report places the ITTF in the middle tier of IF's. He mentioned that given the work done in 2018 in relation to good governance and compliance (i.e. the revision of the ITTF constitution, implementation of the Code of Ethics, etc) the result for ITTF will be much better in the future.

The Secretary General suggested the work should continue, to place the ITTF in the future among the leader IFs in terms of good governance.

#### **5.8.4 Harassment cases**

5.8.4.1 The Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, updated the EC on the harassment case handled in 2018, in which the Respondent, Mr Cyril Sen, did appeal to the CAS. The CAS considered the appeal and declared the ITTF EC decision void.

Mr Calin informed that a letter was received from the Respondent requesting the ITTF to take actions against the Complainant for false accusations.

The Secretary General noted that, as per the advice of the ITTF legal advisor, Dr Jakob, the responsibility of the ITTF was to nullify the warning informing both parties and to return to Mr Sen the CAS fees.

5.8.4.2 The Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, presented the facts on his complaint against Mr Omar Assar expressing to the EC his disappointment for the damage that this situation has caused to his image.

Mr Al Mohannadi stated that this kind of inappropriate conduct is not acceptable and expressed his concern about the lack of disciplinary actions and disciplinary regulations in the ITTF to deal with such cases. Mr Al-Mohannadi stressed the need to develop rules in order to protect the Executive Committee members in particular, and the entire ITTF Family in general.

The Secretary General apologized for the delay in the handling of the case and updated the EC in detail of the step by step process taken since the complaint was received in August 2018, including investigation, hearing and mediation.

Mr Calin reported that, although the two harassment officers were of the opinion that this was not a case of harassment, legal experts from Switzerland considered that the complaint

of Mr Al-Mohannadi was substantiated, and that the ITTF anti-harassment regulations could be improved to provide more clarity to future harassment officers.

It was agreed that one of the tasks of the Governance group, on their regulation's revision, will be to work in the next few months on the establishment of a Code of Conduct and formulate a proposition for the 2020 AGM in Busan.

Mr Al-Mohannadi said being disappointed with the length of the process, and asked to close the case, urging the EC to adopt stronger measures to protect individuals in the future.

#### **06-EC-20190217**

At the request of the complainant, Mr Al-Mohannadi, the case of his complaint against Mr Omar Assar was declared closed.

#### 5.8.5 Policy framework

The EC approved the proposed Policy framework elaborated by the CFO, Mr Michael Brown, and supported by the EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling.

#### **07-EC-20190217**

The Executive Committee approved the proposed Policy framework.

## **6. Competition Program**

### 6.1 Olympic Games Update

The Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, updated the EC on the preparations leading up to the Olympic Games, reporting that the Communication with Tokyo 2020 is still quite slow.

Mr Calin reported that a delegation comprised of the one of the Technical Delegates for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, Prof. Chan Cheong-Ki, the Competition Director, Mrs Vicky Eleftheriade, the Marketing Director, Mr Matt Pound and himself, will be visiting Tokyo for inspection in March 2019 and highlighted some of the pending points of the Agenda that still need to be confirmed such as:

- Transport between the competition hall and the practice hall
- Colours of the flooring and surrounds
- Confirmation of the result display on the FOP
- Team World Cup – Test event
- VIP area for the Sponsors, Guests, and ITTF Family

### 6.2 World Championships update

#### 6.2.1 2019 WTTC Budapest update

Mrs Eleftheriade updated the EC on the 2019 WTTC preparation progress, and reported that the on-site inspection was positive, with many important items having been solved. She noted that the Competition and Marketing Staff are in permanent contact with the LOC and everything should be according to the plan.

#### 6.2.2 2021 and 2022 Bids

The ITTF Competition Director updated the EC on the bidding process for 2021 and 2022 WTTC Finals and reported that the initial on-site inspections for the five bidding cities are scheduled in March 2019. The inspections' reports will be forwarded to the selection panel for further consideration.

### 6.3 World Tour Update

The Competition Director updated the EC on the 2020 ITTF World Tour bidding process, reporting that there was a total of 12 bids. She noted that the biggest issue for 2020 was the calendar planning, but it was finally solved.

#### 6.4 Challenge Update

The ITTF Competition Director updated the EC on the 2020 ITTF Challenge Series bidding process. She reported that the bidding phase was finalized, and the evaluation panel will complete the evaluation and proceed with the event allocation.

The AC Chair, Mr Primorac, complained about the excessive number of entries and the system of play implemented at the 2019 ITTF Challenge Plus Portugal Open, and asked for immediate solutions.

Mrs Eleftheriade mentioned that the number of entries is based on a formula that considers the number of days of the event and the system of play and specified that the issues in Portugal were caused by an error in the calculations of the numbers of games of some of the matches. She apologized for the inconveniences caused by this situation.

Mrs Eleftheriade stated that the competition department will be monitoring the performance and evolution of the events in the next couple of months, with the intention that from 2021 onwards, each tier of events will target different levels of players.

#### 6.5 World Cups Update

The ITTF Competition Director updated the EC on the World Cups Bidding process. She reported that based on the evaluation, it was agreed that the 2020 WWC will be held in Bangkok, Thailand and the 2020 MWC in Germany.

Mrs Eleftheriade recommended including the AC Chair, Mrs Zoran Primorac, in the evaluation panel for events in the future.

#### 6.6 Junior Program Update

##### 6.6.1 WJTTC Update

The ITTF Competition Director informed the EC that the bids for 2021 and 2022 WJTTC were opened.

##### 6.6.2 WCC Update

The ITTF Competition Director updated the EC on the 2019 WCC which will be held in Cetniewo, Poland.

#### 6.7 Multi-Sport Games Update

The EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, informed the EC that there were no further updates related to Multi-Sport Games. The Organizing Committee of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games should send a response regarding the inclusion of table tennis in the Para Program in March 2019.

#### 6.8 World Veteran Tour (WVT)

The EVP, Mr James Morris, updated the EC on the WVT bidding process and congratulated the Managing Director Product Innovation, Mr Gordon Kaye for the hard work done in the past months.

The Executive Assistant to the CEO, Ms Iulia Necula, reported that the 2019 WVT Events will be hosted in the following cities:

- Shenzhen, China – 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> August
- Townsville, Australia – 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> August
- Innsbruck, Austria – 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> August
- Ft. Lauderdale, USA – 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> October

- Doha, Qatar – 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> November
- Cardiff, Wales – 10<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> December

#### 6.9 World Veteran Championships (WVC)

The ITTF President updated the EC on the discussions regarding the WVC transition and the positive outcome of the meeting held with the Swaythling Club on 25<sup>th</sup> of January in Düsseldorf, Germany.

He reported that it was agreed that the ITTF will be in charge of the WVC from 2022 onwards. Mr Weikert informed the EC that a first draft of the contract with the SCI is being prepared with the intention of signing it during the WTTC in Budapest.

#### 6.10 World Ranking

The ITTF Competition Director updated the EC on the WR revision and informed that a new World Ranking Manager will be hired in the hope of professionalizing this further.

The AC Chair reported that the players are complaining about the WR revision. The ITTF President, answered that the revision was proposed and approved by the WR working group, in which the athletes are represented by one member of the AC, and also based on the recommendations of the former AC Chair, and the feedback received from the players.

Mrs Sörling, recommended to reconsider the mandate and composition of the WR working group once the WR Manager has been hired.

Mr Weikert, stated that while the work of the new WR Manager will be focused on the technical aspect of the Ranking system, the WR working group has the mandate to establish the principles in which the ranking system is defined.

#### 6.11 T2 Diamond

The ITTF Competition Director updated the EC on the T2 Diamond events in terms of dates, playing system and WR.

#### 6.12 Future World Tour

The Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, announced that the World Tour Organizers have been invited for a meeting to be held in Doha during the Qatar Open, with the main objective of discussing how to improve the ITTF events in the future. Mr Al-Mohannadi stated that the ITTF is working very hard to improve the events and it is important to send a clear message to all organizers that future measures are required.

Mr Burton stated that it is important to develop a competitive bidding process and make sure that the right to host ITTF events will be awarded only to those that can guarantee a certain quality.

#### 6.13 Match Duration – Time Limit

Mr Maehara informed the EC about an analysis made of the match duration at the 2018 Asian Games and the 2018 World Tour Grand Finals, and suggested that a time limit should be implemented between points at the ITTF events.

Mr Weikert, recommended to adopt a systematic approach and reconsider the match duration and playing system.

Mrs Eleftheriade, agreed with the proposal and ensured that the competition department will coordinate with the URC the enforcement of the continuity of play rule. Mrs Eleftheriade noted that this measure will be further tested during the T2 events.

#### 6.14 Multi-Ball system

Mr Maehara, expressed his satisfaction with the multi-ball system and recommended it to be implemented in all the international events.

The Competition Director informed the EC that at the 2019 WTTC in Budapest the multi ball system will be implemented from Day 4 onwards. She mentioned that the reason for not being able to implement it from Day 1 is the high number of tables and matches played at the same time and the lack of ball kids.

## 7. Marketing and Promotion

### 7.1 Marketing & Media strategy update

#### 7.1.1 2021 Tender Process – Deloitte Presentation

The Marketing Director, Mr Matt Pound, gave a brief introduction about the tender process and the work done so far, and invited the Deloitte Project Manager, Mr Alan Switzer, to further explain the new proposed structure and to present the monetization model of the commercial vehicle.

The Deloitte Report contained relevant information regarding:

- The Vision, Mission and Objectives for World Table Tennis (WTT)
- Tender process - guiding principles, timelines and targeted bidders
- Overview ITTF & WTT Division of platforms
- WTT Business Model – options of available commercial models
- WTT Business Plan
- Investment / priority areas

The Marketing Director noted that all the relevant documents regarding the tender process will be shared and distributed with all the EC members.

#### 7.1.2 World Table Tennis – KW presentation

Following the mandate given by the EC to develop the concept of the commercial vehicle at the meeting in Incheon, the Marketing Director explained the work done during these weeks, and invited the Withers KhattarWong legal representatives, Mrs Annabel Pennefather and Mr Anthony Indaimo, to offer more details about the proposed structure and set-up of the commercial entity. They offered a brief introduction of the individual portfolio as well as the work developed as part of the Withers KhattarWong proposal.

Mr Anthony Indaimo, explained the legal process and procedure to be followed in case of creation of a for profit entity within ITTF, organization which will be granted the exclusive commercialization rights of table tennis under the ITTF control. Mr Indaimo made reference to a new in-house structure that, following ASOIF recommendations, dissociates the governance of the sport from the commercialization of the sport, to avoid conflict of interest on elected officials, as happened in recent years in a few International Federations.

Mr Anthony Indaimo presented the legal matters to be taken into consideration:

- WTT's objectives as ITTF's commercialization partner
- Proposed structure and procedure to be followed in the creation of the WTT
- Proposed Governance
- WTT Finances
- Money flow – WTT "for profit" vs ITTF/ ITTF AP "non-for-profit"
- Master License Agreement between ITTF & WTT

The ITTF President, Mr Thomas Weikert, raised the question if the Constitution enables the EC to establish a commercial entity and if so then it should be done fully transparent and according to good governance. Mr Weikert made a reference to the history and the past experience with the TMS International.

Mr Anthony Indaimo stated that under the Swiss law, despite the fact of being a tax-exempt entity, the ITTF has the right to do all the things that a legal company can do and the ITTF

Constitution enables it to do so. Mr Indaimo said that although he understands the concern regarding the past experience, the proposed model is very different that can be seen as “Evolutionary and Revolutionary” in the world of sport and broadcasting, by following the trend in the current business environment

Mrs Annabel Pennefather, highlighted the major difference between TMS International as an external private company and WTT, as an ITTF own structure.

The Withers Khattarwong legal representatives will proceed with the next steps based on the considerations and feedback provided from the EC members in the following weeks:

- Finalise structure
- Incorporate WTT Pte Ltd
- Finalise Master Licence Agreement

The ITTF CEO thanked the Withers KhattarWong legal representatives and mentioned that it is the first time for the Executive Committee to witness this kind of legal presentation.

Mr Dainton reminded that during the last IF Forum held in November 2018 in Lausanne, the ASOIF Executive Director, Mr Andrew Ryan sent a strong message to the IF’s about the need to move forward in a professional way and follow the trend in the current business environment by separating the governance and commercial aspects.

The EC agreed that Withers KhattarWong should reserve the name “World Table Tennis” as a registered company in Singapore as the first step for the potential establishment of a commercial vehicle.

#### **08-EC-20190217**

The Executive Committee decided to request Withers KhattarWong to reserve, for the ITTF, the name “World Table Tennis” as a registered company in Singapore, as the first step for the potential establishment of a commercial vehicle

#### **7.2 Sponsorship update**

The ITTF Marketing Director updated the EC on the Sponsorship situation, reporting that a Sponsorship Agreement was signed with 12Bet for the 2019 WTTC in Budapest and ongoing discussions are being held for a more extensive and long-term partnership.

Mr Pound stated that conversations are also being held with GoDaddy but unfortunately, nothing has been finalised yet due to changes in their Asian commercial strategies.

The Marketing Director reported that Tianjin 729 became the new Official ball partner for Para factor 40 and Para continental events. Mr Pound confirmed that this agreement reinforces the belief that Para Events have a commercial value for ITTF.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, noted that the news was very positive and very well received from the Para Committee side.

### **8. Any other business**

#### **8.1 European Veteran Championships**

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, updated the EC on the European Veteran Championships and asked for the ITTF to consider how to better support the continental events.

#### **8.2 ITTF Oceania**

The EVP, Mr James Morris, requested the ITTF Competition Department to give a special attention to the lead up to the Australian Open after the various changes at ITTF Oceania.

### 8.3 Omar Assar Player's Sponsorship Agreement

The EC decided that given the current circumstances the ITTF should not grant the payment to Mr Omar Assar as it violates the terms and conditions of the Player's Sponsorship Agreement between Mr Assar and the ITTF. It was agreed that the President will have a final check on the legal points.

### 8.4 AC Budget

The AC Chair, Mr Zoran Primorac, requested financial resources on behalf of the Athletes Commission in order to fulfil the AC's tasks and Objectives.

It was agreed that a provisional Budget shall be prepared by the AC Chair and presented to the EVP of Finances and the ITTF CEO.

## 9. **Next EC meeting**

It will be held at 14:00 on 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2019 in Budapest, Hungary.

## 10. **Adjournment**

Without further subjects, the meeting was adjourned on 18<sup>th</sup> of February at 16:30.

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Thomas Weikert  
ITTF President

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Date

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Raul Calin  
ITTF Secretary General

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Date