

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Video Conference

1<sup>st</sup> May 2020

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome and Opening

#### 1.1 President's opening remarks

The President, Mr Thomas Weikert, welcomed everyone and started the meeting by summarising some of the main topics of the moment including Finances, Events postponement, and IOC matters.

#### 1.2 Roll Call

Thomas Weikert	ITTF President
Khalil Al-Mohannadi	ITTF Deputy President
Petra Sörling	Executive Vice-President - Finance
Bruce Burton	Executive Vice-President
Masahiro Maehara	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

Apologies	
Shi Zhihao	Executive Vice-President

#### 1.3 Conference with IOC President update

Mr Weikert gave a brief update of the recent call he had with IOC President, Dr Bach, on relevant topics linked to the Tokyo Olympic Games. The Executive Committee noted that the general message is that the IOC intend in principle to provide a similar funding as it was received in Rio.

Mr Weikert also reported on the talks with Dr Bach about the quotas for the Olympic Games and on the media requests in Germany about Mr Weikert's opinion of the IOC strategy during the COVID-19 crisis.

#### 1.4 Upcoming meetings

The dates of the upcoming EC meetings were proposed in line with the current requirements and according to the provisional WTTC dates and AGM deadlines.

The EC agreed to meet on Tuesday, 2nd June, at 11h30 CEST time, and on 23rd of June 2020 at 11h30 CEST, but opening the door to additional meetings as it may be required during this crisis period.

## 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 meeting were approved and will be signed electronically by the President.

Mr Ryu Seungmin reminded about the letter sent on behalf of the Korean Table Tennis Association's Athletes Commission, requesting the EC to provide an answer.

The AC Chair, Mr Zoran Primorac, informed that a response letter was already sent to KTTA on behalf of the ITTF Athletes Commission, as they were also recipient of the KTTA letter.

Mr Weikert acknowledged Mr Ryu's request, and while confirming that the decision taken during the last meeting was final, the EC will respond KTTA'S AC letter.

<b>ACTION 20200501#01</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
<b>To prepare a letter in response to the Korean Table Tennis Association's Athletes Commission request for special consideration to the athletes that could not participate at Qatar, Oman and Polish Open.</b>		

### 2.2 Business arising from the Minutes

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

In reference to Action 20200415#09, Mr Calin reported that following the EC request, a second legal assessment regarding the ITTF election dates issue was received from Mr Antonio Arimany, Secretary General of the International Triathlon Union (ITU). His assessment coinciding with the assessment of the ITTF Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah, and the EVP, Mr Nestor Tenca, that the ITTF Elections should be held in 2021.

## 3. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda was confirmed without any further business.

## 4. COVID-2019 situational report

Upon receiving a comprehensive update report from the COVID-19 Task Force, the EC decided to extend the suspension of all ITTF events and activities until the end of July 2020. The situation will be monitored closely for an eventual restart of ITTF events in August 2020.

Given the current situation and amount of work it was agreed that the COVID-19 Task Force will reduce its reporting from daily updates to twice a week announcement (Tuesdays and Fridays).

The EVP, Dr Alaa Meshref, recommended that the ITTF, through the ITTF SSMC, should work on the development of a Sport Specific Guidelines regarding the sterilization of the equipment and the field of play area to be used as a reference for all the stakeholders, once the activity resumes in their country or region.

Mr Calin informed that in following a previous conversation regarding the type of projects undertaken by the ITTF SSMC, this would ideally be a fit for the Committee, but if they are unable to help in this area, as earlier requested by the CEO, the ITTF staff will work on this.

### 20200501-EC-01

The Executive Committee decided to extend the suspension of all the ITTF international activities until 31<sup>st</sup> of July 2020.

<b>ACTION 20200501#02</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
To discuss with the ITTF SSMC about their potential engagement in a Guidelines document for sterilization of equipment and venues, and to coordinate efforts with the work being made by the Equipment staff.		

#### 4.1 Suspension of Veterans and TTX events for the rest of 2020

The CEO, Mr Steve Dainton, informed that following the discussions held with the EVP, Mr James Morris and Managing Director of Product Innovation, Mr Gordon Kaye, the general feeling was that it was highly unlikely to host Veteran Events and TTX events in 2020.

The arguments were because the Veterans age group is being considered a major risk category affected by the COVID-19. In similar circumstances, TTX events represented a risk due to the mass participation aspect.

The EC decided to suspend all World Veterans Tour (WVT) and Table Tennis X (TTX) events until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

### 20200501-EC-02

The Executive Committee decided to suspend all the World Veterans Tour (WVT) and Table Tennis X (TTX) events until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

<b>ACTION 20200501#03</b>	<b>In charge: M. D. Product Innovation</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
To inform all the WVT and TTX Event LOC's about the suspension.		

## 5. **CEO Update**

### 5.1 Busan 2020 WTTC update

The CEO, Mr Steve Dainton, updated the EC on the latest discussions held with the LOC of the Hana Bank 2020 World Team Table Tennis Championships informing that, at the moment, there was no need to take any further action.

A decision about the status of the Hana Bank 2020 World Team Table Tennis Championships to be made during the next EC meeting held in June 2020. The ITTF staff will work together with the 2020 WTTTC LOC on alternative dates and further back-up plans in case the WTTTC needs a further postponement.

The KTTA President, Mr Ryu Seungmin, informed that there were no changes from the previous decision, except the fact that the mayor of Busan, one the biggest supporter of the projects, suddenly resigned-

Mr Ryu stated that a further update regarding the discussions held with the new Interim Mayor will be shared during the next meeting.

ACTION 20200501#04	In charge: ITTF Management	Deadline: 2020-06-02
The ITTF staff to work together with the 2020 WTTTC LOC on further back-up plans in case the WTTTC needs a further postponement.		

## 5.2 Staff update

Despite the financial difficulties and measures taken in order to preserve the financial stability of the organisation, Mr Dainton emphasized that the current situation presents itself as a good opportunity for the ITTF to plan a future long-term strategy and re-think the overall staff structure for the next cycle.

Mr Weikert reminded about the decision taken by the EC back in October, to hire a professional staff responsible of the area of HR, mentioning that the hiring process was postponed due to the COVID-19 situation.

Mrs Sörling was of the opinion that it was important to take tough decisions, but at the same time to take the opportunity of seeing big picture.

## 5.3 WTT

The CEO outlined that while trying to remain positive, despite all the hard work and proactive steps taken in launching WTT in 2021, it is undeniable that the sport and entertainment industry will be affected by the COVID-19. The overall complications caused by the crisis, together with the postponement of the Tokyo Olympics to 2021, will affect the next year's event planning and will definitely have an impact on the overall (financial) expectations.

The Marketing Director, Mr Matt Pound, updated the EC on the work done by the WTT team in the last months, informing that despite the changing landscape and financial difficulties, it is important to remain positive.

Mr Pound reported that due to the current situation, the bidding process for the WTT Events Hosts has been extended until further notice, and informed that so far, there were over 40 countries and cities around the world that expressed their interest in hosting events in and beyond 2021.

Mr Pound ensured that while still a game changer for the sport and transforming the table experience, the reality was that for 2021, there was a possibility to have less events that initially

planned, mainly due to the available dates and calendar issue caused by the postponement Tokyo Olympic Games.

Mr Pound informed the EC that the new WTT Event Strategy Director, Mr Stephen Duckitt, who is leading this area, already held conversations with the potential hosts and together with the rest of the team is working on the development of the best possible event structure for table tennis in order to elevate the sport.

The Marketing Director also indicated that WTT was close to finalise a business deal with one of the biggest Sport Management Agency in the next weeks. An update about the name and the details regarding the collaboration with the new global partners will be presented during the next EC meeting.

Mr Pound emphasized that a lot of work was happening behind the scenes in the last months, when the team took the time to masterminding the strategy and the commercial structure of WTT in order to build a brighter future for the sport once the pandemic eventually passes.

Mr Weikert praised the work done by the Marketing Director and the entire WTT team and congratulated them for the advances made so far.

The EVP, Mr Maehara Masahiro, requested additional information about those cities that expressed their interest in in hosting WTT Events and asked what were the reasons that lead to the of extension period of the bidding process.

Mr Dainton explained that the extension of the bidding process is due to the current climate directly linked to the COVID-19 global crisis, and given these unique circumstances, it was important to be flexible and to define the new timelines once the situation gets clearer.

Mr Pound confirmed that the main concern is more a time issue, rather than a financial one, mentioning that the uncertainty around the world impacts directly on the allocation of sport events.

Mr Weikert confirmed that from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 onwards, the Master Licence Agreement will come into force, meaning that WTT will release the new professional event structure and ITTF will continue to manage the WTTC.

## **6. Athletes update**

Mr Primorac updated the EC on the outcome of the last meetings held among the ITTF AC members informing about some of the main topics.

The survey conducted among the athletes was very positive, and a further push helped to receive more answers.

Mr Primorac informed that the Mixed doubles qualifications was another reason of concern for the athletes as there where many questions received regarding ITTF's position on this matter.

This discussion was deferred to 8.1.

Mr Primorac also updated the EC on the proposal presented by the AC Deputy Chair, Ms Galia Dvorak, regarding the development of an Athletes Education platform and the discussions held with the ITTF Education on how to increase the awareness of the available online education tools for athletes. Following the meeting, a letter was distributed on behalf of the AC, informing the athletes about the available programs, and invited them to the first webinar series held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020. Mr Primorac took the opportunity to thank the ITTF staff for the work done in the past weeks.

In response to Mr Maehara's question regarding the athlete's recovery plan following the COVID-19 break, Mr Primorac, on behalf of the AC, suggested that 8 weeks were considered enough to get back in full shape. In addition to they would also like to hear about the recommendation of the SSMC which would be based on scientific facts.

On behalf of the athletes, Mr Primorac expressed the desire to learn more about the WTT events structure and WR system and asked to include the athlete's representatives in the development of such system.

Following the example of other organisations, Mr Primorac suggested to create a COVID-19 Athletes Relief fund, to support the athletes that are facing financial difficulties during the current circumstances.

Mr Weikert congratulated the AC for the hard work and informed that the ITTF Foundation was already planning to initiate a similar fund-raising campaign.

Mrs Sörling, thanked Mr Primorac and congratulated the AC for being so proactive. Giving the examples of other International Federations, Mrs Sörling indicated that discussions regarding the Athletes Relief fund were already held during in the ITTF Foundation and the ITTF Finance Meeting and praised such initiative. Mrs Sörling was of the opinion that while the Foundation was oriented to the larger audience, it was necessary for the ITTF to raise money and invest in its own professional athletes.

The EVP, Mr James Morris, noted that although the financial aspect plays a very important role in these circumstances, it was equally significant to provide emotional support and assistance to the athletes.

The Executive Committee agreed with the Athletes Commission proposal to create a COVID-19 Athletes Relief Fund and decided to create a working group to develop the strategy of the COVID-19 Athletes Relief Fund.

Given the current financial difficulties within the organisation, Mr Dainton stated that this decision pushes the ITTF to seek funding outside the usual resources.

**20200501-EC-03**

The Executive Committee decided to create a COVID-19 Athletes Relief Fund.

<b>ACTION 20200501#05</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Management &amp; AC Chair</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
<b>To create a working group to develop the strategy of the COVID-19 Athletes Relief Fund.</b>		

<b>ACTION 20200501#06</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-05-08</b>
<b>To share the latest updated list of the results of survey conducted among the Athletes.</b>		

## **7. Operations program**

### **7.1 Finances**

The EC members discussed the different financial scenarios and options presented in the financial report submitted by the CFO, Mr Michael Brown, after the work done in the previous days with the President, the EVP of Finances, the CEO, and the Secretary General.

Mr Brown, gave a brief update of the latest ITTF financial forecast, explaining that the overall financial impact is very significant, leading to a situation that requires to further reduce the expenses in relation to the HR.

Mr Dainton mentioned that after 3 years of growth strategy, it is a very difficult situation to start considering reductions, but due to the crisis, the ITTF has to start taking actions. From a financial perspective, the HR represents the current major expense, therefore, it is a necessary measure in order to ensure a reasonable outcome at the end of the year.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, emphasized that this was the next phase of a staggered approach, already discussed at the last EC meeting, and although it was not an easy task, given the potential prolonged effect of the crisis, it was necessary for the EC to support the CEO in light of this decision.

The EC noted the report from Mr Dainton about the call with the IOC regarding the ITTF financial situation. The IOC was very pleased to learn about the actions taken so far by the ITTF in comparison to other IF's. The IOC praised the ITTF for the professional approach, especially for not being exclusively reliant on the Olympic Funding, and the proactivity in preparing contingency plans.

The CEO confirmed that together with the CFO, they exhausted all the possibilities, in terms of government subsidies and public financial support and confirmed to the EC that he will work together with the Senior Management and provide a list of the measures that will be taken in reference to the Human Resources reduction.

Based on the assumptions, the CEO committed to an extra 50% decrease of his salary to help with 2020 financial situation. Mr Dainton believed that it was the ITTF Leadership / Management responsibility to work on the long-term benefit of the ITTF and warned that if no actions are being taken, the financial result of 2020 might be of three to four million losses, meaning almost no reserves for the future.

Mr Calin asked then the EC Members to confirm their agreement to the structure of budget adjustments and HR cuts as presented in the finance document shared with them, as it is not possible to wait one more month until the next EC meeting.

Mrs Sörling thanked Mr Calin for the precise recommendation and agreed it is important that the EC agrees to the Finance Group analysis, moving forward with the adjustments, as the ITTF cannot wait any longer to make them.

Mr Weikert asked each of the EC member to confirm with a yes, their agreement.

The EC members were confirming in turns, with some additional comments as follows:

Mr Primorac mentioned it is very important how the ITTF reacts in these situations as this will speak well about the ITTF in the future. Mr Primorac agreed in full with Mr Dainton, taking care and trying to get back the people as soon as possible after the crisis passes.

Dr Meshref thanked the senior staff for the initiative and for taking all the necessary measures, in their capacity and also mentioned that although it is not in the capacity of the staff to take any decision in regards to the Honorarium of the ITTF President, he would hope that the President will follow the example of the senior staff and will take a similar approach in case it is needed to reduce further costs.

While agreeing with the humanistic approach through the establishment of possible mechanisms to offer support to the athletes and to ensure that the staff will survive during this crisis, The EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, was of the opinion that it was needed to demonstrate the commitment across all the boards of the entire ITTF family.

Based on those arguments, Mr Burton asked if the President and the Presidential Office was prepared to offer any type of contribution in the overall context, as it would be difficult to explain the reductions applicable only to the staff members, and not as a sacrifice taken by the entire ITTF Family. In addition, Mr Burton explained that the Presidential Honorarium is not considered a salary, but rather a compensation to the President for the ITTF representation at international events and meetings, which in view of the current situation are suspended.

Mr Burton expressed his disappointment with the approach regarding the Foundation, where the consensus at the end of the meeting was to set a different standard for the Foundation's employees working from the Leipzig office, which due to the generous public contribution and substantial government subsidies towards the salary, are able to work at 50% capacity for 95% value of the salary. In his perspective, such decision is problematic which raises many concerns in term of fairness and optics for applying different treatments to the employees in Germany, in comparison to the rest of the staff located in other parts of the world.

Mr Weikert offered to discuss the matter of the Presidential Honorarium with the CEO and Secretary General and think about it. Mr Weikert emphasized that although the Presidential Representation is non-existent, at the moment the amount of work is double.

Mr Weikert explained the particularities of the offices located in Germany which have a special treatment under the German Law and are eligible to access local public funding and support. Moreover, he clarified that the government support accessed by the Foundation is quite different than any other company support. Mr Weikert acknowledged the difficulties of treating all the staff equally, as they are located in different countries with different systems and legislations.



Mrs Sörling emphasized that from an optics perspective, she would have expected a higher contribution and solidarity from the Foundation as an organisation, and perhaps it would be good to consider what are the expectations of the Foundation in the future. She also noted that the government support packages received, represent a very small income in comparison to the overall loss.

Mrs Sörling also added that the President's honorarium is the task of the EC and not of the staff and reminded that at the EC meeting in Halmstad in September 2017, the EC increased the President's Honorarium by themselves, without the involvement of the President, who left the room for the discussion.

Mr Primorac added that although speaking about percentages of reduction of salaries for the staff, not knowing the salaries is difficult to judge. Mr Primorac asked if being the ITTF a not-for-profit organization the EC members should not have the right to get the details about the salaries of all the staff, and he asked if he could get these figures in order to make a fairer decision; especially if some people is struggling to have a living. Mr Primorac also mentioned that that he only knows the Honorarium of the President.

Mr Weikert mentioned that in his opinion, the duty of the salary's adjustments belongs to Mr Dainton and Mr Brown, and the duty of the EC is to confirm the overall plan approval, and for CEO and CFO to implement.

The Deputy President, Mr Al-Mohannadi, said being in full agreement with Mrs Sörling and Dr Meshref about the President's Honorarium should be decided by the EC without the President, similar to what was made in Halmstad 2017 in Sweden.

#### **20200501-EC-04**

The Executive Committee agree to make the necessary HR adjustments as per the Financial Plan presented as annex, and entrusted the CEO together with the Senior Management, to implement these adjustments.

<b>ACTION 20200501#07</b>	<b>In charge: CEO &amp; Senior Management</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-05-15</b>
<b>The CEO to work together with the Senior Management and implement the HR adjustment measures as defined in the Financial Plan presented to the EC.</b>		

#### 7.2 Merit Award

The EC decided to approve the table of points as recommended by the Nomination Committee.

#### **20200501-EC-05**

The Executive Committee decided to approve the table of points as recommended by the Nomination Committee.

<b>ACTION 20200501#08</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
<b>To open the call for the Merit Awards 2020.</b>		

### 7.3 Conflict of Interest declaration

The Secretary General reminded that during the meeting held in December in Zhengzhou, the EC approved the two policies, the Child Abuse policy and Conflict of Interest policy.

Discussions have been held regarding what was the best technical way to implement the COI policy.

Mr Calin indicated that the final version of the document was distributed to the EC members, and they are asked to fill it in by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Following that date, the Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah will review them in his capacity as ITTF Integrity Officer.

<b>ACTION 20200501#09</b>	<b>In charge: EC members</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-05-30</b>
<b>To fill in and sign the Conflict of Interest Policy.</b>		

### 7.4 CAS appeal of Mr Sharara

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the by CAS appeal of Mr Sharara, indicating that CAS refused to lift the suspension (requested by Mr Sharara's counsel) for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, which shows the strength of the ITTF's position in this case.

Mr Weikert informed that the settlement meeting will be held on 11<sup>th</sup> and (if needed) on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 via video conference. Following the recommendation of Mr Rigozzi, a pre-meeting will be held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020, where all the EC members are welcomed to attend in order to get familiar with the particularities of the case.

Given the level of involvement in the case, the EC decided that the two speakers during the settlement meeting should be the President and the CEO. The rest of the EC members being able to listen but not speaking.

It was yet to define the protocol and the communication system throughout the settlement meeting, but ideally, an instant communication system will be made available among the EC members.

Dr Meshref asked in regard to the detailed documents from the case to be made available for the EC members (i.e., Exhibits)

<b>ACTION 20200501#10</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-05-10</b>
<b>To define the protocol and communication system throughout the potential settlement meeting with Mr Sharara.</b>		

<b>ACTION 20200501#11</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-05-10</b>
<b>To review the information shared with the EC members in the case of the CAS appeal of Mr Sharara and ensure all documents related to the case are shared with the EC members.</b>		

## 8. Competition Program

### 8.1 Olympic Games Qualification System

The Secretary General gave a brief update on the process and the work done together with the Competition Director, Mrs Vicky Eleftheriade and the ITTF Technical Commissioner, Mr Graeme Ireland, the discussions held with the Athletes Commission on the Tokyo 2020 Olympic qualification pathways, particularly on the WR quota allocation for Singles and Mixed Doubles events.

Further discussions to be held with the Technical Commissioner and with the Athletes Commission in regard to the Mixed Doubles event, as officially, the Mixed Doubles qualification pathway had no WR quota, but a reallocation of the qualification tournaments quotas or host country quotas.

Mrs Eleftheriade informed that it was agreed to give more time to the Athletes to complete the survey, and following the further discussions with the AC, the Competition Department will work on the different options and will amend the final proposal document by the next EC meeting

Mr Primorac emphasized that there are many different opinions on this matter, therefore it was important to work together on a proposal based on the principles of fairness and recognise the efforts from the last 12 months.

Referring to Dr Meshref question with respect to the deadlines set to the NOC's nominations for the singles events, Mr Calin confirmed that the deadlines are postponed to 2021 as part of the extension process.

<b>ACTION 2020050#12</b>	<b>In charge: Sec. Gen &amp; Comp. Director</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
<b>To adjust the Olympic Qualification System.</b>		

<b>ACTION 2020050#13</b>	<b>In charge: Sec. Gen &amp; Comp. Director</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
<b>To propose a pathway for the WR quotas selection.</b>		

### 8.2 Paralympic Games Qualification System

The Secretary General gave a brief update on the process and the work done together with the Para Athletes Representatives, mentioning a much simpler approach as there is only one remaining tournament to be held, which is postponed to 2021.

Following the request from Mr Primorac to ensure a fair use of the Bipartite Commission quotas, Mr Calin clarified the principles of allocation and explained the particularities of the Para Table Tennis event at the Paralympic Games in comparison to the Olympic Games, mentioning that the Bipartite Commission will take into consideration the special circumstances happened during the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruptions occurred.

<b>ACTION 2020050#14</b>	<b>In charge: Sec. Gen &amp; Comp. Director</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
<b>To adjust the Paralympic Qualification System.</b>		

### 8.3 World Championships 2020

As per point 5.1.

### 8.4 World Championships 2021

The EC was informed that following the previous EC meeting, Mr Dainton together with Mr Calin participated in a conference call with the 2021 WTTC LOC and the different stakeholders, in order to evaluate the impact of the current situation.

Mr Dainton reported that the LOC expressed their concern in regard to the proximity of the event to the new Olympic Games dates. While there was no real final decision at the moment, Mr Dainton explicitly asked for confidentiality within the EC in regard to the discussions held with the 2021 WTTC LOC.

Mr Calin explained that for the 2021 WTTC LOC, the situation was complicated not only from a finances & economy perspective and the number of sporting events that will eventually move from 2020 to 2021, but also due to the impact on the potential sponsorship opportunities and venue availabilities, with the Convention Centre and Toyota Centre being in high demand due to COVID-19.

Mr Calin noted the sensitivity around this matter and as it was agreed to discuss a communication plan, he emphasized the importance of confidentiality among the EC members until a further decision is made.

Mr Ryu informed that the 2020 WTTC LOC is ready to organise the WTTC in 2020 or 2021 in Busan, in conjunction with the individual WTTC if needed.

<b>ACTION 20200501#15</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Management</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-06-02</b>
<b>The ITTF staff to work together with the 2021 WTTC LOC on the evaluation of the impact of the current situation and potential scenarios.</b>		

## 9. **ITTF Foundation**

Mr Weikert gave a brief update on the meetings held by the ITTF Foundation Board of Trustees and ITTF Foundation Board held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020, and the discussions in regard to the following programs and projects:

- Table Tennis United Fund - Athletes Relief Fund
- World Table Tennis Day at home
- Exploring a suitable position for HRH Princess Zeina Rashed of Jordan

## 10. **Any other business**

Mr Weikert addressed his EC colleagues in regard to the letter that was sent on behalf of the ITTF Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, and the EVP of Finance, Mrs Petra Sörling on 24<sup>th</sup> April from the Swedish National Table Tennis Association, with the title ITTF Leadership, to an unknown distribution list.

Leaving the human side aside, from a business perspective, Mr Weikert claimed that there was no previous hearing nor communication from any of the two senders, in regards to any of the supposed allegations, and Mr Weikert said being worried that the mailing list, might have included ITTF family members, such as the Member Associations, the staff the BoD members and others, etc.

Mr Weikert considered that the letter did a big damage to the ITTF and himself and reminded that every EC member duty was to protect the ITTF.

Mr Weikert stated that he was in the process of examining the legal assessment and the implications for ITTF and for himself personally, in terms of civil and criminal law.

In these difficult times Mr Weikert insisted that it was necessary to stay united and strong as an EC and asked everyone to consider if Mr Al-Mohannadi and Mrs Sörling approached this matter correctly, especially in this crisis.

Mr Weikert emphasized that the Deputy President and the EVP of Finances are the main persons that should work together with the President in a very trustworthy manner and according to the constitution, only the President has the right to appoint these two positions. Mr Weikert mentioned that the trust at this moment is destroyed therefore he will consider in the next days if further steps should be taken, especially in relation to the occupancy of the 2 positions.

Mr Weikert announced his availability for the EC members and to everyone that wishes to, to clarify everything directly to become a stronger team in the future.

Mr Weikert was ready to conclude the meeting by wishing everyone to stay safe strong and hopefully we clarify this matter in the next days.

In response to the criticism, Mr Al-Mohannadi condemned the way the President planned to adjourn the meeting and blamed him for announcing his candidacy for president in 2021 without discussing the matter with any of the EC.

Mr Al-Mohannadi complained that Mr Weikert was not treating the EC members as a team and not involving them in any decision regarding the future ITTF leadership.

Mrs Sörling indicated that in a democratic way of leading an organisation it was ok for the President to discuss with the team and to want to have the last word but criticized Mr Weikert for not addressing at the adoption of the agenda point at the beginning of the meeting this issue, and for attempting to finish the meeting without giving the floor to those mentioned.

Mrs Sörling claimed that as an EVP of Finance, she was not in contact with the President since the crisis started, mainly because Mr Weikert never reached her in relation to any matter and she believed that in this crisis situation is important to act as a team.

Mrs Sörling also outlined that Mr Weikert announced his candidacy to 2021 Presidency without any previous discussion, and only received a notification message on her mobile ten minutes before the announcement, which made her understand that she was not part of the team.

Mrs Sörling reminded that in the past months she was heavily criticised/accused by Mr Weikert in regard to her ITTF Representation and international travels.

Similarly to Mr Al-Mohannadi, Mrs Sörling also criticised Mr Weikert for providing no information about his idea the future ITTF leadership, while she claimed to have approached Mr Weikert in Alicante, back in 2018.

Mrs Sörling highlighted that the mentioned letter was not an announcement but rather a statement that the EC members refuse to have any discussions regarding elections campaigns, as other important topics and priorities at the moment.

Mrs Sörling expressed her preference of not discussing regarding the elections and accused Mr Weikert of continuing his election campaign during these critical times.

Mr Weikert noted that everyone had the opportunity to address personally or to make an internal statement, and heavily criticised the world-wide distribution approach.

Dr Meshref remembered that during the EC meeting held in Chengdu, when the President initiated the discussions about his decision to run for Presidency in 2021, he did comment at that time that it was not the right timing.

Dr Meshref also noted that it was also not the right time for the President to announce his candidacy in a time that the crisis was just getting started and the ITTF was finding itself in a situation where the 2020 WTTC was facing a potential postponement.

Dr Meshref understanding was that not all the EC members were total agreement with the President's approach and perhaps his initiative at the beginning did some damage at the unity of the team.

Dr Meshref insisted that although he was not against anyone's right to announce, it would be expected that the closest or the most senior team members are aware of the President's plans and agree with on the step taken, and it seems that that didn't happen.

Dr Meshref warned that if Mr Weikert goes further and try to make changes at Deputy President and EVP Finance positions, it will only bring more damage rather than bringing any solution. Dr Meshref added that going to court against each other will also not bring any good solution.

Dr Meshref also noted that Mr Weikert made some arguable comments in media during the last week in regard to the ITTF CEO's silver lining letter, which raised a lot of questions and affected the imagine of ITTF in the eyes of the other member associations.

Dr Meshref closed his statement by saying that during these times everyone is under severe stress and pressure and hoped that everyone will calm down and don't take any rushed decision.

Dr Meshref also advised to better open the dialogue and try to put the image of ITTF first and sacrifice the egos or rights in order to overcome this problem.

The EVP, Mr Maehara stated that it was important for the ITTF to be focused on how to overcome the difficult crisis caused by COVID-19 and protect the ITTF Finances and it was time for the EC members to work together as a team.

Mr Weikert insisted that he didn't speak this with anybody else and that this was his first statement in relation to the matter. Mr Weikert clarified that he already announced in October 2019 that he will run as a candidate again, and the formal announcement was on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020, before the COVID crisis. Mr Weikert also justified that giving the information with a short notice to the EC members before the announcement was not a big deal.

Mr Weikert claimed that he previously discussed this matter with Mr Al-Mohannadi, and his biggest complaint was not for being criticized for his actions, but for sending a public letter without previous warning nor discussions.

Mr Weikert assured that he was not taking any actions at the moment and made himself available for any discussion, asking his colleagues to take into consideration his words, which were done in a good faith, and insisted that his duty was to protect ITTF especially in this crisis.

Mr Ryu Seungmin, in his capacity of EC member and Athletes Representative, stressed that in this environment and difficult situation this mood was inappropriate.

Mr Ryu did appeal for the EC members to focus on how to protect the sport, how to protect the athletes, how to support the staff members who are working very hard in this difficult situation and coming together as a team. Mr Ryu stressed that there was not too much time to overcome this situation and as a role model it was the EC duty to lead the ITTF and show solidarity until the COVID-19 situation is over.

The EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, stated that he was ready to address the issues that were raised by Mr Al-Mohannadi and Mrs Sörling in the letter, but in light of the previous statements made by Mr Weikert a few moments ago, he preferred not to say anything, but waiting for the transcription on the minutes to see exactly the words used and the level of threats stated by Mr Weikert, and then he would be prepared to follow up on that.

## 11. Adjournment

Without further points the Executive Committee Meeting was adjourned at 14h45 CEST.

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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