

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Video Conference (via Zoom ®)
Saturday 29th January 2022 – 12h00 to 15h00 CET

MINUTES

EC members in attendance:

SÖRLING Petra	ITTF President
AL-MOHANNADI Khalil	Executive Vice-President
AZEVEDO Alaor	Executive Vice-President
LIU Guoliang	Executive Vice-President
MAEHARA Masahiro	Executive Vice-President
MESHREF Alaa	Executive Vice-President
NATRAN Roland	Executive Vice-President
OSHODI Wahid	Executive Vice-President
SYMONS Graham	Executive Vice-President
PRIMORAC Zoran	Athletes Commission (AC) Chair
RYU Seung-Min	IOC Member

Staff in attendance:

DAINTON Steve	ITTF Group CEO
CALIN Raul	ITTF Secretary General

Invited staff (in order of intervention):

BROWN Michael	ITTF Group CFO (sections 5.1 and 8)
LOURDES Charlotte	ITTF Group HR Manager (section 5.2)
LAVIER Tristan	ITTF Group Head of Communications (sections 5.3)
FELEGYI Gabor	ITTF Competitions Director (section 7)
POUND Matt	WTT Director (sections 8)
CEHOVIN Polona	ITTF HPD & Education Director (section 9)
OLVECH Leandro	ITTF Foundation Director (section 10)

1. Welcome and Opening

1.1. President's opening remarks

Ms SÖRLING welcomed the EC members in attendance thanking them for their motivation to assist the ITTF in this new cycle and congratulating those celebrating the Lunar New Year.

Ms SÖRLING updated the EC members on the different meetings held in previous weeks with members of the Senior Management and of the Para Table Tennis Committee.

1.2. Roll Call

The meeting started with all EC members present except Mr Khalil AL-MOHANNADI, who joined a few minutes later due to travel reasons, and Mr LIU Guoliang, who indicated will be joining the meeting at 13:30 CET.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted after inclusion of the matter of the ITTF Tribunal case in 2021 and the addition of a point on the ITTF President Honorarium.

3. Minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting

- 3.1. Approval of the Minutes from the last meeting
The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th November 2021 were approved.
It was agreed that the Minutes of the Meetings held from 1st August until 22nd November will be circulated for revision and further approval, as this was still pending, and only the decisions were published.
- 3.2. Business arising from the Minutes
No further business not included in the current Agenda were reported.

4. CEO Report / Strategic Plan (SP)

The EC noted the update report presented by Mr DAINTON, which included references to the World Championships Finals held in Houston in November 2021, marked by the unfortunate absence of Mr Al-Mohannadi, and the WTT Cup Finals held in Singapore in December 2021. Mr DAINTON reflected on the postponement of the World Championships to be held in Chengdu 2022 due to the Omicron variant of COVID-19 and the impact in the 2022 sport calendar. Mr DAINTON and Ms SÖRLING reported about the positive meetings held in Sweden and the necessity to review the SP, to better incorporate the new ITTF entities, such the ITTF Foundation and World Table Tennis (WTT). Ms SÖRLING indicated, in addition to Mr DAINTON report, that staff structure is a key aspect to work on in the coming weeks.

5. Operations

- 5.1. Finances
The EC noted the report of the CFO, Mr Michael BROWN, on the World Championships financial aspects.
Mr BROWN indicated that at the time of the presentation, the ITTF had already received from the IOC 90% of the expected contribution for Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.
In relation to the ITTF Foundation, the EC noted that the 2021 audit work was also being finalised and that the WTT finances would be presented in the section 8 of the agenda.
On a question from Ms SÖRLING, Mr BROWN indicated that the full consolidated audit for 2021 will be hopefully available end of Q1, and that the budget for 2022 would be ready in the coming weeks.
Mr DAINTON added that the postponement of the WTT Finals in Chengdu likely means a more cautious approach is needed for budgeting, hoping the WTT Finals can be solved in the upcoming weeks, in which case a more buoyant position can be taken once again.
- 5.2. HR and Sustainability
Following a brief introduction of herself, being the first time addressing the EC, Ms Charlotte LOURDES, ITTF Group HR Manager since October 2020, introduced the chart of the future ITTF Group staff structure.
The EC noted the work being done about the future staff structure, which should be aligned with the needs of the ITTF strategic direction and also, the discussions about the correct placement of High Performance in the chart, which is still being studied.
On a question from Mr RYU about who would best assist the Athletes from the staff, Ms SÖRLING suggested all areas should be serving them.
It was agreed that the ITTF Secretary General, Raul CALIN, will return to Lausanne, to have better presence in the ITTF Headquarters.
Mr DAINTON suggested that work is in progress to finalise not only the incorporation of some staff linking WTT with the Athletes, but also having some proper voice of the Athletes on the governance of WTT.

On a question from Mr AL-MOHANNADI about the Competition Manager function, Mr DAINTON explained that in the new structure, Event Supervisors will handle the table tennis aspects of the work previously done by the Competition Managers.

5.3. Communications and Protocol

The EC noted the presentation from Mr Tristan LAVIER, ITTF Group Head of Communications since October 2021, including references to the different missions and objectives of each of the three ITTF entities, and how the synergies between their communication teams can better serve the ITTF Group and the overall image of the sport of Table Tennis.

6. Athletes

6.1. Athletes Commission (**AC**) Report

The EC noted the AC report presented by Mr PRIMORAC, who thanked the EC colleagues for their support to the propositions passed at the ITTF AGM to, 1) have two athletes of different genders on the EC, and 2), to adopt the IOC Athletes Declaration.

The EC also noted the letter received from the AC, endorsed by athletes, in relation to the continuity of the World Cups.

Mr DAINTON referred to the study done in cooperation with Deloitte which showed that having World Cups in October and World Tour Grand Finals in December, being two very similar events, was not helping in terms of narrative, neither in marketing nor commercially, so the idea is to combine both. Mr DAINTON agreed with Ms SÖRLING's suggestion to call for discussions between the mentioned parties as soon as possible.

6.2. Athletes Commission elections

In relation to the AC elections, Mr PRIMORAC mentioned that with less players competing at the World Championships Finals, it is important to find a proper election system, with the goal to have the athletes bringing their own voice and choosing among their peers their representatives for the next four years in the most fairly manner.

Ms SÖRLING mentioned that it will be good to work on the Terms of Reference (**ToR**) and Mr CALIN complemented indicating that the old system with appointed members should be reviewed, ensuring the AC members are elected by their peers.

6.3. Others

Ms SÖRLING proposed creating an Entourage group within the ITTF, following similar initiatives in other sports and in the IOC, for what more information will be presented in upcoming meetings.

7. Events

7.1. World Title Events

Houston 2021 WTTC Debriefing

The EC noted the verbal update of Mr DAINTON, who reported about the previous day debriefing of the LOC in Houston, attended by him and Mr CALIN.

Mr DAINTON indicated that pending of the finalisation of the WTTC Finals report, which will be presented in March EC meeting, the ticket sales aspect was one of the highlights, and the disappointment of not obtaining the VISA for Mr AL-MOHANNADI, one of the negative aspects of the event.

Ms SÖRLING added that the situation around the VISA of Mr AL-MOHANNADI should not happen ever again, neither to an athlete nor to an official.

Mr AL-MOHANNADI reminded that for 35 years he has been attending the World Championships except for this one; asking what decision the EC will take in regard to his case.

Ms SÖRLING expressed her understanding of Mr AL-MOHANNADI's feelings, agreed with Mr DAINTON that an action was needed, whether a financial or other type of sanction, and agreed with Mr AL-MOHANNADI to ask for a formal written response about the VISA denial.

7.1.1. Chengdu 2022 WTTC update

The EC noted the report of Mr DAINTON about the WTTTC Finals Chengdu 2022, which were confirmed in December 2021 to be held in April 2022, but on 18th January, the ITTF had to postpone, on the request of the CTTA and the LOC.

Several options have been considered, with the preferred dates being 30th September to 9th October 2022.

Mr DAINTON suggested it will be important to count on the support of CTTA and Mr LIU Guoliang and mentioned that he had pre-checked the dates with Ms SÖRLING and Mr PRIMORAC, and they found them reasonable in principle.

Mr PRIMORAC confirmed the proposed dates could work and hoped for a successful event in Chengdu.

7.1.2. Others

The EC considered that with the postponement of the WTTTC Finals 2022, the timelines for the application for the WTTTC Finals 2025 should be reconsidered.

7.2. Olympic & Paralympic Games

The EC noted that the Qualification System (QS) for Paris 2024 will be discussed under 11.3.4 and that the Table Tennis Sport Manager will start his work on 31st January 2022.

7.3. World Ranking

The EC received the presentation and report of the Mr Gabor FELEGYI about the proposed updates on the World Ranking system, due to the number of events being lower than expected because of the pandemic.

The EC noted that the AC was consulted in the process.

After consideration the background and rationale, the Executive Committee agreed to the proposals presented.

20220129-EC-01

The Executive Committee decided to extend the validity of 2021 events for four (4) months (lasting 16 months instead of 12) and review the situation on 1st May 2022 due to the uncertainty of the upcoming events.

20220129-EC-02

The Executive Committee decided to reduce the initial points from 50% to 20% and release an updated calendar of deductions by 1st of May, with immediate effect.

20220129-EC-03

The Executive Committee decided to award points for the WTT Feeder Series according to the following Table:

	FORMAT	W	F	SF	QF	R16	R32	R64	QUAL	QR4 / Groups 3 rd Last	QR3	QR2 / Groups 2 nd Last	QR1 / Groups Last
Singles	MD 32	150	105	55	30	15	2		8	6	3	2	1
	MD 48/64	150	105	55	30	15	8	2	8	6	3	2	1
Doubles		150	105	50	30	2			8			4	1

The EC noted the report from Mr CALIN about the proposed updates on the Para Table Tennis World Rankings as presented by the Competition Department, following the agreement made by the Para Table Tennis Committee Chair, Ranking Manager, Para Table Tennis Manager and Para Athletes.

20220129-EC-04

The Executive Committee agreed to the proposed updates on the Para Table Tennis World Rankings as received from the working group.

Dr MESHREF asked in relation to the different systems utilised for World Rankings and Para World Rankings, and if it will be possible finding harmony in their concepts as, otherwise, it is difficult to follow for the Media.

Mr CALIN confirmed that indeed, one of the reasons of the work started in the SP for Para Table Tennis is to ensure the narrative of the sport is better, and hopefully the Para World Rankings will be also aligned with the general philosophy of the ITTF World Rankings.

8. World Table Tennis Update

The EC noted the report of Mr Matt POUND, which included updates on the calendar, on the commercial agreements made since the last EC meeting and on the meeting with players held on 6th January 2022, which counted with the participation of Mr PRIMORAC.

Mr POUND reported also on the incorporation of Ms AI Fukuhara as WTT Japan General Manager. The EC discussed the upcoming review of the WTT Governance and targeted the upcoming physical EC meeting in Singapore as a perfect opportunity for on-boarding on WTT matters.

The EC noted the presentations of Mr POUND and Mr BROWN on the WTT finances, the result of 2021, and the work done with external consultants on the valuation of WTT, as an important tool to search for third party investors.

The EC noted the different models of potential growth were presented.

Mr DANTON explained that with the pandemic and the internal political situation within the ITTF in 2021, the investment plans from QG Sports were slowed down, adding that with the Beijing 2022 Olympic Games starting soon it is not easy to coordinate meetings for the time being.

The EC agreed to entrust Mr DANTON to visit China with the goal to have confirmed the investment plan for the EC meeting in March.

9. Development

The EC noted the presentation from Ms Polona CEHOVIN on Development, which included a review of 2021 HPD programs and a preview of 2022.

In terms of 2021 review, the EC noted the launch of the participation programme, the revised "Hopes around the clock" programme, the scholarships programme, the Continental Programmes, and equipment packages distributions preparations. Ms CEHOVIN added that around 10,000 participants were reached through the Development activities.

Speaking about 2022 and the future, Ms CEHOVIN touched on the support to continental training centres, the concept of training bases, and three rotating initiatives for the period 2022-2024 in terms of Participation: MA Activity, MA National Project & MA On-line Service.

In terms of Continental activities, the EC noted, the increased support for Para Table Tennis development activities.

Ms Cehovin explained on "Quick Pathways", a new programme introduced in 2021 as a pilot project in South Africa, linked to Durban 2023 WTTC.

In terms of Education, the EC noted the "Education Matrix" with all the services offered, which will also include education about Events Organisation.

Training Solutions opportunities were also presented as well as the new Athlete Development Model, much more comprehensive in 2022.

Ms CEHOVIN welcomed the Feeder Tour, as an opportunity for those departing the youth ages categories and trying to venture in the professional table tennis.

10. ITTF Foundation Update

Not having urgent matters to deal with since the last presentation in Houston, it was agreed to defer this update to the next EC meeting to be held in March.

11. Governance Update

11.1. Continental Council

Mr CALIN reported that following the Continental Council meeting held on 16th January, and with the feedback received from the continental associations, four options for the WTTTC Chengdu 2022 and two options for the WPTTC Granada 2022 will be circulated to the Continental Council for analysis and vote, so the final decision can be communicated to the Member Associations.

11.2. Appointment of Commissioners

The EC received the proposition to renew the current Commissioners for another term, what was agreed unanimously.

20220129-EC-05

The Executive Committee appointed Hajera KAJEE (RSA) as Gender Commissioner for the period 2021-2025.

20220129-EC-06

The Executive Committee appointed Heike AHLERT (GER) as Junior Commissioner for the period 2021-2025.

20220129-EC-07

The Executive Committee appointed Graeme IRELAND (AUS) as Technical Commissioner for the period 2021-2025.

11.3. Working Groups Update

As per the mandate given by the AGM and the BoD, four Working Groups (**WG**) were agreed to be formed, as follows.

11.3.1. Governance Review

20220129-EC-08

The Executive Committee agreed for the Governance Review Working Group to be composed as follows:

Petra SÖRLING (President), Wahid OSHODI (EC member in charge of Governance, who will act as chair of the WG), Heike AHLERT (BoD), Rudi SPORRER (Rules Committee Chair), Graeme IRELAND (Technical Commissioner), Steve DAINTON (CEO), Raul CALIN (Secretary General) one member of the Athletes Commission (TBD) and one staff from the Legal area.

11.3.2. Time Between Points

20220129-EC-09

The Executive Committee agreed for the Time Between Points Working Group to be composed as follows:

MAEHARA Masahiro (EC member who will act as chair of the WG), Graeme IRELAND (Technical Commissioner), two members of the Athletes Commission (with one being a Para Athlete), one member of the URC, one member of the Rules Committee, one staff with experience in competition matters and one staff with experience in media matters.

11.3.3. World Ranking

20220129-EC-10

The Executive Committee agreed for the World Ranking Working Group to be composed as follows: Wahid OSHODI (EC member in charge of WR, who will act as chair of the WG), Graeme IRELAND (Technical Commissioner), two members of the Athletes Commission (with one being a Para Athlete), three ranking experts - representatives from Member Associations / Continental Federations (with

both genders represented among the three persons), Matt POUND (staff with experience in commercial matters) and Javier ANGULO (staff with experience in ranking/IT matters).

11.3.4. Olympic and Paralympic Games

20220129-EC-11

The Executive Committee agreed for the OG and PG QS Working Group to be composed as follows: RYU Seung-Min (EC member in charge of OG, who will act as chair of the WG), one Continental President, Graeme IRELAND (Technical Commissioner), two members of the Athletes Commission (with one being a Para Athlete), Raul CALIN (Secretary General), Matt POUND (staff with experience in commercial/media matters and Vicky ELEFTHERIADE (staff with experience in competitions).

11.4. One Hundred Years

Mr AL-MOHANNADI suggested a visit to London to meet Table Tennis England and work on the concept of what could be One Hundred Years celebration, ideally preparing a report to be presented to the EC in September.

Mr AL-MOHANNADI mentioned his request in 2020 to the EC to open a special bank account for the One Hundred Years celebration, what will be followed-up in the next EC meeting.

11.5. Others

Dr MESHREF referred to the existing Legal Working Group on the DTTB letter asking if the composition should remain the same.

20220129-EC-12

The EC agreed for the Legal Working Group on the DTTB letter to remain the same.

Mr DAINTON added that the following day a meeting will be held with the new DTTB President, Ms Claudia HERWEG, hoping for a prompt resolution of the case.

11.5.1. EC members onboarding

The following portfolios were assigned to each of the EC members:

Petra SÖRLING

Strategic Plan, HR, Sustainability, Olympic and Paralympic Games (together with RYU Seung-Min), Academies, External Relations, Member Relations, Diversity (Gender, Universality).

Khalil AL-MOHANNADI

Continental Council, Events, World Championships

Alaor AZEVEDO

Health, Innovation, Para Table Tennis

LIU Guoliang

Commercial (WTT), High Performance, ITTF Museum

MAEHARA Masahiro

Entourage, Home of Table Tennis, Sport Science

Alaa MESHREF

Athletes (together with Zoran PRIMORAC), Development, IT & Digitalisation

Roland NATRAN

Finance, Veterans

Wahid OSHODI

Communications & Protocol, Governance, World Ranking

Graham SYMONS

Clean Sport/Integrity, Equipment, Sport for All

Zoran PRIMORAC

Athletes Commission (together with MESHREF Alaa)

RYU Seung-Min

Olympic and Paralympic Games (together with SÖRLING Petra)

Mr CALIN confirmed that the onboarding sessions for the EC will be held in mid-February (between 15th and 18th February).

11.5.2. Terms of Reference for Committees

The EC noted that the Terms of Reference of the Committees have not been reviewed in recent years, and it is necessary to do it, to ensure their objectives are aligned with those of the ITTF Strategic Plan.

12. IOC Member Report

Ms SÖRLING indicated this will be a new and permanent point in the EC agenda as the ITTF has the privilege to have one of its members being also an IOC Member.

Mr RYU thanked Ms SÖRLING for the initiative and mentioned that since his election as member in 2016, he has been working hard to represent the sport of Table Tennis.

The EC noted that Mr RYU is member of the following Commissions and Working Groups within the IOC: Sustainability and Legacy Commission, Education Commission, LA28 Coordination Commission, Olympic Programme Commission, Olympic Broadcasting, and IOC AC Strategy Working Group.

In addition, Mr RYU has been appointed as Chair of the AC Athlete365 Career+ Steering Committee, and is also Academic Advisory Board member of the IOC Certificate: Safeguarding in Sport.

Mr RYU mentioned that with his term as IOC Member finishing in 2024 (as Athletes Commission Member), it will be important for the ITTF to encourage and support table tennis players who are interested in the IOC membership, to ensure that our sport can continue having a member in the IOC AC following Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

In addition, Mr RYU encouraged Ms SÖRLING, as ITTF President, to consider seeking the IOC membership, adding that it is important for table tennis to try to have as many as many voices as possible within the Olympic Movement.

The EC noted the report of Mr RYU who expressed his desire to work hard together with the AC Chair, Mr PRIMORAC to make a better athletes' community, with enhancing athletes rights, declaration, and well-being.

Ms SÖRLING thanked Mr RYU for his report and for all the work he is doing for table tennis and agreed it will be important to support any table tennis players willing to become IOC AC members in Paris 2024.

The EC noted the ongoing preparations for the Beijing 2022 Olympic Games and wished Mr RYU success in his functions while at the Games.

13. Other Business

13.1. Tribunal case of 2021 (Tribunal fees)

The EC noted the report from Mr CALIN about the Tribunal case "*ITTF 2021-1 – Thomas Weikert v. ITTF Executive Committee members*", summarized as follows:

- 13.1.1. On 22nd March 2021, Mr Thomas WEIKERT, who was at that time the ITTF President, presented a [Claim](#) to the ITTF Tribunal against the decision taken by the EC on 20th March 2021 to reinstate Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi as the ITTF Deputy President (hereinafter referred to as the "Challenged Decision"). The respondents to the Challenged Decision were nine (9) of Mr WEIKERT's colleagues on the EC (all at that time, except Mr PRIMORAC) (for the purposes of this Clause 13.1, referred to as the "Respondents").
- 13.1.2. On 19th May 2021, as per the "[Termination Order](#)" the ITTF Tribunal considered the Claim presented by Mr WEIKERT (for the purposes of this Clause 13.1, referred to as the "Claimant") withdrawn due to the Claimant not having filed any submission within the prescribed deadline.
- 13.1.3. The EC took, among others, the following decisions on 16th September 2021:
- 13.1.4. **20210916-EC-02**

The Executive Committee unanimously decided to reimburse the expenses resulted from the legal fees incurred by Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi to defend his honour and reputation against accusation made by other parties.

13.1.5. **20210916-EC-03**

The Executive Committee unanimously decided not to reimburse the expenses resulted from the legal fees incurred by Mr Thomas Weikert since Mr Weikert acted in a unilateral manner, without the consensus of the EC.

13.1.6. On 7th December 2021, the ITTF Tribunal issued the "[Order on Costs](#)" on the case of reference, attributing to the Claimant 64% of the costs, and attributing to each of the Respondents 4% of the costs.

13.1.7. Subsequently, Mr WEIKERT contacted Ms SÖRLING, asking the ITTF to cover his portion of the costs, what Ms SÖRLING shares with the EC for their consideration and eventual decision at this EC meeting. Ms SÖRLING added that Mr WEIKERT indicated to her in his communication that -in his opinion- he did this Claim in his capacity as ITTF President.

13.1.8. Mr CALIN reported, for EC awareness, that a 1000 USD administrative fee to the ITTF is a requisite to put forward a claim to the Tribunal if the claimant is not the ITTF Integrity Unit or the ITTF itself ("Administrative Fee") (ITTF Handbook 8.24.2), and confirmed that the Mr WEIKERT did make a bank transfer to the ITTF for the Administrative Fee.

Following the summary of the facts presented, the EC decided to cover the cost of the Respondents, but not the cost of the Claimant.

20220129-EC-13

The EC agreed, in relation to the "Order of Costs" issued by the ITTF Tribunal on 7th December 2021 on the case "ITTF 2021-1 – Thomas Weikert v. ITTF Executive Committee members" to cover the cost of the Respondents but not the cost of the Claimant.

13.2. ITTF President Honorarium

At this point of the agenda, Ms SÖRLING did leave the meeting, to allow her EC colleagues to discuss freely, thanking everyone for their active participation.

Mr AL-MOHANNADI explained that at the EC meeting held in Delhi in January 2020, he did already express that the next ITTF President should be a full-time position. With the former President, Mr WEIKERT, being considered to work half time, with an honorarium of 8,000 EUR/month, Mr AL-MOHANNADI suggested that the full-time position of ITTF President should be compensated with an honorarium of 15,000 EUR/month.

Mr NATRAN thanked Mr AL-MOHANNADI for his proposal, highlighting that the full-time attention of the ITTF President is very important and agreed in full with Mr AL-MOHANNADI's proposal.

Mr DAINTON added that the last four years' history of the ITTF proved that having a part time President is not the best way of operating, hoping that with a full time President, that person can take more responsibilities, particularly in the area of politics, what will be beneficial for the staff, that in the past had to step on that area due to the part time situation of the President.

Mr PRIMORAC stated he fully agreed with the proposal.

20220129-EC-14

The Executive Committee agreed that starting 1st January 2022 the ITTF President should be a full-time position, with an honorarium of 15,000 EUR/month.

14. Next Meetings

The next EC meeting will be held on 15th and 16th March 2022 in Singapore.

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 15h30 CET.

Petra SÖRLING
ITTF President

Date

Raul CALIN
ITTF Secretary General

Date