

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Video Conference
30th September 2020

Minutes

1. Welcome and Opening

1.1 President's opening remarks

The President, Mr Thomas Weikert, welcomed everyone for the first EC meeting to be held after the 2020 AGM.

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
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
Gabor Felegyi	Competition Director Interim
Mr Antonio Rigozzi	Lawyer - Lévy Kaufmann-Kohler

Apologies

Alaa Meshref	Executive Vice-President
Shi Zhihao	Executive Vice-President
James Morris	Executive Vice-President

2. 2020 AGM wrap-up

Mr Weikert congratulated the EC and the ITTF staff for the organisation of a very successful 2020 AGM, and praised the work done by Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, for the planning and preparation leading up to the meeting.

Mr Weikert also thanked the Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, and the QTTA for the arrangements that made possible conducting the AGM virtually from Doha, as well as the team of QTTA and ITTF staff and officials present there, which was considered instrumental for the positive outcome of the meeting.

Mr Calin considered that the 2020 AGM was a huge success for this administration and thanked the EC and the ITTF staff involved in the organisation process, for the support provided during the whole period leading up to the meeting.

Despite the technical complexity and multiple challenges of hosting such a meeting online, Mr Calin was very satisfied with the high participation rate and the successful outcome with respect to the Propositions and Resolution presented by the ITTF Executive Committee to the 2020 AGM.

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, praised the effort and the work done by the ITTF and QTTA teams in Doha, and congratulated the ITTF for the choices made in terms of set-up, use of technologies and voting system, as well as the education of the members leading up to the 2020 AGM. Mrs Sörling considered that this year's edition set a new precedent which marks the next steps towards digitalisation and the way ITTF plans its institutional meetings in the future.

The Deputy President, Mr Al-Mohannadi, explained the necessary steps taken and the extraordinary arrangements made with the support of Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) and Qatar Table Tennis Association (QTTA) in order to ensure that key EC members and Senior Staff could travel to Doha to coordinate the 2020 AGM from the same location. Mr Al-Mohannadi also expressed that the fact that the ITTF President cancelled the trip to Doha right before the meeting, without any previous official announcement, put Mr Al-Mohannadi and QTTA in a very uncomfortable position.

Mr Al Mohannadi and Mrs Sörling expressed their disappointment regarding the lack of information received from Mr Weikert with respect to the last-minute cancellation of his trip to Doha and both hoped that the communication between the President and the other EC members would improve in the future.

Mr Weikert thanked the QOC and QTTA for the support showed to the ITTF during these complicated times and apologised for not reaching directly Mr Al-Mohannadi and Mrs Sörling to announce them his impossibility to travel. Mr Weikert emphasized that he was in daily contact with Mr Dainton and Mr Calin, who were fully informed about the ban on travelling because he had to undergo a test for COVID 19 and wait for the test result before he was allowed to travel. Mr Weikert also stated that it was already planned to send an official "Thank You letter" to QTTA after this EC meeting.

Following the discussions, the EC decided to cover all hospitality and logistics costs related to the 2020 AGM set-up and management from Doha, Qatar, and to send a formal congratulations letter to QTTA for their support in successfully hosting the first ever virtual ITTF AGM.

20200930-EC-01

The Executive Committee decided that the ITTF will cover the set-up, hospitality and logistics costs related to the 2020 AGM organisation in Doha, Qatar.

ACTION 20200930#01	In charge: Secretary General	Deadline: 2020-10-01
To prepare and send, on behalf of the ITTF, an official thank you letter to the QTTA.		

3. 2020 WJTTC

The EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, updated the EC on the 2020 WJTTC indicating that given the upsurge of COVID-19 cases in Europe and the current international travel restrictions it will not be possible to run an effective event in Portugal in 2020.

The EC noted the proposal of Mr Burton and Mr Maehara as follows:

- 1) To cancel the 2020 WJTTC in Portugal.
- 2) To give to Portugal TTA the first chance to organise the 2021 World Youth Championships that will include the new age categories U15 and U19, so those players eligible this year would be eligible in 2021 (assuming the proposition from the ITTF EC to the BoD to be held on 19th November will pass, meaning, converting the WJTTC into the World Youth Championships).
- 3) To propose that Tunisia TTA, that was allocated with the WJTTC 2021, will be awarded the 2022 World Youth Championships (assuming the proposition from the ITTF EC to the BoD to be held on 19th November will pass, meaning, converting the WJTTC into the World Youth Championships).

Mr Weikert suggested that the Secretary General together with the ITTF Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah should determine the correct legal procedure to be taken in this process.

The EC agreed with the recommendation made and the steps to be taken in the process.

20200930-EC-02

The Executive Committee decided to cancel the 2020 WJTTC in Portugal and to submit recommendations to the Board of Directors in relation to the World Youth Table Tennis Championships 2021 and 2022 if the related proposition passes.

ACTION 20200930#02	In charge: SG & Legal Counsel	Deadline: 2020-10-01
To determine the correct legal procedure to be taken in the process regarding the allocation of the 2021 and 2022 World Youth Championships.		

4. CAS Appeal (letter received)

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the CAS case and the letter received on 18th of September from Mr Sharara regarding a potential settlement that was shared with the EC earlier in the week.

The ITTF Legal Representative, Mr Antonio Rigozzi, presented the facts and the general background of the CAS appeal of Mr Adham Sharara, mentioning the key elements to be taken into consideration when assessing the settlement. Also, Mr Rigozzi explained the possible future implications if there will be a CAS hearing.

Mr Rigozzi made a clear indication on what were the chances of success in the case, explaining that although Mr Sharara's actions were not good from an ethical perspective, there is a significant chance to lose the case on technicalities, on the ground that there is no real legal bases for such a sanction in the ITTF Regulations.

Mr Burton expressed his disappointment in regard to the steps followed in this process, especially for rushing the EC to take a decision regarding a potential settlement without the involvement nor prior consulting with the group that was created with this purpose.

Mr Weikert explained the omission and indicated the next steps to be take in terms of the process. After having a chat with Mr Rigozzi, Mr Weikert was of the opinion, that the whole EC should know about this proposal. A rushed decision from the EC was neither suggested nor planned.

Mrs Sörling shared the disappointment of Mr Burton on the way the process was handled, indicating she assumed the recommendation was coming from the working group. Knowing that it was not the case, Mrs Sörling added that she would prefer the EC receiving a proposal from the working group, having the time to evaluate and then take a proper decision. Also, Mrs Sörling asked Mr Rigozzi what the main changes since the month of May were, at the time in which the settlement meetings were held, that should lead the EC to make a settlement now instead of going for the CAS hearing and if an estimation of the cost could be provided.

Mr Rigozzi suggested the current position of the appellant was reasonable, reason why as the ITTF legal counsel, he is suggesting reaching the settlement, while a few months ago the claims of the appellant were totally unreasonable, and it is clear the favourable evolution on his position.

The EC considered that more time was necessary in order to assess the settlement proposal and a more calculated decision. From a financial perspective, the EC considered that the potential 10% increase in the overall costs allocated to this project is not a reason to rush into a settlement without taking into consideration the overall impact that the case may have on the ITTF and its reputation.

Mr Al-Mohannadi suggested that the final agreement should not have any restriction on the Appellant running for any position in the next elections.

On the proposal of Mr Weikert, the working group decided to hold a meeting on Monday 5th of October together with Mr Rigozzi to discuss the case and explore the available and final options.

ACTION 20200930#03	In charge: Working Group	Deadline: 2020-10-05
The CAS case working group to discuss and explore the available options and make a recommendation to the EC for a final decision.		

5. Any other business

Mr Maehara asked for updates regarding the 2020 World Tour Platinum Austrian Open and the 2020 World Tour Swedish Open.

Mr Dainton informed that although in principle the events would not be played as per the usual WT format, discussions were being held with the relevant LOC's about potentially hosting alternative regional based events at the end of the year and allow the European players to compete at more international level.

Despite the current uncertainties and difficulties, the IOC Member, Mr Ryu Seungmin, hoped that ITTF will be able to find solutions to allow more players to participate and compete internationally.

6. Next EC Meeting

The next EC meeting to be held a few days before the Board of Directors, in a date to be confirmed.

7. Adjournment

Without further points on the agenda, the Executive Committee Meeting was adjourned at 13h30 CEST.

Thomas Weikert
ITTF President

Date

Raul Calin
ITTF Secretary General

Date