

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Video Conference

28th August 2020

Minutes

1. Welcome and Opening

1.1 President's opening remarks

The President, Mr Thomas Weikert, welcomed everyone and started the meeting indicating that unfortunately, the global situation was not improving as it was expected few months ago and the COVID-19 registered cases continue to grow in the different parts of the world.

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
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
Gabor Felegyi	Competition Director
Polona Cehovin	HPD Director

* Mr Masahiro Maehara encountered technical and connectivity issues during the meeting.

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, with an extended note on 7.1 clarifying why Mr Al-Mohannadi (in charge of WTT matters) and Mrs Sörling (in charge of Europe relations) were chosen to entertain discussions with the European Associations presenting propositions and resolutions to the AGM, as per Mrs Sörling request.

2.2 Business arising from the Minutes

The Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, reported that there were no business arising from the previous meetings other than those included in the agenda.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda was confirmed with the following points:

7.4 Finances

10.1 Eligibility

4. COVID-2019 situational report

The CFO, Mr Michael Brown, updated the EC on the COVID-19 Task Force indicating that the situation was not improving, as the number of cases continue to grow at global level, and some European countries are witnessing a “second wave” of cases.

Mr Brown emphasized the need for a better understanding of the various requirements in order to ensure a proper training for those in charge of implementing the health protocols and guidelines in case international events will return in the near future.

5. CEO Update

5.1 Bubbles

The CEO, Mr Steve Dainton, updated the EC on the work done by the ITTF Staff in order to restart the table tennis activity by hosting alternative international events for the remainder of 2020. As the traditional international events were highly unlikely in the current global circumstances, the ITTF staff explored the possibility to host a compressed series of events including the 2020 Women’s and Men’s World Cup, ITTF Finals and an additional WTT promo event, in a safe controlled environment or a “bubble”.

Mr Dainton informed that following the decision taken by the EC during the last meeting, a call has been made to all the NA’s that wish to host bubble events and there were only 2 expressions of interest received from the Chinese Table Tennis Association (CTTA) and German Table Tennis Association (DTTB).

Based on the discussions held with both potential organisers, the ITTF staff prepared a financial evaluation of the different bubble scenarios taking into consideration the location, available dates, travel restrictions and quarantine policy of the country, training options for players, financial support and sponsorship opportunities.

In accordance with the Financial Evaluation, Mr Dainton informed that the group formed by the ITTF President, the EVP of Finances, the EVP responsible of Competition, the AC Chair, the CEO, the Secretary General, the CFO, the Marketing Director, the Competition Director, decided that it was in the best interest of the ITTF to host the bubble in China.

Based on the feedback received from the players, the ITTF staff acknowledged the different challenges, such as health concerns and potential schedule conflicts and they were working hard trying to condense the events and reduce the period of time needed for the players to be away. Mr Dainton also mentioned that the LOC is working on a special system that would allow players to practice during the quarantine.

The EVP, Dr Alaa Meshref, expressed that it is very important to guarantee the possibility of training during the quarantine, especially leading up to the important events. Dr Meshref also

insisted to take into consideration the logistics and hospitality costs that might incur as a result of the additional measures and their impact on the players.

The AC Chair, Mr Zoran Primorac, also raised a general concern of the athletes in regard to the two weeks of mandatory quarantine without the possibility of regular training. Mr Primorac also referred to the schedule conflict, mentioning that it is important to take into consideration the current commitments of the athletes.

While the Table Tennis Association of Thailand (TTAT), confirmed that they were unable to host the 2020 Uncle Pop Women's World Cup in Bangkok, due to the COVID-19 situation, Mr Dainton notified the EC about the request received from the German Table Tennis Association (DTTB) to receive a financial compensation for releasing the hosting rights of the host of the 2020 LIEBHERR Men's World Cup in Düsseldorf.

In a similar way, various LOC's were also claiming financial compensations for those 2020 World Tour events that were cancelled due to COVID-19.

It was agreed that the relevant EC members and management staff will discuss in a separate meeting the potential financial compensation for the LOC's of the 2020 MWC and other 2020 World Tour events that were cancelled due to COVID-19.

20200828-EC-01

The Executive Committee confirmed that a "Bubble" will be organized in in China including the Women's World Cup, the Men's World Cup and the ITTF Finals.

ACTION 20200828#01	In charge: ITTF EC & Management	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To discuss the potential financial compensation for the LOCs of the 2020 MWC and other 2020 World Tour events that were cancelled due to COVID-19.		

5.2 WTT

The Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, in his capacity as WTT Director, praised the hard work done by the WTT Staff preparing all the documentation leading up to the 2021 launch and hoped that the activity can soon resume thanks to the 2020 Bubble event taking place in China.

The ITTF Marketing Director, Mr Matt Pound, updated the EC on the progress and the work done by WTT in relation to 2021 event structure. Mr Pound outlined that, unfortunately, the global situation was not improving as it was expected a few months ago. From a WTT event calendar perspective, it seems difficult to have a traditional event structure and it is hard to imagine that the different stakeholders will be able to travel freely in the first half of 2021.

Mr Pound mentioned that it is important to be proactive and instead, release a schedule of bubble events at the beginning of the next year, starting in March 2021 with a bubble in the Middle East, followed by a second one in China, and eventually a third one in Europe. This will ensure a global spread and offer the opportunity to a larger number of players to participate in

WTT events. In the following weeks WTT will share more information with the EC about the process and will send an update on the 2021 Bubble concept.

Mr Pound indicated that when scheduling the bubble events all the provisions were put in place, assuming the potential quarantine policies between countries and a worst-case scenario.

Mr Pound reminded that as per the decision taken at the EC meeting held in Chengdu in 2019 (MLA), [REDACTED]

Mr Pound explained that due to the COVID-19 situation, the negotiations took longer than expected, but WTT was very close to sign a new investment agreement in the following weeks. A draft of the 2nd investment agreement was close to being finalized and will be shared shortly with the relevant EC members.

Mr Pound emphasised that a lot of work has been done in regard to the WTT event structure, preparing all the documentation and the relevant details on how the events will be looking like. Mr Pound indicated that a detailed pack of information will be sent to the EC.

ACTION 20200828#02	In charge: WTT	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To share with the EC the documents regarding the 2021 Bubble events.		
ACTION 20200828#03	In charge: WTT	Deadline: 2020-10-31
To share the 2nd investor agreement with the relevant EC members.		
ACTION 20200828#04	In charge: WTT	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To share a detailed WTT event structure pack.		

6. Athletes update

In addition to the points already raised in reference to the Bubble and the WR, Mr Primorac, highlighted the need to promote and increase the awareness around the Table Tennis United, and to make sure that it reaches its targets.

7. Operations program

7.1 AGM and leading videoconferences preparation

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the discussions held during a meeting together with the Deputy President, the CEO, and the Secretary General in regard to the planning and organisation of the 2020 AGM.

Following the examples of other international sport organisations, the EC determined that it was essential for the President and Secretary General to prepare and coordinate the AGM together, from the same location. As per the usual practice, the President would be the chair of the meeting and the Secretary General will be providing the technical support and run some of the relevant points of the agenda, particularly the propositions and resolutions. The Deputy President, Mr. Khalil Al-Mohannadi, offered Doha as potential location for the AGM management.

The President thanked Mr. Al-Mohannadi and suggested to look into Lausanne and Doha as options.

Mr Calin reminded that as the 2020 AGM will be very much oriented to the formal proceedings, the presentations and most of the questions and answers should happen on the six leading videoconferences:

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| 1. ITTF Foundation | Presentation on 1 st September 13h00 CEST |
| 2. High Performance & Development | Presentation on 4 th September 13h00 CEST |
| 3. Propositions & resolutions to AGM | Presentation on 7 th September 13h00 CEST |
| 4. Finance Forum | Presentation on 10 th September 13h00 CEST |
| 5. World Table Tennis | Presentation on 14 th September 13h00 CEST |
| 6. World Championships 2023 bids | Presentations on 21 st September 13h00 CEST |

A short summary in reference to the upcoming 2020 ITTF virtual AGM including the key dates of the leading up conferences and testing procedures will be circulated together with further information on the technology solutions.

ACTION 20200828#05	In charge: Secretary General	Deadline: 2020-08-30
To share a summary in reference to the 2020 ITTF virtual AGM and the leading videoconferences.		

7.2 Propositions and Resolutions – EC position

Discussions were held in regard to the position of the EC in regard to the propositions and resolutions presented by other bodies to the 2020 AGM.

The EC agreed to the proposal of the Secretary General to approach the relevant Member Associations in an attempt to discuss and try to resolve some of the concerns raised through their propositions submitted to the 2020 AGM.

ACTION 20200828#06	In charge: Secretary General	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To approach the various NAs and discuss the propositions submitted to the 2020 AGM.		

7.3 BoD planning

Mr Calin reported that due to the busy schedule in the upcoming month, with the 2020 ITTF virtual AGM and leading videoconferences, as well as several other additional continental annual general meetings or congresses, it was suggested to postpone the BoD until the middle of November (between 10th and 20th of November) and this way to give enough time to finalise the Agenda and prepare the meeting accordingly.

The official dates of the BoD will be decided within September.

20200828-EC-02

The Executive Committee decided to postpone the BoD to the middle of November 2020. The precise date to be decided within September.

7.4 Finances

The EC members noted the financial report presented by the CFO, Mr Michael Brown, which due to the prolonged COVID-19 situation, revealed a 92% decrease of revenues in Q2 & Q3 and only a 64% decrease in expenses. Mr Brown emphasized that despite the huge efforts and the significant reduction of the expenses, the ITTF is currently spending more than it earns, and this situation can only last for a certain period before it becomes critical.

Although it won't guarantee a positive result at the end of the year, Mr Brown explained that the restart of international events can help reverse the entire financial situation. Based on the financial outcome analysed from the 4 potential scenarios, following the interest from both CHN and GER to host a return to international events, it was determined that a bubble in China would be able to generate revenues and help cover a large part of the deficit.

Mr Brown presented the forecasted balance for 2020, indicating that even though the ITTF finds itself in a much more positive situation than a few months ago, some of the unknowns that may have a major impact on the ITTF Finances are as follows:

- The potential expense ITTF will incur on in case the 2020 WTTC are eventually cancelled and the ITTF being unable to recover the already transferred funds (USD 1.39m).
- The financial risk in case the ITTF is required to provide any form of financial support for those events cancelled throughout 2020 (exceeding USD 1m).
- Having to honour some of the various investment agreements with continental and regional bodies.
- Providing additional support to the staff which salaries were significantly reduced or, depending on the situation, considering further HR reductions to help reduce the overall financial impact for the ITTF.

The EVP of Finances, Mrs Petra Sörling, thanked Mr Brown for the comprehensive report. While being of the opinion that the different areas of action might require a deeper thought, Mrs Sörling indicated that it was a good opportunity to reconsider selling the property owned by the ITTF in Renens, especially with the real estate's market having gone up since the pandemic started.

The EVP, Mr James Morris, considered that it was necessary to update the Member Associations about the situation of the ITTF Finances and Reserves, and inform them about what ITTF is doing to mitigate risks in these pandemic times.

8. **Competition Program**

8.1 Calendar August-December 2020

With all ITTF activities being suspended until 31st of August 2020, the Interim Competition Director, Mr Gabor Felegyi, presented a brief update in regard to the status of the events scheduled in 2020 that are not yet cancelled nor postponed:

- 2020 Challenge Plus Belgium Open, De Hann – 27-31 October
- 2020 Challenge Plus North American Open, Vancouver 1-5 December
- 2020 World Tour Platinum Austrian Open, Linz 10-15 November
- 2020 World Tour Swedish Open, Stockholm 3-8 November
- 2020 ITTF WJTTC, Guimarães (Portugal) 29 November – 6 December

In regard to the 2020 Challenge Plus events, Mr Felegyi informed that the competition team was in close contact with both LOCs, the Royal Belgian Table Tennis Federation and ITTF North America Regional Director, Mr Anton Kiesenhofer, and most likely both (Challenge Plus) events will be cancelled.

Mr Felegyi indicated that during the discussions held with the Austrian Table Tennis Association and Swedish Table Tennis Associations, both LOCs expressed their intention to host the World Tour events as initially planned. Although, it will not be possible to have WT events in a traditional way, as many countries from the different parts of the world are still facing many travel restrictions, Mr Felegyi expressed that it would be a good opportunity to try and have 2 open events for those participants residing in Europe.

Mr Felegyi stated that, based on the new reality, further discussions were necessary in order to change the structure, the playing format and renegotiate the technical requirements of the events. Mr Felegyi emphasized that both events are connected and conditioned by the financial success of the 2020 Bubble in China, as the ITTF will not be able to pay a normal contribution without the additional revenue generated.

In relation to the 2020 WJTTC, Mr Felegyi reported that a new location of the event has been proposed by the Portuguese Table Tennis Federation, due to the fact that no mass gatherings were being allowed the original city, Guimarães, for the rest of the year. While further evaluations will be required in order to determine the feasibility of the event, Mr Felegyi expressed some of his concerns in relation to the implementation of COVID 19 health protocols to protect the minors and about the potential travel restrictions that players proceeding from outside EU could still be facing at the given date.

ACTION 20200828#07	In charge: Competitions	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To work together with the LOCs of the 2020 World Tour events to try and host alternative regional based events.		

8.2 WTTC 2020 and 2021 update

The EC noted that there were no further updates in relation to the 2020 and 2021 WTTC. A group formed by the President, the Deputy President, the EVP responsible of Competitions, the CEO, the Secretary General and the Competition Director, will be scheduled a meeting in the following weeks to discuss to the overall situation of the 2020 and 2021 WTTC.

ACTION 20200828#08	In charge: ITTF EC & Management	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To schedule a group meeting to discuss the 2020 and 2021 WTTC situation		

8.3 World Ranking

The EC noted the WR proposal for the 2020 ITTF Bubble and the Executive Summary circulated by the Competition Director, Mr Gabor Felegyi, explaining the rationale behind the recommendation and the differences of opinions among the members of the World Ranking working group.

Although the World Ranking working group reached a majority with four (4) votes in favour, and three (3) votes against, Mr Felegyi felt that such decision required the EC's assessment and validation to ensure that it represents the best interest of all the Table Tennis stakeholders.

The different arguments were debated among the EC members.

Mr Weikert was of the opinion that the WR proposal should be protecting the players and not force them to play the bubble events, especially as they have other obligations with their clubs. As the bubble was an unplanned competition, it can cause a calendar conflict with the national leagues. In Mr Weikert's point of view the WR would have no impact over the events as the players' participation it's purely a matter of availability.

The AC Chair, Mr Zoran Primorac, indicated that although all the athletes were in favour to restart the international activity and competition, it was important to take into consideration the current situation of the athletes. Although the AC was not against the Bubble and Mr Primorac could understand the ITTF's perspective, it was not fair in Mr Primorac's opinion to push the athletes to play the bubble as there are many factors to be taken into consideration, such a health, current club commitments and family obligations.

Therefore, in Mr Primorac's point of view, it was fair for those that participate to be able improve their results and earn additional points but also to keep the results from the past editions, for those players that cannot or chose not to participate.

The ITTF CEO explained that whilst he was originally of a different opinion regarding the ranking to the ITTF President, after discussions with Mr Weikert and Mr Primorac, he could understand their arguments and therefore would be comfortable with whichever decision would be finally made.

Mr Al-Mohannadi and Dr Meshref coincided that as an IF it was very important to be consistent and treat all the events and the different group of players fairly and equally. It was recalled that earlier in the year, the WRWG decided not to award world ranking points to those players that were affected by the last-minute travel restrictions and were unable to attend events held IN February and March due to the emerging COVID-19 situation, particularly 2020 ITTF WT Platinum Qatar Open and 2020 ITTF Challenge Plus Oman Open.

Although fully understanding the concerns and the direct impact of certain players, Mr Burton considered that from an WR perspective it was important to ensure the maximum participation of top players and the best competition in the bubble events. Mr Burton also insisted to maintain a position in the best interest and fairness for all the athletes.

Given the complexity of the subject, the EC decided to give the mandate to the WRWG which based on the expertise in the various areas was enabled to take a final decision in regard to the WR proposal for the 2020 Bubble.

20200828-EC-03

The Executive Committee decided to give the mandate to the World Ranking Working Group to take a final decision in regard to the WR proposal for the 2020 Bubble.

ACTION 20200828#09	In charge: ITTF WRWG	Deadline: 2020-09-04
To schedule a WRWG meeting and make the final decision in regard to the WR proposal for the 2020 Bubble.		

9. High Performance and Development

The HPD Director, Mrs Polona Cehovin, updated the EC on the work done and the discussions held during the meeting between the President, the EVP of Finances, the EVP responsible of Development, the CEO, the Secretary General, the CFO and the Member Relations Director with regards to the future ITTF HPD plan.

While taking into consideration some adjustments in accordance to the new realities, Mrs Cehovin indicated that, in principle, the group reached an agreement about the new direction of the ITTF HPD, the vision and objectives of the programs and the business model.

As part of the new plan, the HPD Department will continue cooperating predominantly directly with the member associations, but also with the continental bodies. However, in comparison to the previous plan, it is preferred to have in place a master agreement that would compile all the different areas of cooperation between ITTF with the respective Continental Federation, such as Events, Marketing, Development and Governance operations (continental offices, HR etc).

A general overview of the future ITTF HPD Plan, including the future programs and education matrix, will be presented during the HPD workshops scheduled on 4th September 2020.

Further details and specific financial commitments will be discussed and decided at a later stage. Although the proposed validity of the agreements will represent a shorter period of time, the overall program implementation will be in line with the long-term strategy of the ITTF HPD plan. A draft of the new Continental Master Agreements will be finalised and ready to be signed in October 2020.

ACTION 20200828#10	In charge: HPD	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To finalise the draft of the new Continental Master Agreements.		

10. Any other business

10.1 Eligibility

Mr Calin updated the EC on the eligibility case of one player from Norway, presenting the facts and the background of the case for their interpretation.

Further information and details of the case will be shared by email to the Eligibility Commission, consisting of the EC members together with the Rules Committee Chair.

ACTION 20200828#11	In charge: Secretary General	Deadline: 2020-09-20
To share the further information and details of the eligibility case presented by Norway with the members of the eligibility Commission.		

11. Next EC meeting

The next EC meeting to be held on Sunday, 20th September 2020 at 13h00 CEST.

12. Adjournment

Without further points the Executive Committee Meeting was adjourned at 14h00 CEST.

Thomas Weikert
ITTF President

Date

Raul Calin
ITTF Secretary General

Date