

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Video Conference
Thursday 4th February 2021

Minutes

1. Welcome and Opening

1.1 President's opening remarks

The President, Mr Thomas Weikert, welcomed everyone and hoped that the EC members will finally be able to meet in person soon in Doha.

As mentioned through a previous email send before the meeting, Mr Weikert indicated that he will not take part in point 9.1. Report on legal aspects of DTTB letter with independent support.

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
Shi Zhihao	Executive Vice-President
Alaa Meshref	Executive Vice-President
James Morris	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 – only for the correspondent point
Gabor Felegyi	Competition Director – only for the correspondent point
Mounir Bessah	Member Relation Director – only for the correspondent point
Polona Cehovin	HPD Director – only for the correspondent point
Dylan Mah	Legal Counsel – only for point 9.1
Pierre Killian	PwC – only for point 9.1
Anthony Indaimo	Withers – only for point 9.1

2. Minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting

2.1 Approval of the previous Minutes

The EC approved the Minutes of the previous EC Meetings with the following remarks:

EC Meeting on 3rd December 2020

The EC confirmed the text proposed by the EVP, Mr Bruce Burton for point 14.1 Informal meeting: *"It should be noted that immediately following this regular meeting an informal*

meeting took place in the absence of the staff. The recording device was turned off and no record of any discussions or potential decisions taken was made.”

EC Meeting on 27th November 2020

Following the recommendation of the ITTF Deputy President, Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, further clarifications were added to point 2. Letter from DTTB to ITTF Associations, Officials and Management Team, by listing all the letters received in relation to the DTTB letter.

The General Secretary informed that although the soft copies and digital signatures are sufficient for internal purposes, according to the requirements of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce, it will also be necessary to physically sign the hard copies of the Minutes of all the EC Meetings held on 2020.

2.2 Business arising from the previous 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 adopted with the following amendments:

9.7 Equipment: Coloured lines on black tables

The EVP, Mrs Petra Sörling, requested that Finances should be always present as a fixed point on the Agenda, under Operations.

In reference to the email send by Mr Tenca in the previous evening, about the case regarding the ITTF CEO, Mr Weikert proposed to postpone the discussion regarding the accusations made by Table tennis Canada and Mr Paul Kyle, and defer this point to the next EC meeting held on 14th March 2021.

Given the sensitivity around the issue and the need for further clarifications, the EVP, Mr Nestor Tenca, accepted Mr Weikert’s proposal to postpone this point to the next EC meeting while waiting for the result of the report from the auditor, Mr Michael Ackermann.

Mrs Petra Sörling wanted to clarify that informing the auditor about this issue, should not be considered a new investigation, but rather a normal audit procedure in relation to the establishment of the ITTF North America, to ensure the protection of the ITTF EC.

The EVP, Mr Bruce Burton, was in agreement with Mr Tenca’s statements and with the analysis done so far and had no issue with this being postponed until the next EC meeting scheduled on 14th March. However, he emphasised that ITTF made no public statement since the correspondence was received by the entire table tennis community leading up to the 2020 BoD and expressed his concerns about the negative impact of these series of accusations.

4. **COVID-19 situational report**

The CFO, Mr Michael Brown, updated the EC on the COVID-19 situational report informing about the positive case registered in the event hotel during the Australia Open (Tennis) in Melbourne which led to the postponement of the event for one day. Based on the occurrences, Mr Brown recommended that the ITTF should be prepared in case of a similar situation and should be flexible in terms of events schedule.

5. CEO update

5.1 Hubs Update

The CEO, Mr Steve Dainton, gave a brief update on the two 2021 WTT hubs scheduled in the first half of the year.

2021 WTT Middle East Hub – Doha Qatar

In regard to the 2021 WTT Middle East Hub in Doha, Mr Dainton talked about the challenges of hosting international events during a pandemic and reported that overnight, Qatar health authorities, tightened the restrictions due to the increasing number of COVID-19 positive cases in the country.

Mr Dainton highlighted that the ITTF and the entire table tennis community were lucky to have the support of Mr Al-Mohannadi and Qatar Table Tennis Association (QTTA), adding that thanks to their huge efforts, a special permit was granted to host international events in Doha with an express forty eight hours mandatory quarantine for the participants.

Whilst ITTF had a good experience in China during 2020 #RESTART, it was now necessary to adapt to the current situation, including different rules and new challenges and learn how to organise events with less financial investment and human resources. Despite all the difficulties, Mr Dainton was confident about hosting a successful event in Doha.

Mr Al-Mohannadi talked about the current changing environment and the complexity around hosting international events in Doha during a pandemic, emphasizing that after more than over 30 years' experience in the industry, this year's edition was very different and by far the most difficult one to organise.

Mr Al-Mohannadi expressed his satisfaction to be able to host the events and finally meet in person during the EC meeting in Doha.

Mr Weikert thanked Mr Al-Mohannadi for the support and for the commitment to host the 2021 WTT ME Hub in Doha.

2021 WTT China Hub

Mr Dainton updated the EC on the ongoing discussions held with the Chinese Table Tennis Association informing that there was still no final confirmation in regard to the 2021 WTT China Hub.

Mr Dainton explained that the delay was mainly due to the tightening of the restrictions in the country during the Chinese New Year (12th February 2021) period, including the government's extra advisory measures to its citizens with respect to travels and the announcement of cultural and sport events. In order to ensure the feasibility of the project, Mr Dainton indicated that a deadline was set for 10th February 2021 and an official announcement will be made following that date.

Mr Dainton reported that ongoing discussions were held with Qatar Airways regarding a potential chartered flight directly from Qatar to China, which would ensure that the majority of the players could travel from one bubble to another. Mr Dainton considered this would be a better solution which also might help to reduce the restrictions that may be into force in China.

Mr Dainton also informed about the discussions held with the Swedish Table Tennis Association (STTA) in regard to the potential organisation of a WTT event in Sweden, before the Olympic Games – which now seemed very complicated due to the current situation and hoped to find a solution later in the year.

Mrs Sörling explained that, traditionally, the Swedish Open was held at the end of the calendar year, and despite the extra efforts made by STTA it was not possible to secure the dates in the first half of 2021. However, Mrs Sörling was happy to keep the original plan to host an international event in Stockholm in the fourth quarter.

Mr Dainton suggested to make a call for those MA's in Europe that are interested and wish to host international events in 2021. Following the discussions held with the ETTU officials and staff, Mr Dainton mentioned that due to COVID-19, there were still many doubts regarding the organisation of European Top 16 and European Championships.

Mr Zoran Primorac, informed that the Croatian Table Tennis Federation is very keen to host an international event and suggested that WTT should consider Croatia as one of the potential hosts, as the situation was improving in the regions and it was now one of the safest countries in Europe.

Mrs Sörling emphasize that many international table tennis events have been cancelled in Europe due to the resurgence of COVID-19 cases. However, she indicated that there were some regions like in the Balkans, i.e., Croatia, Slovenia, that might be able to host international events.

Mr Weikert declared being very much aware of the challenges around hosting international events during a pandemic, hoping that the situation will improve in the following weeks and recommended to wait before taking any official decision.

5.2 Human Resources

Mr Dainton reported that a general staff meeting was held on Friday, 22nd January 2021 together with the President and the EVP responsible for staff in order to update on the key plans and objectives, sharing some positivity despite the difficult situation.

Although it was important to remain cautious, Mr Dainton hoped to be able to pay full salaries in 2021. Such decision was mostly depending on the possibility to host all the events proposed in 2021 but also on the organisation of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Mr Dainton also mentioned that, pending on the financial situation, there are some HR areas that might be filled in the coming months.

Mrs Sörling praised the decision to hold a staff meeting, which she felt it was a great success, and expressed her satisfaction with the interaction and positive outcome on the meeting.

5.3 Group Finances

Mrs Sörling requested to include a Financial overview as a separate point in the Agenda mainly to inform that the organisation has started the 2020 audit process.

Mr Brown gave a brief update on the progress made during the 2020 financial audit, indicating that the consolidation process for all the activities correspondent to all the entities part of the ITTF Group will require a bit more time due to the fact that 2020 was not a regular year.

Mr Brown emphasised that the ultimate decision which will determine the final financial position for 2020 will be the management of the release of the Olympic Fund which corresponds to a five-year Olympic cycle this time, instead of the four-year standard cycle.

The final financial position will be presented during the next EC on 14th March in Doha.

Although still waiting for the audited process and for the final contracts to be solved, Mr Dainton believed that the prudent approach and the financial measures taken early in 2020, put ITTF in a reasonable position.

Mr Dainton considered that the ITTF EC should be proud about the overall positive outcome and it would be interesting to compare the results achieved by other IF's in 2020.

Based on the discussions held with other IF's representatives, Mr Weikert was of the opinion that ITTF should be proud for such a good result, which was achieved especially due to 2020 #RESTART.

6. Member Relations Program

6.1 Master Continental Agreement

The Member Relations Director, Mr Mounir Bessah, updated the EC on the progress and the work done among the different entities, departments, and staff members in relation to the Master Continental Agreements (**MCAs**).

The draft documents which were created with the help of the Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah, will be shared with the Continental Federations. Mr Bessah reported that a second round of discussions was scheduled together with each of the Continental Federations during the following week, with the intention to get their final feedback and finalise the documents.

Mr Bessah indicated that all continents were very positive regarding the agreement, with the exception of the Asian Table Tennis Union (ATTU), that decided to delay the process and put on hold any decision regarding the Master Continental Agreement between ITTF and ATTU.

Mr Bessah stated that a further decision regarding signing a Master Continental Agreement between ITTF and ATTU should be taken in the near future, especially as the needs of the Member Associations (**MAs**) cannot be put on hold.

The HPD Director, Mrs Polona Cehovin, thanked everyone involved in the work done in this process and applauded the initiative to present the concept of the ITTF Group by reflecting the unity and the work done together across all the different areas and departments.

In his capacity as ATTU Deputy President, Mr Al-Mohannadi expressed his disappointment with ATTU's attitude regarding the matter of the MCA hoping for a better cooperation in the future.

Mr Primorac congratulated the Mr Bessah and Mrs Cehovin for the approach and for the work done in this area, particularly for the involvement of all the stakeholders in the entire process.

The EVP, Mr James Morris, asked for clarifications regarding the next steps of the process and timelines and Mr Bessah indicated that following the second round of discussions with the Continental Federations, the aim was to sign the Master Continental Agreements around the next EC Meeting in Doha, in the presence of the ITTF President, EC Members and Continental Presidents.

Mr Bessah reminded the EC about the request of Falkland Islands to become member of the ITTF, indicating that the application and all the requested documents have already been submitted and shared with the EC. Seeing the success and popularity in other sports in the Commonwealth Games, Mr Bessah believed that this would be a great opportunity to grown table tennis in that territory.

Mr Weikert mentioned that an official decision regarding Falkland Island was not possible during this meeting and proposed to include this point in the Agenda for the EC meeting held on 14th March.

ACTION 20210204#01	In charge: SG	Deadline: 2021-03-14
To include the topic Falkland Island to the next EC Agenda.		

7. High Performance and Development

7.1 7.1. Services for MA's

Mrs Cehovin gave a brief overview on the new HPD program presenting the available services for the MAs according to the challenges and specific needs of the sport, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, by embracing the new technologies and digitalisation to reach the objectives established in the Strategic Plan.

Mrs Cehovin informed that the HPD Participation Unit, together with the Member Relations Department, will be managing the MAs Services program in cooperation with a new digital partner, PingProfy, and was targeting a quarter allocation of support for approximately fifty-five (55) MAs based on a defined selection criterion.

The program includes:

- Contents and activation services to co-fund national level activities & events
- Access the available online services (consultation, mentoring, coaching, tutoring, remote activations, etc.) offered by ITTF through PingProfy platform (as credits/coupons)
- To co-fund relevant national level projects – equipment purchases
- To co-finance staff related expenses

Mrs Cehovin continued by presenting some of the available online services offered to the MA's via the digital platform, indicating that the partnership with PingProfy will be formalised and defined through a Cooperation Agreement with the main objective to reach all the MAs on ground and online platforms.

The EVPs, Mr James Morris and Mr Maehara Masahiro congratulated Mrs Cehovin and the HPD team for the initiative and providing a fundamental tool for the education of the players and coaches.

Mrs Sörling asked clarification regarding the company's background and ownership ensuring that that a transparent process has been followed.

Mrs Cehovin informed that the company was established and co-owned by three table tennis players, namely Mr Jose Miguel Ramirez (GUA), Mr Thiago Monteiro (BRA) and Mr Marcos Madrid (MEX), being operated with the support of a technical team. Mrs Cehovin suggested that one of the reasons the company was interested in a joint venture was the need of finding an investor to grow the product and reach a bigger audience.

Mrs Cehovin assured that all aspects related to due diligence will be included in the Cooperation Agreement.

Mr Dainton wished that the ITTF would have been able to develop its own digital platform in first place and use it as a fully integrated education tool, however, depending on the result achieved during this initial stage of cooperation, the ITTF should consider a joint venture in the future.

Mr Primorac congratulated the HPD department for the great initiative and for the work done in cooperation with the fellow athletes, especially as the idea of such platform was frequently discussed among the members of the table tennis community.

Mrs Cehovin emphasized that showing support to the athletes post their sporting career sends a positive message to the community and improves the perspective for a professional career after their retirement.

8. Athletes' Commission update

On behalf of the Athletes Commission, Mr Primorac, updated the EC on the following points:

1. In relation to the meeting held with the IOC Athletes Commission, Mr Primorac reported that the IOC President, Dr Thomas Bach, was very positive and optimistic that Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will go ahead. Among the topics discussed during the meeting, Mr Primorac summarised:
 - The IOC recommendation for Athletes to have a COVID-19 vaccine (not mandatory)
 - The release of the Tokyo 2020 Playbook for Athletes in reference to the conduct during the Olympic Games
 - the IOC recommendation to keep the Olympic Qualification pathway through field of play results and in last instance through the WR
2. Mr Primorac mentioned that the AC received many enquiries from players regarding the 2021 WTT China Hub and emphasized that in order to fulfil the responsibilities and commitments that the players have with their clubs, it was fundamental to provide the relevant information about the events as soon as possible. In Mr Primorac's opinion, it would be good to establish a deadline to make an official announcement.

Although Mr Primorac understood the challenges around organising international events during a pandemic, Mr Primorac pointed that the participation into the two hubs would mean that the players will be on a tour for a total of 65 days. It was important to take into consideration the players schedule including the preparation for the Olympics Games, the European Top 16, the European Championships, and Clubs' leagues.

3. Mr Primorac mentioned that the cancellation of 2020 WTT in Busan had a negative impact over the table tennis community and that it was imperative to find a solution to host the 2021 WTT edition and crown the World Champions.

9. Operations Program

Before leaving the meeting for the deliberations on 9.1, Mr Weikert mentioned his surprise to see that additional participants will be attending this part of the meeting without being informed in advance.

Mr Calin informed that during the working group meeting held on Sunday 31st January 2021, it was agreed to invite Mr Pierre Killian (PwC), Mr Anthony Indaimo, (Withers) and Mr Dylan Mah, (ITTF Legal Counsel). Mr Calin apologised for the misunderstanding in view of the discomfort of Mr Weikert, assuring that it was absolutely no intention to hide any information from Mr Weikert, but the process was rushed due to the volume of information and activity in hands.

Although in agreement with the recommendation of the working group, Mr Weikert emphasized that he was totally against the formalities and procedures followed in this process, and as ITTF President, it was his right to be aware of the participation list and to invite guests to the EC meetings.

Despite having his own opinion in regard to the PwC report, Mr Weikert indicated that he never interfered in the work done by the working group nor in the outcome of the meeting.

On behalf of the working group, Mr Calin commented that it was agreed that the working group should present their report during this EC meeting, and based on the recommendation of the legal experts, the information was not shared with Mr Weikert due to Mr Weikert's dual role in the ITTF and DTTB.

The EVP, Dr Alaa Meshref, wanted to clarify that the working group acted in good faith and planned this meeting with good intentions as they felt the need to hear the experts' opinions when dealing with legal matters.

Dr Meshref reminded that up to seven EC members requested the presence of Mr Anthony Indaimo on the EC Meeting held on 27th November 2020, what was not granted by Mr Weikert adducing potential COI of Mr Indaimo/Withers. After the PwC report was published, clearing everyone involved in the establishment of the WTT, including Withers, Dr Meshref believed it was now the right time to include Mr Indaimo in the discussion.

The general impression in the working group was that the EC Members can invite other participants, however, if any regulations prohibit such action, then the EC can reconsider re-scheduling such meeting.

In that regard, Mr Burton reminded that the EC, when deciding to form the working group, also gave the mandate to call for meetings and determine the participants to such meetings and he fully endorsed the way the working group acted.

Based on the ground that information presented during this part of the meeting was strictly confidential and subject to the legal privilege, restricted to members of the EC and the working group only, Mr Dylan Mah asked the CEO, Mr Steve Dainton, and the CEO's Office - Projects Director, Ms Iulia Necula, to leave the meeting.

Mr Dainton expressed having no problem to leave the meeting but mentioned not fully understanding what was the rationale of such decision. Mr Dainton added that, nevertheless, trusting the professional experts and their recommendation on this process, he would leave.

In relation to the next steps, Mr Dainton stated that regardless of the decision taken by the ITTF, due to the nature of the attacks which targeted him personally, including involving the name of his wife, he was considering taking his own personal legal actions against DTTB.

9.1 Report on legal aspects of DTTB letter with independent support

Once Mr Weikert and Mrs Vatheuer had left the meeting, Mr Killian (PwC), Mr Indaimo (Withers) and Mr Mah (ITTF Legal Counsel) joined the meeting.

The EC noted the introduction of Dr Meshref on behalf of the Legal Working Group (LWG), reporting on the circulation of the Executive Summary (ES) of PwC's report to all EC Members and the circulation of the "Conclusions" document to the ITTF MAs, Board of Directors, Committee Chairs and Senior Management. Dr Meshref highlighted the fact that PwC report cleared the ITTF from all 22 allegations from the DTTB Letter.

Dr Meshref added that following the completion of PwC report, the next step for the LWG was discussing the possible actions the ITTF should take. On behalf of the LWG, Dr Meshref apologized to the EC colleagues for the late circulation of the "Working Group Options Paper on DTTB Letter", which tries to summarize the five potential options of actions the EC can take.

The EC noted that following the initial discussions with the DTTB about sharing with them the ES of the PwC report, the LWG and PwC were concerned that again DTTB was going to media, sharing impressions on the PwC conclusions document. For this reason, the LWG decided - instead of sharing with the DTTB the ES- to first address these issues to the EC.

Dr Meshref invited then Mr Pierre Killian from PwC to share his impressions with the EC.

Mr Killian started reporting on the extremely good cooperation PwC found by everyone involved, the ITTF, as the custodians of all documents, the Selection Panel, and the DTTB, that participated in two calls with PwC, pointing to some documents and exchanges they wanted PwC to look at.

Mr Killian suggested it has been a successful project, particularly given the period of the year it was carried. Referring to the ES and to the Conclusions document, Mr Killian stated WTT was properly established within the Constitution, good governance was followed, and perhaps better

and regular updates could have been given in the period before March 2020 to MAs, particularly to those not having representatives in the EC.

Mr Killian however added a caveat indicating that having commercially sensitive information being provided to prospective business partners, it was also prudent and normal in business environment, not to share certain privileged information outside the EC and Management.

Mr Killian continued adding that the tender documentation was complete, and PwC did not find any irregularities, like tender fraud, or conflict of interest between the selection panel members and commercial partners of WTT.

Turning into the twenty-two (22) allegations of DTTB, Mr Killian reported PwC being shocked that DTTB did not provide any evidence to support their claims. DTTB gave explanations on why they felt like they felt, but they were not able to provide any evidence, nor PwC found them, that could substantiate their allegations.

Mr Killian added that in PwC's view, WTT was being established openly and transparently, and MAs, included DTTB, could have known that this establishment was happening through EC Minutes, Presentations and Press Releases.

It appears that only after WTT was founded, DTTB voiced their displeasure and started asking for information. What shocked more PwC that most of the information DTTB was asking for, they could have access to. For example, Directors and Shareholders of WTT as a company, having Singapore and open and transparent companies house, for just 15 USD, you can get all details form any company. In relation to Budapest meetings, and some questions being made by DTTB, like the hosting rights for the World Championships, it was always made clear that the hosting rights were staying in the ITTF, and even if the MLA details were not known yet, being still in draft mode, it was communicated as such, and only after the entire process, they were making such questions.

In conclusion, PwC could not substantiate the merits of DTTB's complaints.

In relation to World Ranking systems, and as already included in the Executive Summary, even if outside the scope of work of PwC, PwC did put some questions to DTTB, and received inconsistent answers, which wanted to point out to the EC.

One part that concerned PwC was that DTTB did an allegation about the wife of the ITTF CEO, Mr Dainton, suggesting that she had financial interest in QG sports. PwC did an analysis of that matter and also received a report commissioned by the ITTF which entrusted a law firm to make a due diligence report on QG and did not find any anomalies, and also no links with Mr Dainton's wife. In the opinion of Mr Killian, bringing such type of allegation without being able to support it, based on a rumour, with a service provider like PwC, was felt irresponsible and reckless, showing some animosity between DTTB and Mr Dainton, adding that if you are to make such allegations, it is better you have evidence to support.

Mr Killian concluded with the following two notes for the EC:

- 1) The allegations that were made against specific individuals within the ITTF were unfounded. It is PwC recommendation to the EC to look after ITTF's staff as heartfelt as possible, as it appears it was extremely unfair the way they were portrayed in the media.
- 2) The interviews given by Mr Geiger in the media¹ are a matter of concern to PwC, as they were based on the Conclusions document, which is clearly marked as confidential. Mr Killian suggested that DTTB discussing the content with the media, before coming to the ITTF to raise their concerns, makes PwC think that the ES may find the same way into the media (i.e., being leaked by DTTB) and -being a much more detailed document- which includes references to personal points of view, and other details, in the opinion of PwC it could lead to be detrimental for the table tennis as a whole. This was the reason why every EC member had to sign an NDA to receive it but, not being DTTB a contractual partner with PwC, they would need to sign a Hold Harmless Letter in addition to the NDA. Mr Killian concluded that it is very important to be protected and should PwC get any indication that DTTB is not willing to keep the confidentiality, PwC would not be in a position to share the ES with them.

Before giving the floor to Mr Indaimo to discuss the "Options Paper", the EC members were asked if at that stage of the discussions they had any comments or questions.

Mr Primorac took the floor and started thanking Mr Killian, Mr Indaimo and Mr Mah for their professional work. Mr Primorac asked if all EC members were consulted when preparing this report, as Mr Primorac felt not being contacted as Athletes Commission Chair would not allow him to provide his views and the voice of the AC, what could be relevant for this report.

Mr Killian responded that the interviews were driven by the scope of work of PwC, which was looking at the establishment of WTT, including the commercial aspects, tender work, and the next part was to look at the complaints of DTTB. The people mentioned on DTTB's complaints were Mr Dainton, Mr Pound and Mr Weikert. For this reason, PwC decided to interview the entire selection panel (Mr Weikert, Mr Al-Mohannadi, Mrs Sörling, Mr Dainton and Mr Pound), plus reviewing all relevant minutes and other official documents, as well as DTTB, Withers and Deloitte, not feeling that there was any missing gap, reason why nobody else was reached out. Mr Primorac commented that the documents would have been more relevant if the entire EC was asked.

Dr Meshref added that in addition to the interviews, other material such minutes, presentations, webinars, videoconferences, bid documents, etc., were made available, and if PwC felt there were no gaps, there was no reason to consult anyone else, but if there would have been, then the persons involved in the selection process of the partner companies, i.e., the Selection Panel, would have been contacted, being directly involved, and no other EC members.

Mrs Sörling reported that being part of the Selection Panel, she always felt very comfortable in the process, but wanted to make the reflection that in terms of communication, when the Busan WTTTC were postponed, being the place where the ITTF was hoping to present all plans to the MAs, it was when the idea of the webinars came.

Mr Burton added feeling very comfortable with the work being done by PwC and added that if he would have considered anything specific should have been brought, he would have addressed the LWG himself.

¹ Referring to interviews appearing in *insidethegames* and The Strait Times on 29-Jan-2021 and 3-Feb-2021 respectively.

Mr Al-Mohannadi, thanked all persons involved in the Legal Working Group and asked what the next steps would be in order to clarify matters to the ITTF family.

Mrs Sörling addressed the other EC colleagues expressing that -as per Mr Killian's recommendation- the staff will be looked after.

Mr Dainton then stated that as requested by the Legal Counsel, he would be leaving the room before the discussion starts on the Options Paper, however, wanted to add that he is seriously considering taking legal actions individually against DTTB for their accusations, not only about him, but also about his wife. Mr Dainton expressed he would prefer this to be handled by the ITTF, but he would reserve his rights if feeling the ITTF has not taken adequate measures after the attack he suffered and indicated he would keep the EC updated on any potential actions he may take.

At that point, Mr Dainton did leave the videoconference, and Mr Indaimo took the floor.

Mr Indaimo started explaining that PwC's mandate included six elements in its scope of work, as requested by the EC. One of them was to review the process and work performed by Deloitte and Withers. For the record, Mr Indaimo wanted to express that initially he thought Withers was part of the LWG, and only after interacting with PwC is when he understood that this was not the case. The EC noted that once PwC finalised their report, is when Withers was co-opted to assist, not only in providing a chronology of events, but also details on the tender process, and to assist with recommendations in the next steps to be taken. Mr Indaimo apologised to the EC members for the late circulation of the Options Paper, explaining that the main reasons lead to this late circulation were three:

First, that following the LWG meeting on Sunday night (31st January), it was important to assemble all comments received, and it was important to capture a holistic and balanced view of a very serious matter, what in Mr Indaimo's experience is unprecedented among sporting organisations.

The second reason being the extremely severe concerns about the strategy that DTTB appears to be adopting which is to communicate to the media on issues which are under investigation, and they have blatantly gone against what is a normal process, communicating with the Press.

And a third concern was about this document remaining among the EC members, not just because of the confidentiality, but because it contains legally privileged information, which if reaching DTTB would let them know the options the ITTF is considering, what is not adequate.

The EC noted the presentation of the report from the WG which included an introduction and offers five (5) possible options for response by the ITTF as well as elaborates in the internal situation of the EC and the "Secret Deal" matter, which is included in the Executive Summary (ES) of PwC's report.

Mr Indaimo referred to the two articles which appeared in *insidethegames* and The Strait Times in January and February, including quotes from Mr Michael Geiger, and very precise statements from the confidential "conclusions" report of PwC. As a result, the ITTF Secretary General wrote

to DTTB expressing ITTF's concerns about the articles and indicating them that this matter will be addressed to the EC, reverting to them after knowing EC's position.

The fact that the DTTB was copying the second WG (European relations) on the correspondence with the LWG was understood as an attempt to fade their responsibility, trying to focus the attention on technical matters which are not part of the mandate of the LWG.

Before presenting the five suggested options, Mr Indaimo highlighted the fact that a letter containing twenty-two baseless allegations was circulated to at least 225 other parties.

After the explanations given by Mr Indaimo, the Executive Committee agreed to proceed with the options 1 and 5 of the option paper, i.e.:

Option 1: to respond to allegations made against the Named Individuals who were targeted by the Letter to confirm that they have the full support of the Executive Committee and

Option 5: to communicate to the DTTB what options the ITTF is considering including a public apology, sanctions and/or possible litigation, and understand DTTB's reactions to this and its intentions as the next steps before deciding how to proceed.

To conclude, Mr Indaimo referred to the internal issues within the EC as the DTTB has sought to drive division between the President and the CEO, something which is very sensitive, as the relationship between President and CEO must remain trustable, with confidence and respect. Mr Indaimo suggested to engage immediately with the staff as the employees may consider that the EC has failed to act with due care for them.

As a result of the work of the WG, the EC was also recommended to re-examine the actual or potential conflict of interests of its members in relation to the DTTB Letter, particularly noting the fact that the ITTF President is advising the DTTB, even understanding that it is only for domestic matters, and to consider whether the President should be suggested to stop his advisory role to the DTTB.

In relation to the "Secret Deal" proposed by DTTB on their email of August 2020 reported by PwC, the WG comes to the conclusion that this was not the action of a reputable, transparent and well governed MA and in the view of the LGW, any response from the ITTF to DTTB's Letter should take into consideration the impropriety of this communication. Furthermore, the EC is asked to consider if further actions are needed, particularly looking at the threat expressed on the "Secret Deal", for example, to raise this matter with the DOSB.

Mr Burton suggested that given the scope of what described by Mr Indaimo, the best would be give some time for the EC members to analyse the Options Paper and to reconvene for another meeting in which a decision could be taken.

In answer to Mr Burton, Mr Calin suggested this would be a reasonable approach, and referring to the earlier comments from Mr Primorac, Mr Calin suggested Mr Primorac could speak with Mr Indaimo and/or Mr Killian in case he had any doubts on the process and this would eventually lead to dissipate any doubts.

Mr Primorac explained that his questions were not mainly related to DTTB's letter, as he feels everybody agrees DTTB's approach was wrong, but more on thoughts and opinions, requesting if he could speak directly Mr Indaimo and stating in his opinion this was not affecting PwC's report. It was agreed Mr Primorac and Mr Indaimo would have a one-on-one call.

Before concluding Mr Kilian offered his availability for any EC member to contact him for further comments or questions.

The EC agreed to suggest the date for a follow-up on this matter, and to continue the meeting, inviting back Mr Weikert, Mr Dainton, Mrs Vatheuer and Ms Necula.

ACTION 20210204#02	In charge: EC	Deadline: 2021-02-04
To suggest the date for a new EC meeting to resume the discussions of the first WG.		

9.2 Report on European Member Associations Concerns

The EC noted the report presented from the second Working Group (WG2), dealing with the concerns of the European MAs.

Mr Weikert mentioned that the complains received during the meeting held on Monday 18th January, were echoing the voices of European players, MAs, international and national leagues and clubs.

The main topics of the agenda included discussions in relation to:

- Calendar clashes of the European events (European Championships, ETTU Champions Leagues & national club leagues competitions) with the WTT Hub & events
- WR issues

Given the technical nature of the discussions held during that meeting, Mr Weikert, Mrs Sörling and Mr Primorac suggested to extend the working group by including an additional non-European EC member and staff members.

Mr Weikert indicated that the next meeting with the European MAs will be held on 10th February.

Mrs Sörling also proposed to schedule a pre-meeting and the working group agreed to held in on 8th February.

Following the discussions held among the EC members, it was agreed to include the EVP, Mr Maehara Masahiro and that the Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, would take part on the meeting as the support staff.

20210204-EC-01

The Executive Committee confirmed the inclusion of the EVP, Mr Maehara Masahiro in the working group dealing with the European Members concerns and the attendance of the support staff, the Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin, to the meeting.

ACTION 20210204#03	In charge: SG	Deadline: 2021-02-04
To schedule a pre-meeting on 8th February 2021.		

9.3 Nomination Committee

Given the busy agenda this point was deferred to the next EC meeting.

ACTION 20210204#04	In charge: SG	Deadline: 2021-02-15
To write to Mr Matthias Vatheuer informing him of this point being deferred to 14th March meeting.		

9.4 ITTF Tribunal update

Mr Calin thanked everyone that were involved in the establishment of the ITTF Tribunal, reminding the EC that the inauguration session of the ITTF Tribunal will be held on Monday 8th February 2021.

9.5 Anti-Doping

9.5.1 CAS decision on RUSADA

At the request of Mr Weikert, Mr Calin informed about the discussions held with WADA representatives regarding the CAS decision on RUSADA, confirming that the process followed by the ITTF was done in a proper manner. As part of the background checks, the ITTF will forward to WADA the names of the Russian athletes, coaches and officials involved in ITTF activities to ensure compliance with the CAS decision.

9.5.2 Agreements with players, coaches (WTT & ITTF events)

Mr Weikert indicated that from a legal perspective, the players and coaches participating in WTT & ITTF events must be bound to the ITTF Regulations through an official agreement.

Mr Calin informed that a draft of the document prepared by the Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah, was already sent to ITA for approval and, following its confirmation, will be distributed to all the players with the objective to have it signed before the 2021 WTT Hub in Doha.

Mr Primorac requested to share this document with the Athletes Commission.

ACTION 20210204#05	In charge: Competition Department	Deadline: 2021-02-25
To share with the Athletes Commission the Condition of Participation form.		

9.6 ITTF 2021 AGM

Mr Weikert reminded that as per the new ITTF Constitution, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) can now be held independently from the World Championships (WTTC). As 2021 was a special year it was important for the EC to discuss this point under point 10.1 WTTC update and determine what was the best solution.

9.7 Equipment: Coloured lines on black tables

The Secretary General referred to the ITTF Handbook art. 3.1.2.2 to explain the EC power to authorise the organiser of an open tournament to adopt temporary law variations. On behalf of the Equipment Department, Mr Calin, asked the EC to authorise the use of different colours (other than white) for the lines on the tables used during the WTT events.

Mr Dainton informed that the tables to be used during the 2021 WTT ME Hub in Doha will have blue coloured lines to match the event branding if the EC grant such permission.

Mr Dainton also reported that following the WTT Macao, a survey regarding the playing conditions was sent to all the participants and no negative feedback was received so far regarding the orange lines of the tables used during the event.

The EC decided to approve the use of different colours for the lines of the tables used during the WTT events.

20210204-EC-02

The Executive Committee decided to approve the use of different colours for the lines of the table used during the WTT events.

10. Competition Program

10.1 World Championships update

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the meeting held on 3rd February between some of the EC members and senior staff together with representatives of the Harris County Houston Sports Authority (HCHSA), USA Table Tennis (USATT), and the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) to evaluate the possibility of hosting the 2021 WTTC in Houston.

Mr Weikert reminded about the cancellation letter received from the HCHSA in May 2020 and commented that following that, the contact between ITTF and the LOC was rather poor.

Mr Weikert emphasized that the general impression was positive, and that the LOC was willing and was ready to host the event in Houston between 21st and 30th November 2021.

Mr Weikert added that it's urgent to evaluate if a WTTC will be possible in Houston in 2021.

Mr Al-Mohannadi mentioned the potential difficulties to host the 2021 WTTC in USA, adding that 2021 will not be a regular year, and due to the pandemic circumstances, hosting the WTTC will require special quarantine conditions, extra financial investment and additional human resources to ensure the implementation of the COVID-19 protocols.

Mr Burton warned that COVID-19 is still a huge concern in the USA, as the number of positive cases and deaths registered in the country is still very high.

Mr Burton talked about the complexity of hosting both events (World Championships and AGM) in the same location, with the involvement of a large group of participants. In terms of logistics, he considered that there were real advantages in having a separation between the AGM and the WTTC, held in two different locations and with the involvement of two different groups of people.

Mr Burton also informed that another main concern raised during the discussions with HCHSA was the significant reduction of the financial budget allocated to the event.

Dr Meshref echoed Mr Burton, outlining that at this moment nobody can predict the evolution of the pandemic, and the huge number of deaths reported in the USA at the moment is a big reason of concern.

Dr Meshref also highlighted the potential travel restrictions to and from USA, especially during the pandemic, which may cause problems for some countries. In his opinion, it would be preferable to separate the AGM and WTTC and try to find a safer solution to host the AGM in a more central and accessible location, like for example, Singapore.

Being in a similar position, as former LOC of the 2020 WTTC edition which was eventually cancelled, the IOC Member, Mr Ryu Seungmin, understood the will and the passion of HCHSA to host the WTTC in 2021 however, given the tight timelines, especially in an Olympic Year, it was important to receive a detailed plan as soon as possible.

With reference to the Tokyo 2020 Playbooks, Mr Calin explained that the more it is understood about the protocol and procedures around major events, the clearer it is in his opinion that the ITTF should have one team focusing on the WTTC and another team focusing on the AGM. Mr Calin suggested to open a tender process to determine the dates and locations of the AGM, separately from the WTTC.

On behalf of the athletes, Mr Primorac, urged the EC not to cancel the WTTC and asked to do everything possible to deliver the WTTC in 2021. Following the cancellation of the 2020 WTTC, Mr Primorac thought it is imperative to host the 2021 edition.

Mr Dainton ensured that the 2021 WTTC is one of the highest priorities of the year and that the ITTF was working hard to make it happen. In relation to Houston, Mr Dainton emphasized that HCHSA showed interest and are willing to host the 2021 WTTC in Houston, however, there were several concerns as they have presented a reduced budget and different hosting conditions/playing venue than initially planned.

Mr Dainton indicated that it was necessary to determine the next steps and discuss the detailed plans in relation to COVID-19 protocols, budget, hosting conditions and expectations for the event, and to give HSHCA a tight deadline to confirm if they are able deliver the WTTC according to ITTF's requirements. Mr Dainton stated that if that was not possible, the ITTF should urgently look for other solutions as part of the contingency plan.

In terms of visa procedures, Mr Weikert reported that the USOPC Representative, Mr Dragomir Cioroslan, confirmed that the law passed by the new POTUS' Administration will facilitate the issuance of visas. Mr Cioroslan also informed that the USA already hosted several international events with participants proceeding from more than 150 countries.

In terms of next steps, Mr Weikert suggested to organise a meeting to discuss with HCHSA if they can manage and deliver the WTTC and evaluate if there was possible to deliver an AGM despite EC's concerns.

Mrs Sörling felt that the EC prefers to separate the WTTC and AGM and held them in different locations, hence it was important how that option was presented to USA.

The EC agreed to form a working group together with the President, Deputy President, AC Chair, the CEO and SG to discuss with HCHSA and evaluate the feasibility of 2021 WTTC in Houston.

A further decision regarding 2021 WTTC to be taken in Doha.

ACTION 20210204#06	In charge: CEO	Deadline: 2021-02-28
To form a working group to discuss with HCHSA		

10.2 Olympic and Paralympic Games Qualifications update

Mr Gabor Felegyi updated the EC on the Olympic Games qualification indicating that:

- ITTF Oceania was unable to host the Continental Olympic qualifications event before the deadline 30th April and confirmed that the remaining quotas will be qualified through the WR (first week of April WR list)
- ETTU postponed the Continental Olympic qualification event from February to April 2021
- At the request of ATTU, the dates and schedule of the Asian Olympic qualifications in Doha were swapped with the dates of World Olympic qualification

In regard to the World Olympic Qualification event, Mr Felegyi reported that a few countries missed the preliminary entries deadline and according to the regulations they are not eligible to register for the final entries.

Mr Felegyi explained that due to COVID-19 regulations in their countries, none of them were able to receive government approval before the deadline and requested an extraordinary permission to enter the event.

Given the special circumstances caused by COVID-19, Mr Felegyi believed that the ITTF should be flexible and asked the EC to make an exception and set a new deadline that will allow the nominated players proceeding from these four countries to register in the event.

Mr Burton was in favour of making an exception and give those players the chance to enter the competition.

Mr Primorac was in agreement with Mr Burton and Mr Felegyi, that in these special circumstances ITTF should allow the late registration and give everyone a chance to play the qualification event and allow them to fulfil their dream to become an Olympian.

20210204-EC-03

The Executive Committee, on the recommendation of the Competition Director and the Athletes Commission, and in light of the COVID-19 situation, decided to exceptionally accept the entries from the Associations which missed the deadline for the World Singles Qualification Event in Doha, as it was not the fault of the athletes but of their Associations.

Mrs Sörling updated the EC on the Paralympic Games qualification system and the discussions held with the ITTF Para Committee, adding that it was decided to host the World Qualification Tournament for the Paralympic Games in Lasko, Slovenia at the latest possible date (June 2021).

Although confident that the event can be delivered in Slovenia, in case of cancellation, the Paralympic Qualification will be done through the WR as the last resort.

10.3 2024 WTTC Bid

Mr Felegyi updated the EC on the work done by the Competition Department in regard to the 2024 WTTC bidding procedure, informing that all the documents will be finalised, and the bidding process will be ready to be open by the end of February.

Mr Calin complemented that as per the request of the world ranking working group, it was necessary to determine the minimum prize money awarded at the WTTC, and include such amount in the bidding documents for further discussions with the potential host countries / MAs / entities.

Based on the discussions with the AC Chair and preliminary calculations of the prize money distribution, anything less than USD 2 million will not be substantial.

Mr Primorac recommended to take into consideration a reasonable amount and not to create an extra burden for those LOC that are interested to host the WTTC.

The SG together with the AC Chair will schedule a meeting to determine the minimum amount for the prize money awarded at the WTTC.

ACTION 20210204#07	In charge: SG & AC Chair	Deadline: 2021-02-28
To determine a minimum amount prize money awarded at WTTC.		

11. **Olympic and Paralympic Games**

Mr Weikert updated the EC on the meeting held with the IOC regarding the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, reporting that overall, the message sent throughout the meeting was very positive and the IOC President was confident that the Olympic Games will go ahead as planned.

Mr Weikert informed that the Tokyo 2020 Playbooks are now available and will be distributed to the Executive Committee members.

Mr Calin emphasized that based on the work done on this documentation, to establish the rules and the protocols, there was no doubt that the IOC was trying everything possible to deliver the Olympic Games in a safe manner.

Mr Primorac asked for more information about the participation conditions of the ITTF Officials at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

According to the tradition, Mr Calin indicated that each ITTF EC member will be granted one Accreditation plus one Accompany person accreditation. However, Mr Calin recommended to

read the Tokyo 2020 Playbook as the conditions will not be like in previous Games, due to the pandemic.

ACTION 20210204#08	In charge: SG	Deadline: 2021-03-14
To distribute the Tokyo 2020 Playbook to the EC.		

ACTION 20210204#09	In charge: Management	Deadline: 2021-03-14
To re-circulate the information about accreditation system for Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games		

12. ITTF Foundation

12.1 Table Tennis United

The ITTF Foundation Director, Mr Leandro Olvech, updated the EC on the Table Tennis United Campaign, managed by the ITTF Foundation.

Mr Olvech gave a brief overview of the countries that applied for financial support in 2020 and 2021 listing the MAs that received support through the campaign:

- In kind support: Australia, Korea DPR.
- Financial support: Senegal, Lebanon.
- In kind and financial support: Kosovo, Tahiti.
- Current applicants under consideration: Croatia, Bhutan.

Mr Olvech presented a financial overview of the available funds for future support, informing that all the applications are being processed by a selection panel composed by members of the ITTF Foundation, the ITTF and WTT.

12.2 Ping Pong Diplomacy 50th Anniversary Celebration

Although initially part of the ITTF's Foundation portfolio, Mr Olvech indicated that during the ITTF Foundation's Board meeting it was agreed that the 50th Anniversary of the Ping Pong Diplomacy was one of ITTF's key objectives in 2021 and therefore should be celebrated across all entities within the ITTF Group.

Mr Olvech mentioned that the original plan was to celebrate this milestone in ITTFs history during the 2021 WTTTC in Houston. However, due to the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was important to open the discussion and encouraged everyone to share their ideas.

Mr Calin emphasized that the 50th Anniversary of the Ping Pong Diplomacy should be an initiative across the entire ITTF Group and reminded that the project was already initiated by both LOCs of 2021 WTTTC in Houston and 2022 WTTTC in Chengdu, which are actually also the two cities which consulates were recently closed due to the political tensions between USA and China.

Although the ITTF Foundation should be involved in this project, Mr Dainton considered that it was important to form a working group led by an EC member, and recommended Mr James Morris as a former player that participated in the original Ping Pong Diplomacy.

Mr Olvech recommended to involve HRH Princess Zeina Rashid in the working group as she was very keen to cooperate especially as Ping Pong Diplomacy was part of her portfolio.

20210204-EC-04

The Executive Committee decided to establish a working group to work on the 50th Anniversary of the Ping Pong Diplomacy including Mr James Morris as the EC representative and HRH Princess Zeina Rashid as ITTF Foundation Board Member.

13. Any other business

Mrs Sörling proposed to include in the Agenda of the next EC Meeting a point regarding "ITTF Equipment approval scheme".

14. Next EC Meeting

The next EC meeting to be held on Wednesday 17th February.

15. Adjournment

Without further points on the agenda, the Executive Committee Meeting was adjourned at 14:10 pm (CET time).

Thomas Weikert
ITTF President

Date

Raul Calin
ITTF Secretary General

Date