

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Video Conference  
10<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome and Opening

#### 1.1 President's opening remarks

The President, Mr Thomas Weikert, welcomed everyone and proceeded with the roll call.

#### 1.2 Roll Call

Thomas Weikert	ITTF 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
Vicky Eleftheriade	Competition Director – only for the relevant points
Dylan Mah	Legal Counsel – only for the relevant points
Apologies	
Khalil Al-Mohannadi	ITTF Deputy President
Absence	
Shi Zhihao	Executive Vice-President

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

#### 2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of the previous meetings

##### 2.1.1 EC#05-2019 Zhengzhou

The Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held in Zhengzhou were approved and will be signed electronically by the President.

The Secretary General, Mr Calin reminded the EC#05-2019 Meeting Minutes will be the last EC Meeting Minutes to be published in full, and as agreed in Delhi, from January 2020 onwards, only the EC decisions will be made public.

#### 2.1.2 EC#08-2020 on-line

The Minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting were approved and will be signed electronically by the President.

#### 2.2 Business arising from the Minutes

Mr Calin indicated that given the current status of some of the business arising from the previous meetings, it was agreed to defer the points WR and HPD Approval to the next EC meeting.

### 3. **Adoption of the Agenda**

The Agenda was confirmed with the following additions:

5.3 Staff update

9.1 HPD update

9.2 Continental Federations Virtual Meetings

### 4. **COVID-2019 situational report**

The CFO, Mr Michael Brown, updated the EC on the COVID-19 task force work, indicating the change in the format of the report which in addition to the global news, was now more focused on the future planning and strategy of the Organisation.

Given the current situation and amount of work related to the new format, it was agreed that the COVID-19 Task Force will reduce its reporting from twice a week announcement to a weekly announcement.

The EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, raised the attention to the recent announcement made by China in reference to the cancellation of participation of the Chinese athletes to all international events for the remainder of 2020.

### 5. **CEO Update**

#### 5.1 WTT update

##### 5.1.1 Master License Agreement

The EC noted the legal advice provided by the ITTF Lawyer, Mr Anthony Indaimo, in regard to the request of the German Table Tennis Association (DTTB) to access the Master License Agreement between ITTF and WTT.

It was noted that the MLA is a legal document and, as such, it contains commercially sensitive information which is considered to be a confidential nature to the ITTF and to WTT which is, at law, a separate legal entity.

Mr Indaimo indicated that the EC is not obliged to provide a full copy of the MLA to the ITTF members and recommended instead to share an overview of the key clauses.

Following the concerns raised by some of the European Member Associations, Mr Weikert stressed about the importance of following the ITTF rules and regulations and insisted that WTT complies in particular to the rules regarding the event allocation and players registration.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Söring, raised her concerns in regard to the potential Conflict of Interest perceived in relation to Mr Weikert's position as ITTF President, Member of the WTT Tender process Selection Panel and German Table Tennis Association (DTTB) Legal Advisor. Mrs Söring also referred to the potential Conflict of Interest perceived in regard to Mrs Claudia Vatheuer's position as ITTF Assistant to the President, being the wife of the Secretary General of the German Table Tennis Association (DTTB), Mr Matthias Vatheuer.

As a member of the Tender Selection Panel herself, Mrs Söring felt it was important to disclose any potential COI in an intent to protect the EC, especially as Mr Weikert was representing a signatory party of the MLA. The concern was even greater, as the propositions & resolutions related to WTT submitted for the 2020 AGM/BoD were on behalf of European Member Associations only.

Mr Weikert pointed out that in his point of view there was and is no COI as he was not involved in the preparation of these propositions by DTTB and he will not be involved in the process regarding the AGM & BoD propositions and resolutions, as he will pass this part to the ITTF Secretary General to handle.

The EC decided to follow the legal advice and share with its members only an overview of the key clauses of the ITTF-WTT MLA.

<b>ACTION 20200710#01</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Management</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-07-25</b>
<b>To make the necessary adjustments on the presentation and follow up with the German Table Tennis Association (DTTB), sharing with them an excerpt of the MLA.</b>		

## 5.2 HoTT update

The CFO, Mr Michael Brown, gave a brief update on the discussions held during the meeting held on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2020, where the Selection Panel for the Home of Table Tennis project confirmed the revised timelines of the tender process.

Mr Brown reported that the deadline for submitting the initial bid documentation will be provisionally extended to 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020, however, the timeframes for the remaining phases of the HoTT tender process will be determined at a later stage once the situation on the COVID-19 pandemic becomes clearer.

It was suggested that the tender team will be reaching out to those cities which have expressed interest in the coming days to inform them about the revised process.

The EC agreed to the recommendation.

### **20200710-EC-01**

The Executive Committee decided to approve the revised timelines of the HoTT tender process as per the Selection Panel recommendation.

<b>ACTION 20200710#02</b>	<b>In charge: Tender Team</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-07-31</b>
<b>Follow up with the cities that expressed their interest to inform them about the revised process.</b>		

### 5.3 Staff update

The CEO gave a brief update on the process and work done together with the ITTF President, ITTF EVP of Finance (HR Representatives on behalf of the ITTF EC), the Secretary General and the CFO, on the future Staff Structure and future planning in the area of HR.

The EC noted Mrs Vicky Eleftheriade's recent decision to not renew her contract as ITTF Competition Director and move back to Cyprus. The CEO praised Mrs Eleftheriade for her hard work and professionalism and admitted that her departure represented a disappointment for the Senior Management.

In the context of the current crisis, Mr Dainton listed some of the urgent matters related to the area of HR:

- Following Mrs Vicky Eleftheriade's departure, Mr Dainton suggested to fill the position internally for the time being. Given his background as former Secretary General of a Member Association and member of the 2019 WTTC LOC, with the experience accumulated as ITTF Staff in charge of the future WTTC, Mr Dainton proposed Mr Gabor Felegyi as a replacement for the interim period.
- The necessity of hiring an HR Manager to help the organization to deal with all the complexities related to this area.
- The necessity to hire a medical and infectious disease control specialist to help elaborate all the health protocols and safety guidelines to ensure that activities can re-start in the future.

Mr Burton wanted to record his appreciation for all what Mrs Eleftheriade has done for the ITTF.

The EC was in agreement with the CEO's proposals to initiate the recruitment process targeting the mentioned positions.

Mr Primorac reminded the EC about his earlier request to receive information regarding the ITTF staff salaries.

Mr Dainton explained that according to the Singaporean Law, the employment contracts signed with the staff include confidentiality terms and data protection clauses which prevents the employer to disclose information that link the personal details of the person to the exact amount received as a remuneration. Alternatively, Mr Dainton mentioned the possibility to share a list that includes the range of salaries correspondent the different areas and levels of management, and Mr Primorac confirmed that such list was sufficient to understand the overall financial situation.

<b>ACTION 20200710#03</b>	<b>In charge: HR</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-08-28</b>
<b>To start the hiring process for the position HR Manager.</b>		

<b>ACTION 20200710#04</b>	<b>In charge: HR</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-08-28</b>
<b>To start the hiring process for the position of Medical &amp; Infectious Disease Specialist.</b>		

ACTION 20200710#05	In charge: HR	Deadline: 2020-08-28
To provide Mr Primorac with a range of salaries of the ITTF staff.		

## 6. Athletes update

Mr Primorac indicated that the Athletes Commission expressed their full support and commitment towards the TT United Fund, hoping that the project will be successful in providing the financial support for Member Associations, athletes and other stakeholders affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Mr Primorac highlighted the importance of defining the protocol and determine the best distribution criteria of the funds.

In relation to World Ranking, and given the high number of concerns raised by the various Member Associations and players, Mr Primorac stressed the importance to involve the two AC representatives, members of the WR working group, in the development of the new system.

Mr Weikert explained the different steps in the development of the new WR system and the process to be followed, indicating that according to the ITTF rules and regulations and also in compliance with the contract with WTT, the EC will have the final decision based on proposal made by the WRWG.

Mr Primorac mentioned it is important for the athletes to be actively contributing in decision making processes, therefore suggesting that, if not in WTT Board, to find another way in which they can be engaged in the decisions.

Mr Dainton noted the request from Mr Primorac, answering that the management will work on it.

## 7. Operations program

### 7.1 EC Propositions and Resolutions for 2020 AGM/BOD

The EC noted the propositions and resolutions submitted by several European Member Associations (AUT, GER, POR, ROU & SUI) for the 2020 ITTF AGM.

Mr Calin expressed his disappointment particularly in regard to the propositions received from the AUT, GER & SUI, which -in his perspective- are going against the philosophy and direction of the work done by the ITTF EC in the last 12 months.

Moreover, Mr Calin outlined that it was even more surprising and concerning the fact that such propositions are coming particularly from the German Table Tennis Association, the Association of the ITTF President; something unheard of in the past 20 years.

In Mr Calin's opinion, this situation was a call for attention and reflexion, as European Associations are questioning the work recently done by the ITTF in his endeavour to raise the standards of the sport that has been stagnated for the last 10 years. As part of his reflection, Mr Calin suggested that maybe communication has not been ideal, in a period in which the world has been tremendously disrupted, but suggested establishing two communication groups to entertain dialogue with these five Associations (one with AUT, GER & SUI and another with POR & ROU).

Mr Calin warned that if becoming public, these propositions and resolution, could eventually jeopardize the credibility of the ITTF and WTT, and assumed that the five European NA's are not really conscious of the damage they can potentially cause to the future of the sport.

Mr Weikert confirmed the comments from Mr Calin and informed he will not be in the group, being from Germany.

Mr Dainton emphasized that such propositions are questioning the rights and responsibilities corresponding to each of the governing bodies within ITTF and implies a shift of power in the decision-making process, from the EC to the AGM, which puts in huge doubt the credibility and the need of the EC as a governing body.

Mr Dainton warned the EC to be conscious of the result and consequences of such actions, the potential damage of the image of the future business and the negative impact in terms of marketing and finances.

Dr Meshref reminded about the steps taken and compared with the process of establishment of the ITTF Foundation, the restructure in terms of development and transfer of rights to the ITTF Foundation and highlighted some of the similarities in the process of the establishment of WTT, however, nobody commented on the ITTF Foundation processes. Understanding the concern of the Member Associations regarding players entries and also the fair ambitions from the players to have the ability to enter directly in professional events, the key is how to find a system that avoids conflicts.

Mrs Sörling mentioned these propositions may jeopardize the interest of potential sponsors which may feel this is not the right sport to invest in.

Mr Primorac suggested that being the period for the commercial rights of 15 years, it is normal that someone raises the question, particularly having vivid memories of TMS recent history. Therefore, being an ITTF EC decision, it is important to explain why this is the best solution for the future, stay behind the decisions taken and then, once the AGM approves the work done by the EC, this will mean that they also agree with the process taken, as ultimately, the AGM is the highest body of the organisation. Mr Primorac exhorted the EC colleagues to make the necessary efforts to establish such dialogue with the Associations and explain them how this is not another TMS and this will be a transparent process. Mr Primorac added: "We have to be confident that we are doing the right thing and we have to be transparent and defend our decisions because we believe we did what is the best for Table Tennis".

Mr Weikert agreed in full with Mr Primorac statement and then, Mr Dainton did just a precision, in the sense that ITTF haven't sold the rights to WTT, but instead restructured how the rights are being managed by the ITTF by setting up WTT. Mr Dainton explained that, in the past, the ITTF did sell the rights to TMS, so this is important to communicate properly.

Mr Dainton confirmed, as Mr Primorac stated, that all the work done by the EC and management has to be endorsed by the AGM and that the establishment of WTT was already approved in Budapest, therefore, what needs to be approved in this AGM is the work done after Budapest AGM.

Based on the discussions held among the different members, the EC agreed with the establishment of a communication group formed by Mr Al-Mohannadi, as EC member in charge of WTT, Mrs Sörling, as EC member in charge of European Relations, Mr Dainton as CEO and Mr Calin as Secretary General, to approach the various NA's, in an intent to discuss and try to

resolve some the concerns raised by those stakeholders. At the insistence of the other members, Mr Burton would also consider cooperating on this matter.

To conclude this point, Mr Calin confirmed the annual process of ratification of all decisions from the EC and the BoD at the next AGM, and in regard to the rumors spread in Europe that the EC could eventually veto the propositions and resolutions submitted by these five associations, Mr Calin explained that these "ghost from the past", may refer to a situation that happened in 2019, in which certain resolutions presented, not adhering to the necessary format (the presenters wanted to take decisions requiring 2/3 majority by simple majority by presenting them as resolutions instead of propositions), were rejected after consultation with the Rules Committee and the Technical Commissioner.

ACTION 20200710#06	In charge: EC & ITTF Staff	Deadline: 2020-07-20
To approach the various NA's and discuss the propositions submitted to the 2020 AGM.		

## 7.2 AGM and BOD planning

The EC confirmed the proposed timelines for the online meetings and presentations to be held leading up to the 2020 AGM:

- ITTF Foundation Presentation (1<sup>st</sup> September)
- HPD Presentation (4<sup>th</sup> September)
- Governance Review Presentation (7<sup>th</sup> September)
- Finances Presentation (10<sup>th</sup> September)
- World Table Tennis Presentation (14<sup>th</sup> September)
- 2023 WTTC bids presentations (21<sup>st</sup> September)

Pending on the lift of the international travel restrictions, Mr Weikert suggested that at least the core team formed by President, Deputy President, EVP Finances, CEO and Secretary General, should try to lead the AGM from the same location, in order to ensure a smooth communication and consistent approach during of the meeting.

The EC noted the complexity of hosting an online AGM with 226 members and all the concerns raised with regard the voting procedure and internet connectivity issues that might occur the different parts of the world.

Mr Calin indicated that he was seeking the advice and exploring the possibilities of working with industry's leading companies in order to establish the voting protocol and communication system throughout the AGM.

The relevant ITTF staff will work together with the correspondent EC on the organisation of the online presentations and the AGM and ensure a proper communication plan for the ITTF members according to the timelines.

## 7.3 Equipment issues

The EC noted the proposition regarding the new definition of Bright colour / Red colour submitted by the Equipment Committee to the 2020 BoD.

Dr Meshref expressed his concern in relation to the proposed definition of brightness of the red colour which might be affecting some of the already approved rubbers existing for a long time in the market, what would cause many issues with the manufacturers.

Dr Meshref also referred to the the lack of agreement of the Equipment Committee with the ITTF Professional Equipment staff when submitting this proposition.

The EC entrusted Dr Meshref and Mr Calin to approach the EqC Chair in order discuss and find a reasonable solution.

With the development of a professional equipment department, the EC acknowledged the need to reconsider the EqC Terms of Reference and determine the responsibilities of the 2 areas in the future.

<b>ACTION 20200710#07</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-08-28</b>
<b>To approach the EqC chair to discuss the proposition submitted by the EqC to the 2020 BoD.</b>		

#### 7.4 CAS appeal of Mr Sharara

Mr Weikert gave a brief update on the CAS appeal of Mr Sharara indicating that CAS officially postponed the hearing to 30 November to 3 December 2020.

In conformity with the recommended steps to be taken by the ITTF to enforce the suspension of Mr Sharara, the EC noted the draft of the letters to be addressed to Table Tennis Canada (TTCAN) and Mr Sharara, prepared by the ITTF Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah, with the input of the ITTF lawyer, Mr Antonio Rigozzi.

Following the recommendation of Mr Rigozzi, the EC agreed that at the moment it is sufficient to only give a notice, and to decide about taking further disciplinary actions at a later stage.

After noting some of the doubts raised by Dr Meshref, Mr Calin was given the mandate to ask for clarifications of the legal interpretation of Mr Rigozzi in relation to paragraph 1.b. of the Letter - describing the potential breach of the suspension of Mr Sharara – and to send the letters after clarification.

<b>ACTION 20200710#08</b>	<b>In charge: Secretary General</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-07-31</b>
<b>To ask Mr Rigozzi for clarifications in regard to the paragraph 1.b. of the Letter addressed to TTCAN and Mr Sharara and to send the letters after clarification.</b>		

## 8. **Competition Program**

### 8.1 Calendar August-December 2020

Mr Weikert reflected on the recent article released by WTA and on whether a compromise to return to competition can be found.

Mr Dainton suggested that, in view of the decreasing probability of international events being staged according to traditional standards, the EC would give the mandate to the Competition Department to explore a "bubble/s" or regionally based events concept for the remainder of the



2020 calendar. The modelling should include a feasibility study that includes the travel considerations, health protocols and check the financial possibilities. Mr Dainton encouraged the EC to try to consider some alternatives.

Mr Primorac supported the idea to stage a “bubble” or regionally based events under the supervision of ITTF, given that that there is an equal opportunity in the different parts of the world, while ensuring a fair distribution of WR points and minimum impact on the Tokyo Olympic qualification system and/or seeding.

Mr Weikert emphasized that it is important to find solutions, trying to organize events and simultaneously find a fair solution regarding the WR.

Mr Dainton suggested that while understanding the concerns about how WR points are awarded, for the events to be viable, the potential partners, broadcasters and sponsors will certainly require legitimacy, and this means having events with WR points, as this is an inherent component to the ITTF competitions. Otherwise, without their support the events would not be financially viable.

Although in favour of the “bubble” concept, Dr Meshref suggested it is very important not to rush before confirming the health protocol and safety guidelines and ensure a controlled environment that would allow the maximum number of players and guarantees the safety of all the participants at an event.

To conclude, Mr Weikert suggested to ask Mr Felegyi and the competition department to explore the possibility for “bubble/s” or regionally based events trying to have competitions in the fourth quarter of 2020. A group composed by the ITTF Competition Staff together with the ITTF President, EVP responsible for Competitions, the AC Chair and the CEO will work on the development of the “bubble” concept and will make a proposal for the activities and events to be held during the remainder of the 2020 calendar.

### 20200710-EC-02

The Executive Committee decided to explore the possibility of staging “bubble” or regionally based events for the remainder of 2020 calendar, particularly in the fourth quarter.

<b>ACTION 20200710#09</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF Competitions</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-08-10</b>
<b>To work on the development of the “bubble” concept as an alternative to the international events and make a proposal for the events to be held during the remainder of the 2020 calendar.</b>		

### 8.2 WTTC 2020 and 2021 update

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the extensive discussions held with Mr Ryu as KTTA President, the ITTF CEO and the Secretary General. After analysing all the potential scenarios, the group concluded that the best option would be to host the WTTC between 28 February – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Mr Weikert emphasized that depending on the evolution of the COVID-19 situation in the next months, further actions might need to be taken into consideration, such as cancellation or a

further postponement of the event to the fourth quarter of 2021. Mr Weikert also reminded about the potential impact caused by the eventual postponement and relocation of the 2021 WTTC.

Mr Ryu thanked the EC the support and encouragement and, despite the event being postponed for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time, the LOC was still fully committed to host a successful WTTTC. In agreement with the group's recommendation, Mr Ryu confirmed the dates of the event in the first part of the year, but was ready to explore the possibility of hosting the event at a later date in 2021, after the Tokyo Olympic Games. In that sense, Mr Ryu insisted that a decision regarding the new dates and location of the 2021 WTTC should be taken soon.

Although fully supportive of the decision taken by the group, the AC Chair, Mr Zoran Primorac, expressed his doubts about the viability of hosting a WTTTC in the first part of 2021, and strongly recommended to keep the option of hosting the event after the Tokyo Olympic Games open.

The EC unanimously decided to postpone the WTTC to 2021. stage the Hana Bank 2020 WTTTC between 28th February – 7th March 2021.

### 20200710-EC-03

The Executive Committee unanimously decided to confirm the dates of the Hana Bank 2020 WTTTC in Busan, Korea Republic, from 28<sup>th</sup> February to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Following the decision, the ITTF management team will work together with USATT to explore the feasibility of hosting the World Individual Championships 2021 WTTC in the fourth quarter of the year, to have more clarity on the calendar.

<b>ACTION 20200710#10</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF CEO</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-09-30</b>
<b>Based on the different letters received from Harris County - Houston Sports Authority and USTTA, the CEO to discuss with them the feasibility of hosting the 2021 WTTC at a later date.</b>		

## 9. Any other business

### 9.1 HPD Update

The ITTF HPD Staff will work together with a group formed by the ITTF President, the EVP of Finance, the EVP responsible of Development, the CEO and CFO, on the revision and approval the new HPD plan.

<b>ACTION 20200710#11</b>	<b>In charge: ITTF HPD</b>	<b>Deadline: 2020-08-28</b>
<b>To work together with the newly formed group on the revision and approval of the new HPD Plan.</b>		

9.2 Continental Federations Virtual Meetings

On recommendation of Mr Morris, the Secretary General will assist the Continental Federations with the know-how acquired during the preparation of the ITTF AGM in terms of sharing the best practices for the preparation of online meetings, voting protocols and communication systems to be implemented throughout 2020.

**10. Next EC Meeting**

The next EC meeting to be held on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

**11. Adjournment**

Without further points on the agenda, the Executive Committee Meeting was adjourned at 14h30 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