

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Video Conference  
29<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome and Opening

#### 1.1 President's opening remarks

The President, Mr Thomas Weikert, welcomed everyone and -as in the previous on-line meeting- wanted to start thanking the ITTF Staff for handling the situation in a very professional manner, as well as the EC members for their availability for frequent on-line meetings.

#### 1.2 Roll Call

Thomas Weikert	ITTF President
Khalil Al-Mohannadi	Deputy President
Petra Sörling	Executive Vice-President - Finance
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
Ryu Seungmin	IOC member

#### In attendance

Steve Dainton	CEO
Raul Calin	Secretary General
Iulia Necula	CEO's Office Projects Director
Claudia Vatheuer	Assistant to the President
Michael Brown	CFO
Matt Pound	Marketing Director
Vicky Eleftheriade	Competition Director
Mounir Bessah	Member Relations Director

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

#### 2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous Executive Committee meetings (2020#01 & 2020#02) were approved and will be signed electronically by the President.

#### 2.2 Business arising from the Minutes

The Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, reported on the status of the business arising from the previous meeting.

Furthermore, the EC noted that, as agreed at the EC meeting in Delhi, a revised version of the 2019#05 EC Meeting Minutes will be circulated as that's the last one to be published on-line, with all EC Meeting Minutes from January 2020 remaining internal and only the decisions to be published on ITTF.com.

### 3. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was confirmed with the inclusion of the following points:

- 7.1 Finances (and moving "Renens Property" to 7.2)
- 10.2 Meeting of Mr Al-Mohannadi with HRH Princess Zeina Rashed
- 11.1 CAS update
- 11.2 Next ITTF Election

### 4. COVID-2019 situational report

As agreed at the last EC Meeting (20200316#03) a COVID-19 Task Force group was established. Led by the CFO, Mr Michael Brown, and with the participation of Ms Zena Sim (from the Competitions Department) and Ms Tessa Cho (from the Marketing Department), the group produces reports and recommendations which are sent daily to the EC and Senior Management.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling thanked the Task Force group for the work being done so far.

Mr Brown gave a brief overview, providing the EC with the latest update, and the main recommendation being suspending ITTF activities until 30<sup>th</sup> June, and starting to analyse the ITTF HR situation if the overall situation does not improve in the coming weeks.

### 5. CEO Update

The CEO, Mr Steve Dainton, highlighted that due to the continued uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the EC was encouraged to agree on the Task Force recommendation to extend the suspension of all currently planned ITTF events and activities that involve international travel until 30 June 2020 and to further postpone the Hana Bank 2020 World Team Table Tennis Championships to a later date. Identically, a similar recommendation would be made to Continental Federations.

#### 20200329-EC-01

The ITTF EC decided to extend the suspension of all ITTF activities involving international until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<b>ACTION 20200329#01</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Management</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-03-30</b>
<b>Inform the ITTF Members and other stakeholders about the suspension of activities involving international travelling until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.</b>		

#### 5.1 World Team Table Tennis Championships update

Mr Ryu Seungmin indicated that given the recent the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the global expansion of the COVID-19 pandemic, the LOC wants to agree with the ITTF on further postponing the Hana Bank 2020 World Team Table Tennis Championships, with the only available option in BEXCO calendar being Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

The EC noted that the postponement will impact in the overall expenditure for the Organizing Committee, and a series of measures are being adopted:

- The LOC being temporarily dismissed until 1-2 months prior to the WTTC
- Revision of the budget in order to find ways to reduce it
- Alternative marketing and promotional activities

Mr Weikert thanked Mr Ryu for the comprehensive report and the EC noted that the proposed dates would clash or be near the current dates of some continental championships, i.e., Africa, Europe, and Pan-America.

Mr Dainton suggested that from the importance of the event and also from the financial perspective, the first priority should be hosing the WTTTC in 2020 and the ITTF would work with the Continental Federations to find a good compromise.

Mr Primorac suggested this approach (top to bottom) would be supported by the Athletes Commission, always keeping safety and health of the athletes as the first priority. Mr Primorac wanted the EC to note that being the clubs and national associations the main source of income for the athletes, it will be important to make a good coordination of the calendar, warning particularly about the concern of having two major events such World Championships and Continental Championships very close to each other.

Mr Ryu requested not to announce the proposed dates until an official agreement is reached between the LOC and the stakeholders, what would eventually happen in the coming days.

Mrs Sörling indicated the importance to coordinate well the communications in this respect.

Dr Meshref suggested to establish a clear priority order for the different events that should be accommodated on the ITTF calendar as the situation evolves.

The EC noted the recommendation of Mr Calin about sending a courtesy letter to the continental federations directly affected by the postponement of the WTTTC and the impact that this may have over their continental events.

## 20200329-EC-02

The ITTF Executive Committee decided to further postpone the Hana Bank 2020 World Team Table Tennis Championships to a later date. The proposal of the new date to be announced in coordination with the LOC.

<b>ACTION 20200329#02</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Management</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-04-06</b>
<b>Inform the ITTF Members and other stakeholders about the new dates of the World Team Table Tennis Championships once agreed with the LOC.</b>		

<b>ACTION 20200329#03</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Management</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-04-06</b>
Send courtesy letters to the Continental Federations which events dates may be clashing or near the newly proposed WTTTC dates.		

## 5.2 HoTT update (extension)

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the HoTT bidding process and recommended that, given the current circumstances, the general consensus was to provisionally suspend the cut-off date to receive applications until further notice. The new timelines and deadlines to be decided and communicated to all stakeholders at a later stage.

### **20200329-EC-03**

The ITTF EC decided to provisionally suspend the cut-off date of the HoTT bidding process until further notice.

<b>ACTION 20200329#04</b>	<b>In charge: HoTT Tender Team</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-04-06</b>
Inform the applicants of the HoTT bidding process that the deadlines are provisionally suspended.		

## **6. Athletes' Commission update**

The EC noted the report of Mr Primorac from the Athletes Commission meeting held on 26th March, particularly the suggestion to engage the different stakeholders, and organizing a survey in order to receive direct feedback from the athletes.

The Competition Director, Mrs Vicky Eleftheriade, updated the EC on the proposition from the World Ranking working group to freeze of ITTF Ranking lists as of April 2020 until further notice, which was in line with AC request.

In relation to the players affected by the travel restrictions in different events in March, Mrs Eleftheriade noted indicated that it was important to distinguish between the different implications and outcomes of the events held in March, where the Polish Open was suspended after the Qualification Stage, while Qatar and Oman Open were completed.

The EC noted the detailed considerations from the WR group, and the CEO suggested it would be good to consider giving courtesy points to the players that could not participate due to travel restrictions.

Mrs Eleftheriade reported that the WR group gave full consideration to this issue, but eventually the recommendation was not to award any points.

Dr Meshref stated that it was important to keep the same standard and not to discriminate the players affected by the last-minute travel restrictions.

The general consensus was not releasing April ranking until a further analysis would be made.

## 20200329-EC-04

The ITTF EC decided to freeze of ITTF Ranking lists as of March 2020 and further evaluate the implications related to the postponement and cancellation of events, travel restrictions, and other exceptional circumstances before taking a decision about April rankings.

ACTION 20200329#05	In charge: World Ranking Group	Deadline: 2020-04-10
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Reconsider the decision to not award courtesy points to the players affected due to the travel restrictions in March events.
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## 7. Operations program

### 7.1 Finances

The EC noted the report of Mrs Sörling about the work being done in terms of crisis management, budget control and adjustments on the activities planned for the rest of the year.

Mr Brown continued, giving the EC a financial overview, highlighting the impact that the Olympic Games postponement might have in the overall situation and recommending the adoption of a more conservative approach, releasing in 2020 a significantly lower amount from the Olympic funding.

The EC also noted the report of Mr Brown about the Marketing Rights being also severely affected and the warn about eventually having to return some of the Olympic equipment supplier's contributions if the Olympic Games would finally not be held.

Mr Brown estimated that the overall financial impact will be very significative in 2020 and might account approx. USD 10-15 millions \$.

Mr Dainton suggested the ITTF should be prepared for the worst-case scenario, although the hope is being able to resume activities from July. Mr Dainton agreed with Mrs Sörling on the suggestion to adopt a conservative approach.

Mrs Sörling suggested the EC should travel in economy class for the rest of the year, with the eventual exception of the World Championships, and giving up the yearly travel allowance.

The EC noted the decision of the senior management to have a voluntary one-month salary reduction, while Mr Dainton and Mr Calin informed the EC they would be taking a second month salary reduction. Mr Weikert informed he will also have his honorarium cut voluntarily for one month. After the different exchanges, the EC agreed on the following decisions:

## 20200329-EC-05

The ITTF EC decided to cancel the 2020 World Cadet Challenge and to significantly reduce the HPD activities.

## 20200329-EC-06

The ITTF EC decided to travel for the rest of 2020 in Economy Class, with the possible exception of the World Championships, and to cancel their yearly allowances for 2020.

Mr Dainton suggested that further measures will be taken if needed, acknowledging that everyone in the table tennis industry is being affected.

Mr Dainton informed the EC that the senior management will have discussions with their teams and if necessary, the rest of the staff might be also required to take a one-month salary reduction.

Mrs Sörling, praised the hard work and sacrifices done by the Senior Staff and suggested that if the finances allow it, at the end of the year the losses in salaries should be returned to the staff.

Mr Brown informed that, at the moment, from a cash flow perspective the ITTF is safe for the coming six months, but the financial team is looking at alternative solutions to help in case the situation doesn't improve, such as government subsidies, interest free loans, etc

Mr Primorac appreciated the hard work done by the ITTF Staff and congratulated the initiative of reducing salaries, which he considered being a positive message.

Dr Meshref thanked the staff for their solidarity and suggested that the EC could also consider reducing their attendance to events as an additional measure to reduce costs.

Mr Burton suggested the actions being taken would eventually help to be in a better position when activities can be resumed.

<b>ACTION 20200329#06</b>	<b>In charge: Finance Team</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-04-10</b>
<b>Investigating subsidies and other financial support ways available from the Governments in the places where the ITTF has offices.</b>		

### 7.2 Rennes property

Mrs Sörling, commented that although it may not be the best time to sell the property in Renens, an alternative option is to rent the available spaces, as suggested by Mr Calin.

## 20200329-EC-07

The ITTF EC decided to explore the possibility to rent the available spaces at the Renens property.

<b>ACTION 20200329#07</b>	<b>In charge: Jordi Serra</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-04-15</b>
<b>Investigating options to rent the available spaces in Renens property.</b>		

## 8. Competition Program

### 8.1 Olympic Games Qualification System

Mr Weikert updated the EC members on IOC's clarification regarding that, athletes and teams already qualified for the Olympic Games, according to the Qualification System will keep their qualification status.

The Secretary General, noted that as per the IOC recommendation, the adjustments to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic qualification pathways will be worked on after the dates of the Games have been decided, including the Athletes Commission in the discussions.

Mr Burton asked about the role of the IFs in the decision for the Olympic Games dates and if the IOC requested any input from the IFs. Mr Al-Mohannadi indicated being informed that the ITTF suggested March-April dates for the Olympic Games and asked for clarification.

Mr Weikert indicated he suggested spring dates, similarly to Swimming and Triathlon, however, it seemed these dates are not feasible.

Mrs Sörling asked if the ITTF has a position on that, and the CEO suggested that the dates in July - August would be ok given the circumstances.

### **20200329-EC-08**

[The ITTF EC decided to support July/August dates if the IOC consult the International Federations.](#)

### 8.2 Paralympic Games Qualification System

Mr Calin mentioned that IPC will wait for the IOC's official confirmation before announcing the dates of the Paralympic Games and the qualification pathway adjustments will be decided through a similar process, with the involvement of the Para athletes' representatives.

### 8.3 World Veteran Championships Update

Mr Morris updated the EC on the postponement of the 2020 WVC without a confirmed date, but probably to be held in 2021.

Mrs Sörling mentioned the letter received from ETTU about the potential new dates of Bordeaux clashing with the European Veteran Championships and suggested it would be good for everyone to understand the exceptional circumstances the world is living.

## 9. Marketing and Promotion Program

### 9.1 Alternative Content

The Executive Committee noted the report of the Marketing Director, Mr Matt Pound, about the ITTF creative team working extremely hard to develop new content ideas to keep the social media platforms active and welcomed the EC to share any ideas they might have.

Mr Pound mentioned the creative team was working on in direct collaboration with the players and also with the ITTF Foundation on Social responsibility videos.

Regarding the World Table Tennis Day, April 6<sup>th</sup>, Mr Pound informed the EC that 24 hours of continuous archive content will be made available with some of the best matches of the last decades.

## 10. ITTF Foundation

### 10.1 World Table Tennis Day activities

Mr Weikert referred to the comments of Mr Pound regarding the ideas to prepare a great virtual World Table Tennis Day on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

### 10.2 Meeting of Mr Al-Mohannadi with HRH Princess Zeina Rashed

The Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, updated the EC on the meeting held with her Royal Highness, Princess Zeina Rashed of Jordan, during the West Asia Olympic Qualification Tournament held in Amman in February.

As a former Table Tennis player, two times Olympian, the EC welcomed HRH interest in supporting our sport.

Mr Al-Mohannadi recommended the ITTF Foundation to offer HRH a position in the ITTF Foundation's Board, highlighting the fact that a remarkable personality of her level would bring major benefits to the sport and organisation.

Mr Weikert thanked Mr Al-Mohannadi for the initiative and welcomed the proposition.

### **20200329-EC-09**

The ITTF EC decided to support the possibility for HRH Zeina Rashed (JOR) to join the ITTF Foundation' Board.

<b>ACTION 20200329#08</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Foundation</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-04-15</b>
<b>To explore a suitable position for HRH Princess Zeina Rashed.</b>		

## 11. Any other business

### 11.1 CAS update

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the CAS appeal of the Honorary President, mentioning that a hearing is scheduled on 14-16 July 2020. Mr Weikert informed about the possibility to have a settlement meeting with the appellant party in May.

### 11.2 Next ITTF Elections

Mr Al-Mohannadi suggested that with the elections expected originally to be held during the WTTC in Houston 2021, he wanted to know if the Olympic Games postponement would have any effect.

Mr Weikert pointed to the text in the ITTF Constitution and suggested that his first interpretation is that the elections should be postponed, however, it was good to clarify.



Mr Calin suggested that as the text is conflicting on the same paragraph, the text should be interpreted, and in his personal opinion, the elections should be held in 2021.

Mr Weikert suggested to ask the ITTF Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah, and eventually other lawyers in Singapore, to study the regulations, and also for the EC members to read and provide their feedback at the next EC meeting.

Mr Dainton suggested the priority is to remain focused on how to overcome the crisis. On a side note, Mr Dainton did mention that the Olympic Games are still called "Tokyo 2020" even if played in 2021, therefore that should not have any influence on the ITTF elections.

<b>ACTION 20200329#09</b>	<b>In charge: Legal Counsel</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-04-14</b>
<b>To study carefully the ITTF Constitution and provide guidance on the election's dates.</b>		

As a complement to this discussion, Mr Calin suggested that once the 2020 WTTC new dates are confirmed the EC should make a call for the official meetings, re-opening the AGM & BoD call for propositions and resolutions. Mr Calin considered particularly important in view that the originally planned Extraordinary General Assembly will not happen in 2020, and with more than one candidate expected for 2021 Presidential Elections, it is very important to ensure having solid electoral candidature rules and also exploring the segregation of the Judicial authority, currently being an EC's responsibility.

## 12. Next EC Meeting

It was agreed to have the next on-line Executive Committee meeting on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> of April, 2020.

Without further subjects, the meeting was adjourned at 14h30 CEST time.

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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