



THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Sanya, 12<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dear Friends,

Last year in our meeting in Bali we had to sadly remind that the WBF had suffered two great losses in the passing of both Jaime Ortiz-Patiño, former President and President Emeritus for many years and also of Joan Gerard who had been a member of the Executive Council for many years and was one of the most loyal and hard workers in the bridge world.

Today, unfortunately again, we have to remember and commemorate two other great friends who sadly passed away.

Just before Christmas, Jean-Louis Derivery left us. He was with us in Bali and although we all knew he was seriously ill and his condition obliged him to go home early, nobody could think of such an imminent fatal event.

This year started very sadly. In January Jens Auken, who in vain fought against the terrible disease which struck him, passed away.

Both of them were great friends, eminent and unforgettable personalities in their social life and not only in the bridge world, extraordinary persons who worked with enthusiasm, dedication and passion for the development and affirmation of our discipline and whose memory, will accompany us and all their bridge friends everywhere in the world for the rest of our lives.

In February another friend, suddenly, still at a young age, left us, Guido Ferraro from Italy, several times World and European Champion, member of various WBF Committees and brilliant Vu-graph's commentator that let us enjoy several vu-graph's shows.

To these friends and all the others who sadly passed away, we pay tribute with gratitude and fondness.

Before starting with our works, I am pleased to welcome and congratulate the new elected and the re-confirmed members of the WBF Executive Council.

Yves Aubry in Zone 1 has been re-elected as EBL President and has been reconfirmed as member of the WBF Executive Council, together with Sevinç Atay, Marc De Pauw, David Harris and Radek Kielbasinski.

Merlin Vilhauer in Zone 2 and Sheena Rayner in Zone 5 have been elected and for their first time attend the meeting of the Executive Council, while Ernesto d'Orsi in Zone 3 and Chen Zelan and Patrick Choy in Zone 6 have been re-confirmed.

Welcome and congratulation to all of you.

The last meeting of the Executive Council was held in Bali and in this occasion we deduced the first conclusions about the World Championship. I had already the occasion to report, together with Ernesto and Marc about this event in the following Officers and Management Committee Meetings (you have in your folder the minutes of these meetings, which will be examined and ratified later), but I am pleased to shortly come back once again to the item.

Marc will report to you later all the financial data, while I want to underline and remark the excellence of the organization, management, welcome and hospitality, which made this event one of the best in the history of the World Championships, receiving the appreciations, congratulations and thanks from all the participants. The championship was really an outstanding success.

After Bali, from 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> October I was in Beijing, whit Zelan and Patrick, invited by the CCBA to attend the Hua Yuan Cup. During our stay we had several meetings with the representatives of CCBA and Ourgame to discuss the arrangements for the World Bridge Series that we are celebrating just in these days. We met the CCBA President Mr. Xiang Huaincheng and we took the occasion to visit the Ourgame Headquarters: a very impressive building which hosts more than 600 employees, for the majority engineers.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> of October I was in Monaco, invited by Jean-Charles Allavena for the Cavendish. José also was there and we had the opportunity to talk about various items.

The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> November I was in Destelbergen, kindly hosted by Marc and Brenda, to examine the 2013 accounts.

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November I was in Lausanne for the International Sport Federations Annual Forum and I met the SportAccord President Marius Vizer and the ARISF President Raffaele Chiulli. I met also our lawyer Maitre Nicolas Gillard, talking with him about the inscription at the Registre of Commerce, the Charity Foundation and the amendments that we have to make at our Constitution and By-Laws to be on line with the IOC Principles. Of course I spent some hours in our Office with Carol and Fotis discussing and planning the activity.

The 9<sup>th</sup> I was in Napoli for the International Tournament entitled to Eugenio Chiaradia: I met several old Italian champions and in particular Pietro Forquet, who despite his 88 years is still playing an excellent bridge. The 13<sup>th</sup> I was in Roma to attend in my position of International President the meeting of the National Council of CONI.

From Roma I went directly to Opatija, where from 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>, kindly invited by Yves, I attended the European Champions Cup and a meeting of the EBL Board. I want to congratulate Yves for this top level competition very well organized and in particular I was impressed by the fact that for the first time in the history a bridge competition has been opened personally by the President of the Republic of the host country, in the specific Croatia. Considering the number of Media attracted by the President, for bridge was a tremendous scoop.

From 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> November I was in Phoenix, in the occasion of the ACBL Fall National, where I met the new ACBL President, Ms Phyllis Harlan, the CEO Robert Hartman, Bruce, Merlin and Paul. I met also Nader Hanna, President of the Canadian Federation and George Jacobs, President of the USBF. With Al and Georgia we discussed in depth about our (it's understood not personal) matters, and with Jeff we examined the situation concerning the German Case in Bali.

The 5<sup>th</sup> of December with Marc, Maurizio Di Sacco and Marina, taking advantage of the immediately following Officers Meeting and SAMG in Beijing, we went to Sanya to meet the representatives of CCBA, Ourgame and the local Authorities and to visit the venue and the hotels.

The 6<sup>th</sup> we flew to Beijing where, from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, the Officers Meeting was held, kindly hosted by the CCBA, followed from 10<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> by the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the SportAccord Mind Games.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> January I was in Istanbul, where I met Sevinç and Ata Aydın for a briefing about the organization of the next World Youth Teams Championship. I will report later about the event, but since now I want to express my gratitude to Sevinç who raised a generous 63.000 € sponsorship, which enables us to host the kids in the first edition of this special championship and to subsidize other small Federations.

On 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January I met in Milano Dirk De Clercq, who provided with Marina the inventory of the WBF equipment.

On 25<sup>th</sup> January together with Yves and David I attended the funeral of Jens Auken in Copenhagen. The WBF provided a wreath.

From 30<sup>th</sup> January to 2<sup>nd</sup> February, invited by Yves, I attended the EBL Officers Seminar in Berlin where I reported on the WBF activity and plans. I am aware in general of the importance of this biannual meeting for the European affiliated Federations, having introduced it since my election at the EBL Presidency, but I have to congratulate Yves and the EBL for the fantastic success of this year, with a record of 34 represented NBOs and about a hundred participants.

In Berlin we achieved another important goal signing with Radek Kielbasinski, in his position of President of the Polish Bridge Union, the contract for the organization of the World Bridge Games 2016 in Poland, in Warsaw or in Wrocław. We will come back to the item later discussing the specific point in Agenda, but since now I want to thank Radek and the Polish Bridge Union.

From 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> February with Marc, Mazhar and Maurizio Di Sacco we visited Chennai and Goa in India, the proposed venues for the 2015 World Teams Championship. We met Kirubakara Moorthy, President of the India Federation and the local organizers, discussing in depth the requirements and needs of such an event.

On 21<sup>st</sup> February I attended the funeral of Guido Ferraro in Torino. The WBF provided a wreath.

On 5<sup>th</sup> March I attended in Roma the CONI National Council.

The 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March I was in Destelbergen to check with Marc and Dirk De Clercq the accounts and the draft of the 2013 balance-sheet. Marc will report in depth later about the matter, but since now I want to thank him and his assistant Dirk for the excellent work done and the even more than positive result achieved.

On 10<sup>th</sup> March I went to Paris with Marc to the Headquarters of the French Federation, where we met the FFB President Patrick Grenthe and his colleagues to discuss and define the details of the contract for the organisation of the 2017 World Teams Championship in Lyon. José and Jean-Claude attended the meeting. Everything has been agreed and the contract will be signed in brief. We will come back to the item later discussing the specific point in Agenda.

The 12<sup>th</sup> of March I met the President of the Italian Federation, Gianni Medugno, who confirmed their interest in organising in the 2016 World Youth Teams Championship in Salsomaggiore, having already spoken with the Mayor of the town. Salsomaggiore, as you know, has hosted several European and World events, including the 1992 Bridge World Olympiad. I gave them all the details concerning the requirements and needs and I am confident that in brief we can sign the agreement.

From 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March I was in Lausanne at our Headquarter to work with Carol, Fotis, Anna and Marina about our general business. We have this kind of meeting all together in Lausanne twice a year and I believe that it's very profitable and constructive to manage the current activity.

Being in Lausanne, I took the occasion of course to accomplish other activities and in particular I met

- The responsible of the Maison du Sport International and representative of the City of Lausanne, M.me Sabrina Tramparulo, talking with her about our needs in the MSI and also about the new immigration law approved in Switzerland, which for the moment does not create any trouble to us.
- The FISU Director of the World University Championship, Paulo Ferreira, and his Executive Assistant, Julien Buhajezuk, to discuss the agreement FISU/WBF to be signed next month in Antalya at the SportAccord Convention, as per the other International Federations. It was a very useful and friendly meeting to focus the perspectives of the University Bridge and to reinforce the relation

between WBF and FISU. Mr. Ferreira confirmed that Geert Magerman is the FISU Technical Delegate for bridge and you can easily understand how much appreciated was this confirmation.

- Maitre Nicolas Gillard to discuss several items, including the new Swiss Immigration Law (he confirmed that for us there is no problem), our status according the Swiss Laws (I sent to you and the entire Executive Council, on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, the good news of our final incorporation), the Charity Foundation, the WBF Constitution and By-Laws, with particular regard to the situation of the Zone 2 and the position of the ACBL. We will discuss later in depth about these items.
- Mr. Vlad Marinescu, General Director of SportAccord, to discuss about the SA plans, the next SA Convention in Antalya, the 2014 SAWMG and in general the relations with the other International Sport Bodies. The meeting was very friendly and I can say that we have very strict and good relation with SA and personally with its officers, including the President Marius Vizer.

In Dallas, the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, kindly hosted by the ACBL, we had the Officers Meeting and an extraordinary session of the Management Committee for the approval of the accounts to submit to the Swiss Authorities and to approve Chennai, as venue of the 2016 World Teams Championship, after the presentation made by the Indian Federation. Contemporary to the Meeting, of course in a separate place and in closing session, there was the Hearing of the Disciplinary Commission concerning the German Case. Being in Dallas we had the occasion to meet Fred Gitelman. Being in Dallas Ernesto, John and Maurizio, we met to define the Sanya's Supplemental Conditions of Contest.

Coming back from Dallas, our activity in Milano has been dedicated to four main issues: the German Disciplinary Case, the SportAccord Convention, the Istanbul Youth Teams Championship and the Sanya World Bridge Series.

From April 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> I was in Belek, Antalya, Turkey, to attend the SportAccord Convention. Marc and Sevinç were with me. We attended the General Assembly of ARISF, the annual meeting of IMSA, attended of course by the Founder President José Damiani, the General Assembly of SportAccord and we had the opportunity to participate workshops and conferences and to have several meeting with IOC, SportAccord, ARISF Officials and other institutional operators. In

particular I met the Officers of FISU and we signed a Protocol with them. We had in addition the occasion to meet Ata Aydin and Murat Molva to discuss the organisation of the Istanbul Youth Championship.

From April 30<sup>th</sup> to May 4<sup>th</sup> I was in Lucignano, Tuscany, in occasion of the annual EBL Presidential Council meeting, hosted as usual in a superb way by our friend Filippo Palma.

The 7<sup>th</sup> of May I was in Roma to attend the National Council meeting of CONI.

From May 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> I was with Cippi in Sao Paulo, very friendly and warmly hosted by Cecilia and Ernesto. Then all together we went up to the 21<sup>st</sup> to Santiago, Chile, where I was invited to attend the annual meeting of the CSB and the Opening Ceremony of the CSB International Festival. It was an important occasion to meet the Officers of the South America NBOs, to discuss with them about their activity and to report to them about the activity, plans and programs of the WBF. It's my pleasure to congratulate Ernesto and Marcelo Caracci, President of Chile Bridge Federation, for the excellent organisation and the friendly and generous welcome and hospitality.

On 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of May I was in Lausanne to attend the meeting of the Medical & Prevention Commission to examine the new WADA Code and Rules concerning the Anti-doping, to accordingly revise, together with Françoise Dagouret from SportAccord, the WBF Anti-doping Rules & Regulations, to be approved by the Executive Council, to examine the excellent job did by the Commission with the survey, finalised to publish a booklet for the athletes.

I took the occasion to meet the 30<sup>th</sup> in Geneva the Swiss Lawyers of the USBF for the German Case and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June I met M.me Françoise Lejuste, President of the WBF Appeal Tribunal and the 4<sup>th</sup> Maitre Gillard, our Swiss Lawyer.

The 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of June I was in Roma for the Centenaire of the CONI, celebrated with various events, but above all with an impressive ceremony at the presence of the President of the Republic, attended by the IOC President Thomas Back, such an hundred representatives of the National Olympic Committees from everywhere in the world and 158 living Italian Olympic Gold Medals. It was in addition for me a very important occasion because I was invited by the CONI President, my

great friend Giovanni Malagò, to a private lunch with IOC President Tomas Back and the EOC President Patrick Hickey, attended by the Italian Representatives of IOC and some IF President, in total 20 persons. President Back told me that he does not play bridge, but he is curious about it, and of course I told him that I am ready to introduce him to the game, as soon as he wants. Never say never....

The 11<sup>th</sup> of June with Marc I flew to Jinhua, China. I have been invited to attend the Opening Ceremony of the Asian Bridge Games and the meeting of the APBF, but we took the occasion to organize two very important meetings. The first with the representatives of CCBA, led by the new elected Secretary General, Wang Xiaofeng, and Ourgame to discuss and define the organisational details of the Sanya Championship, the second with Kirubakara Moorthy, President of the Bridge Federation of India to sign the agreement for Chennai 2015. Mazhar joined us and also Maurizio and Marina, who were in Beijing to attend a SportAccord Briefing for the SAWMG of December and reached us. Of course both Patrick and Zelan were in Jinhua. It was a very good occasion to meet the Asian Officers and in particular Fan Guangsheng, elected Executive Vice President of the CCBA, Michael Bambang Hartono and the new Secretary General of the Indonesian Bridge Federation and the new Australian President, Bruce Neill. Marc will report about the membership situation and about Bruce Neill I can anticipate that he is very interested to organise the Bermuda Bowl in Gold Coast in 2019 and he told me that with the Australian board they already started to plan a strategy to provide the necessary funds. It's my pleasure to congratulate Esther and the CCBA for the excellent organisation and the friendly and generous welcome and hospitality.

The 20<sup>th</sup> of June I attended in Opatija the Opening Ceremony of the European Team Championship, attended once again by the President of the Croatia Republic, who joined the following reception. As for the Champions Cup an impressive representative of media attended the event, reporting via TV, newspapers and internet. Congratulations to Yves, the EBL and the Local Organizers.

From 27<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July in Opatija, kindly hosted by the EBL, we had the Management Committee Meeting. You have in your folder the related minutes. We have been invited by Yves to attend the EBL President Gala Dinner and the EBL General Assembly, which provided the election of the President and the Executive Committee for the quadriennium 2014/2018. Being in Opatija I met the Mayor, Mr. Ivo



Dumic, the President of the Croatian Federation, Mr. Jurica Caric and the Local Organizer, Mr. Goran Grguric talking about the candidature of Opatija to organise the 2015 World Youth Open Bridge Championship.

Coming back from Opatija we provided the postal ballot concerning the amendments to the By-Laws and the information to the NBOs for their approval. We will examine this item later.

The 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of July, taking the occasion of the Appeal Tribunal Hearing for the German Case I was in Lausanne: I did not of course attend the hearing, but the 15<sup>th</sup> I met, together with Jeff, our Swiss lawyer, Ross Wenzel, who assists Jeff in the procedure and the hearing held the 16<sup>th</sup>.

The 18<sup>th</sup> I flew to Las Vegas in occasion of the ACBL Summer National where I met the President Phillis Harlan and the CEO Robert Hartman, who kindly organised a dinner in my honour inviting all the American WBF members of the Executive Council. I had the honour, with my great surprise but with great appreciation, to be appointed by Phillis as member of the ACBL Goodwill Committee, during the official meeting of the Committee. I was also invited by the President Howard Weinstein to attend the meeting of the Board of the USBF. After the meeting, together with Al, I met Howard and Jan Martel to define the signature of the contract for the Orlando 2018 World Series, that you have in your folder, and the participation of the USBF teams at the 2014 SAWMG. During my stay I met Jeff about the German Case and in general the disciplinary matters, Georgia about the problematic of the Zone 2, and practically with Al we lived in symbiosis. I met also Ernesto who was there for the national and we spend some hours together talking about the organisation of the forthcoming championships.

The 8<sup>th</sup> of August in Milano I met with Marc the representatives of WCB (we will discuss later about their proposal) and the day after I flew to Istanbul for the World Youth Championship. I will report later, together with Sevinç and Ata, about the event, but since now I want to say that it was amazing and I want to express my gratitude to Sevinç and Ata for their fantastic job which consented to achieve such tremendous success.

From 24<sup>th</sup> August to 1<sup>st</sup> September finally I was able to switch off the connections (also if not completely) to refill the batteries.

The 9<sup>th</sup> of September with Marc I went to Amsterdam to meet again the WCB representatives to discuss their proposal, that later we will examine. The 15<sup>th</sup> I was in Roma to meet prof. Gabriele and prof. Capelli in order to publish the survey result's composition and to forward it to the IOC, to talk about the next steps of the initiative and to discuss about the application of the new Anti-doping rules.

The 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> I was in Lausanne where I met Maitre Wenzel for the new test of the Disciplinary Code and the Players Commitment, that we have to examine and approve later, and for a consultation about the German Case consequences. I had also a meeting with David Nivelles, Director of SportAccord, signing the contract and talking about the SAMG organisational details. Being Maurizio in Lausanne to define with Fotis the technical details of the World Series, I took the occasion to examine and discuss with them the various aspects of the event.

The 30<sup>th</sup> September I was in Wroclaw to meet, with Radek, the Mayor, Mr. Rafal Dutkiewicz and the Marshal of Lower Silesia, Mr. Radoslaw Molon, and then to visit the venue for the 2016 World Games. Radek will report later about the matter, providing a presentation of the event, but I can anticipate that the venue is superb and both the Mayor and the Marshal are enthusiastic to host and of course to support the event. Both welcomed us very friendly and the Mayor dedicated us a couple of hours, also offering us a very nice lunch. In this occasion Radek and the Mayor signed a protocol of intents.

The 5<sup>th</sup> of October I flew to Sanya and here we are.

As you can well imagine the major tasks of our activity in the office concerned the organisation of the Youth Championship in Istanbul, the World Bridge Series in Sanya and the SAWMG in Beijing. We were practically daily in contact with the local organizers and we really did a lot of work to guarantee the success of these three events, about whom we will discuss in depth later. But of course not neglecting all the other not less important ordinary business that we followed with the same dedication. I want to express my appreciation and thanks to Marina who worked practically without pauses and to Anna and Gildana for the amazing work they did in collecting data and pictures related to these events.

Dear friends, we are at the end of the legislature and this meeting represents practically its final act.

You will find in your folder my report to the Congress and so I don't want to be repetitive, reporting here the same considerations, but let me shortly summarize the result achieved in this quadriennium.

I believe that we have to be more than satisfy because we achieved all the aims determined at the starting of the legislature, in fact we provided:

- The rule and its practical realisation of three meetings a year, the Executive Council, the Management Committee and the Officers with the generous support of the EBL and the ACBL and consequently
- The WBF Reimbursement Policy Rule
- The definitive consolidation of the Headquarters in Lausanne with stable personnel
- The acquirement of the inscription at the Registre de Commerce and consequently the definitive incorporation in the Swiss Law
- The institution of the Technological Commission and the renewal of the Web Site and the system of information and communication, also trough Social Media, with particular attention to the championships
- The introduction of the Disciplinary Code, including the constitution of the Disciplinary Commission and the Appeal Tribunal, the Eligibility Code, The Tournament Directors Official Register and the related Policy, the Dress Code, the new WBF Anti-doping Code, the Reviewer instead of the Appeal Committee
- The creation of the Medical and Prevention Commission with the realization of the survey to provide the booklet to help them to familiarize with the anti-doping rules and to make them aware of the importance of their health
- The consolidation of the Girls category and the introduction of the Kids, in the frame of the development of youth bridge, creating the Youth Fund and the Simultaneous Tournaments pro Youth
- The new format of the World Series and the World Games with the introduction of the World National Pairs Championship
- The scheduling of the World Championship for the entire legislature
- The new Victory Points Scale

- The implementation of the technological managing of the championships, introducing new services like the, very appreciated, Bar-code Badge and the software which consent to every player to print directly at the end of the session their own result-score

Under the economical point of view (the Treasurer will show you the data) we also have to be satisfy because the result reflects the good work done in administrating and managing following the simple but secure principle that the ancients defined of the “Bonus Pater Familias”: cautious exploitation of the resources and strict control of the expenses.

All this has been possible thanks all of you and because we acted as a real team and not as a group of individuals.

I want to thank all of you, including Jimmy, Joan, Jean-Louis and Jens, and I want to express my gratitude for your work, for your confidence and for helping, supporting and stimulating me in friendship, always showing your co-operational spirit to achieve the common goal. But consent to me to reserve a special thank to Marc with whom I worked and I am working practically daily, sharing enthusiasm and concerns and to José, our President Emeritus, for being always at my side, with his precious advices.

Last but not least let me conclude that, if we have been able to have a serene and profitable quadriennium and to achieve some results, a not little part of merit goes to the dedicated members of our committees, to our fantastic co-operators and members of the championships staff and to our extraordinary personnel Carol, Fotis and Marina, including Anna and Maurizio, who are essential part of our marvellous family.

Thank you for your attention