



International Sport Federation (IF) recognized by the International Olympic Committee

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF CONGRESS
Thursday, 27th September 2018
Orlando, USA**

In Attendance

Mr Gianarrigo Rona, President in the Chair
Mr. José Damiani, President Emeritus
Mr John Wignall, 1st Vice President
Mr Marc De Pauw, Treasurer

Ms Georgia Heth, Honorary Secretary
Mr David Harris, General Counsel
Mr Simon Fellus, Secretary

The following Executive Council Members attended

Mr Marcelo Caracci
Mrs Chen Zelan
Mr Patrick Choy
Mr Mazhar Jafri
Mr Paul Janicki
Mr Jan Kamras
Mr Eric Laurant

Mr. Alvin Levy
Mr Eitan Levy
Mrs Kari-Anne Opsal
Mr Bernard Pascal
Mrs. Sheena Rayner
Mr Merlin Vilhauer
Mr Howard Weinstein

The following Committee of Honour Members attended

Mr Panos Gerontopoulos

Mr. George Retek

Also in Attendance

Mrs Sevinç Atay
Mr Dirk De Clercq, Assistant Treasurer
Mrs Lilian Sun, Interpreter

Ms. Carol von Linstow, Secretary to the
Executive Council

The meeting was called to order at 09.00 a.m. by the President, Mr. Rona, who welcomed the delegates to this Congress meeting and thanked them for their presence in Orlando.





The meeting then proceeded as follows:

1. Roll Call to Determine Quorum

Ms Georgia Heth declared a quorum. The following member NBOs were represented by their President or his accredited representative, or by that representative's proxy:

Argentina	Germany	Poland
Australia	Greece	Portugal
Austria	Guadaloupe	Reunion
Barbados	Guatamala	Romania
Belgium	Haiti	San Marino
Bermuda	Hungary	Scotland
Botswana	Ireland	Singapore
Brazil	Israel	South Africa
Bulgaria	Italy	Spain
Canada	Japan	Sweden
Chile	Kenya	Switzerland
China	Macau	Thailand
Chinese Taipei	Mexico	Trinidad & Tobago
Columbia	Morocco	Tunisia
Costa Rica	Netherlands	Turkey
Croatia	New Zealand	Uruguay
Egypt	Norway	USBF
Finland	Pakistan	Venezuela
France	Paraguay	Wales

The President declared the meeting open, there being 57 NBOs represented.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2016 Meeting

The minutes of the 2016 meeting of Congress, held on 16th October 2016 in Wroclaw, Poland, which had previously been circulated to all NBOs, were approved unanimously with one abstention and ordered filed with the official records of the Federation.

3. President's Report

The President welcomed the delegates to this meeting in Orlando, USA. First of all, he remembered the friends who had sadly passed away since being with us in Wroclaw. Anna Maria Torlontano, Member of the Committee of Honour of the WBF and Honorary Vice President of the European Bridge League had, for many years, been the soul of women's bridge. She was a great and unforgettable friend to all who knew her. A few days ago, we learned of the sudden death of Jean-Paul Meyer, who coordinated and supervised the Daily Bulletin for many years, in addition to the Vu-Graph and the Internet Broadcasting. He was a great eclectic personality, champion, administrator, office and journalist: in two words "Mister Bridge". The President asked the delegates to rise for a minute of silence in their memory.



He went on to outline his travels through most of the world in meetings with other organizations, both within the Olympic movement and without, in support of Youth bridge and in preparation for future championships. He had also spent time with our Swiss lawyers.

Two years having passed since the last Congress in Wroclaw this quadrennium comes to an end. Going forward and celebrating the 60th anniversary of the WBF new Statutes and By-Laws are being introduced and hopefully approved to give us a more solid base for consolidation and development. Four years ago, the objectives were to work on the organization and economical structure of our Federation, to re-enforce relations with the Olympic Committee and other sporting organizations, to improve and update our championships, and to continue the development of bridge particularly Youth bridge. The delegates should be happy with what has been achieved. As the Treasurer will report the reserves have been built up to a comfortable level. Bridge was admitted and participated most successful in the Asian Olympic Games in August. The President acknowledged the debt owed to Esther Sophonpanich, the President of Zone 6, for the part she played in achieving this. He was therefore proud to call her to the stage to award the WBF Gold Medal and to receive their acclamation.

A tremendous amount had been achieved with Youth bridge and in particular with the under 16s. A Youth Mini-Site has been launched and the World On-Line Youth Championship established. In Wujiang, the Youth World Championship was a great success with record entries in all events.

He thanked all the colleagues that had cooperated with him and now retired and in particular the 1st Vice President, John Wignall, to whom he was proud to award the WBF Gold Medal.

The report was adopted by acclamation, is appended to and forms part of these Minutes.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented his report to the delegates. He outlined the financial management policy guidelines which were: 1. To break even on the fixed side; 2. To consolidate and increase financial reserves of the WBF; and 3. To increase the Youth and Development and Promotion Fund. He confirmed that the majority of these targets had been realized and said the WBF was in a sound position with a substantially increased Equity. Because of a reduced level of annual subscriptions, fixed expenses are now higher than the fixed income. Consideration is therefore being given to investing a substantial part of our Reserves in interest-bearing investments. This should enable us to break even on the fixed side.

The audited accounts for 2016-2017 and the budgets for 2018 and 2019 were unanimously approved.

The President thanked Mr De Pauw for his report which was adopted by acclamation is appended to and forms part of these Minutes.

5. WBF Statutes

It was moved by Mr Alvin Fitzpatrick, delegate for Trinidad & Tobago, and carried that the revised Statutes, having been previously circulated to all members, should be taken as read. The intention and detail were explained to the meeting and the revised Statutes were unanimously adopted with one abstention. The revised Statutes are appended to and form part of these Minutes.



6. WBF By-Laws

The President presented the revised WBF By-Laws, which will in accordance with article 38 of the Statutes will be sent to all NBOs. The following By-Laws have been adopted by the Executive Council and the Congress unanimously endorsed these By-Laws and thus they will come into effect provided that less than one-third of NBOs do not register an objection within 60 days. The revised WBF By-Laws are appended to and form part of these Minutes.

7. WBF 60th Anniversary

Mr Damiani, President Emeritus, noted that over the past 60 years great progress had been made, in particular with regard to our membership of the IOC, GAISF, FISU and UNESCO. We had also been a founding member of the International Mind Sports Association. The number of NBOs had increased substantially as had the number of Championships and other World Bridge Events. The most significant development, however, lay in Youth bridge which has never been more popular. The finances had never been better and we can look forward to the future with some confidence.

8. Bridge2Success

Ela Tomczuk made a presentation of a programme entitled “Bridge2Success”, a new initiative targeted towards encouraging people between the ages of 20 and 50 to play bridge within the framework of their work environments, suggesting that companies could open bridge clubs in the workplace.

9. Adjournment

The President thanked all the delegates for their attendance and there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned sine die at 10:55.



International Sport Federation (IF) recognized by the International Olympic Committee

WBF Statutes

Chapter 1

Name – Status – Purpose

Article 1 - Name & Duration

The name of the federation is the World Bridge Federation (“WBF”). The duration of the WBF is unlimited.

Article 2 - Status and Resources

The World Bridge Federation, founded on August 18, 1958 in Oslo, recognised by the International Olympic Committee as an International Sport Federation, International University Sport Federation (“FISU”), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (“UNESCO”) is a non-profit making organisation of a strictly civil nature incorporated as an association in accordance with article 60 ff. of the Swiss Civil Code and registered in the Commercial Register of the Canton de Vaud.

The WBF is a recognised member of the Global Association of International Sport Federations (“GAISF”), the Association of Recognised IOC International Sports Federations (“ARISF”), the International Mind Sports Association (“IMSA”), and is a Signatory of the World Anti-Doping Code issued by the World Anti-Doping Agency (“WADA”).

The WBF’s resources consist of members’ annual dues or charges, gifts and donations and any other resources, such as income from competition, tournaments and other events organized by the WBF; its resources shall be applied exclusively in furtherance of its purposes.

Article 3 - Headquarters

The official headquarters and administrative offices of the WBF are based in Lausanne, Switzerland, but by decision of the Executive Council (“EC”), may be moved to another location in Switzerland.

Article 4 - Guiding Principles & Motto

The WBF recognises and pursues the fundamental principles of the Olympic Charter, in particular the aims:

- a) to blend bridge with culture and education and to promote the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles;





- b) to encourage the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity;
- c) to fight and reject any violation of human rights.

The motto of the WBF is "Bridge for Peace".

Article 5 - Purpose

The purpose of the WBF shall be:

- to promote, foster, promulgate, develop and govern the sport of Bridge internationally;
- to support and encourage the development of youth bridge, in particular by encouraging and assisting NBOs in promoting bridge in schools, universities and other educational and youth organisations;
- to be in the Olympic Movement, remaining affiliated with the International Olympic Committee ("IOC") as a recognized International Federation ("IF") in conformity with the requirements of the Olympic Charter and to contribute to the achievement of the goals set out in the Olympic Charter, in particular by way of spreading Olympism and Olympic education;
- to federate national bridge organisations in all countries;
- to devise methods and conduct competitions to award international or world championship titles;
- to establish standard laws for its contests adopting recognised standards of fair-play and good ethics and supplementing these as may be required;
- to support and encourage the promotion of positive sport ethics;
- to dedicate its efforts to ensure that in bridge contests the spirit of fair play prevails;
- to fight against unethical behaviour, manipulation of competitions and alterations of results in bridge;
- to fight against doping in sport and to take measures, the goal of which is to prevent endangering the health of bridge players.

The WBF endeavours to maintain friendly relations amongst its members and amongst Zonal Conferences. The WBF does not permit any political, religious, gender or racial discrimination or any violation of human rights amongst its members.



Chapter 2 Members

Article 6 - Members

The members of the World Bridge Federation are the National Bridge Organisations (“NBOs”). In accordance with the Olympic Charter, only one NBO for each country may become a member of the WBF.

The expression “country” shall mean any country, state, territory or a part of territory recognized by the international community. The name of the NBO must reflect the territorial extent and tradition of its country and must be approved by WBF as being in conformity with the Olympic Charter and the IOC regulations.

Each NBO must be duly constituted under the laws of its jurisdiction and shall seek recognition by its national governing authority (e.g. National Olympic Committee, National Sports Committee, National Association of Sports Federations and/or Governmental Authorities).

Article 7 - Admission Requirements

Any NBO wishing to affiliate with the WBF is required:

- To exercise Bridge activity in its country and internationally, in particular by organizing and participating in competitions, implementing bridge education and training programmes for bridge players, with regards in particular to the development of youth bridge;
- To respect the Statutes, By-Laws, Laws of Bridge, Rules and Regulations and any other guidelines or principles of the WBF as well as to recognize and enforce any decision rendered in application thereof;
- To conduct its activities in compliance with the Olympic Charter;
- To implement a Disciplinary Code and a Code of Ethics reflecting the provisions of the WBF Disciplinary Code, the WBF Code of Ethics *mutatis mutandis*, which shall apply in its sphere of activities, including its jurisdiction;
- To manage its affairs autonomously and without interference from bodies outside the Olympic Movement;
- To have an appropriate and updated register of members,
- To pay the Membership fees and other monies owed to the WBF when due;
- To refuse membership of any bridge association and/or bridge club located outside of its country, unless duly authorized by the WBF;
- To be open to all nationals or bona fide residents of the particular country;
- To agree to play in WBF competitions against all other NBOs which are qualified members of the WBF.

The Executive Council has the power to decide whether to grant membership to an NBO. The granted membership has to be ratified by the next ensuing Congress.

Article 8 - Resignation

Any member of the WBF may resign in writing to the President on six months’ notice. For the avoidance of doubt, the resignation shall not affect any financial or other obligations that have arisen during the term of membership.



Article 9 - Suspension

Without prejudice to any other provision for suspension elsewhere in the Statutes, By-Laws, Code of Ethics or other Rules and Regulations, a member may be suspended by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Executive Council either upon the request in writing by the relevant member or if the Executive Council concludes, in its discretion, that the member is not conforming or has not conformed with the requirements for an application for membership of the WBF.

In the event of a failure for a period of two full years to pay the annual dues or charges the suspension is automatically sanctioned by the Executive Council.

A suspended member may not exercise any of the rights or benefits of membership of the WBF during the period of suspension. The suspension does not discontinue the obligation to pay the annual dues.

A member temporarily suspended may be reinstated at any time by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Executive Council on such conditions as the Executive Council may prescribe.

Article 10 - Removal

Without prejudice to any other provision for removal elsewhere in the Statutes, By-Laws, Code of Ethics or other Rules and Regulations, a member may be removed by the Executive Council, providing its reasons for such decision are approved on an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the total members. The removal has to be ratified by the next ensuing Congress.

After two years of suspension for failure in payment of the annual dues or charges, a member, if not reinstated, is automatically removed by the Executive Council.

Any membership dues owed up until the time of removal remain due and payable notwithstanding the removal.

Article 11 - Effect

As soon as an NBO is recognised as an affiliated member of the WBF, it automatically becomes an affiliated member of a WBF Zonal Conference (see article 14 below). No NBO can be an affiliated member of a Zonal Conference without being an affiliated member of the WBF.

Resignation, Removal and Suspension from the WBF are automatically extended to the Zonal Conference.



Chapter 3

Zonal Conferences & Associate Member

Article 12 - Zonal Conferences

The world shall be divided into five continents, following the five rings of the Olympic Movement (America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania). Each continent must always contain at least one Zonal Conference.

The continents of Europe, Africa and Oceania shall be represented by one Zonal Conference each. The continents of America and Asia may be represented, as determined by the Executive Council, by a maximum of three Zonal Conferences. The Executive Council shall be entitled, subject to an affirmative vote of two-thirds majority, to split or merge Zonal Conferences in the continents of America and Asia.

The role of Zonal Conferences within the WBF system shall be to administer and further the objectives of the WBF and to organize zonal competitions.

Article 13 - Requirements

The Zonal Conferences shall have their own Statutes and By-Laws that shall respect and be consistent with these Statutes and the WBF By-Laws.

The Zonal Conferences shall respect the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, the Statutes, By-Laws, Code of Ethics, Disciplinary Code and other Rules & Regulations, and the decisions of the WBF and otherwise act in the best interest of the WBF. The Zonal Conferences shall also implement a Disciplinary Code and a Code of Ethics reflecting the provisions of the WBF Disciplinary Code and the WBF Code of Ethics *mutatis mutandis*, which shall apply in their sphere of activities, including their jurisdiction.

Article 14 - Geographical affiliation

Members located within the geographical scope of a Zonal Conference may be affiliated to such Zonal Conference only and not to another Zonal Conference, save that in exceptional circumstances, the Executive Council may, upon application of a member, authorize such member to be affiliated to a Zonal Conference to which it does not geographically belong.

The Zonal Conference concerned by the possible affiliation of a member that does not geographically belong to it shall be consulted prior to any decision being taken by the Executive Council in this respect, without any limitation to the Executive Council's discretion.

Article 15 - Associated Members

In recognition of historic contribution, outstanding support and distinguished services to the development of bridge, the Congress, on the proposal of the Executive Council, may afford the status of Associated Member to a Bridge Organisation which is not part of the WBF. The relations between the WBF and the Associated Member/s are provided and set out in the By-Laws. Associated Members shall not have any vote at the WBF Congress.



Chapter 4 Authority

Article 16 - Principle of Autonomy

Members and Zonal Conferences retain their entire autonomy and independence of action and are free to set up their internal organisation as they see fit, within the limits imposed by these Statutes.

The WBF observes strict neutrality in the internal affairs of its members.

Article 17 - Jurisdiction for competitions

The WBF, members and Zonal Conferences shall have jurisdiction (including, without limitation, technical and disciplinary jurisdiction) over the competitions governed by their own statutes and competition regulations, which must be approved by the WBF.

This Article 17 shall not prevent the WBF from issuing regulations providing for certain of its rules and regulations to apply within the context of qualification systems for WBF Events and events that award WBF Master-points under the jurisdiction of members or Zonal Conferences.

In case of dispute between any entities (WBF, member(s), Zonal Conference(s)) as to who shall assume jurisdiction over a disciplinary matter, the WBF shall decide at its own discretion. The WBF's decision shall be final and binding on all members and Zonal Conferences.

Article 18 - Principle of Reciprocity

Each member and Zonal Conference must accept and respect all decisions taken by other members and/or Zonal Conferences in disciplinary matters. In particular, all members and Zonal Conferences shall apply and enforce sanctions of other members or Zonal Conferences or of the WBF (including for the avoidance of doubt suspensions or bans) within their geographical jurisdiction, provided that such sanction respects the principles set out in these Statutes and in any other WBF Regulations.

All sanctions must be reported to the WBF in a timely manner by the member and/or Zonal Conference imposing the same.

The WBF may, at its discretion, decide to apply a sanction rendered by a member or a Zonal Conference to the events under its jurisdiction and/or grant worldwide effect to it.

All decisions rendered by the WBF in application of this Article shall be final and binding on all members and Zonal Conferences.



Chapter 5 Organisation

Article 19 - Organisation of the WBF

The government of the WBF shall be vested in a Congress, a President and an Executive Council, together with a Management Committee when the Executive Council is not in session (see Chapter 9).

The officers of the WBF include the President, the two Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, the Secretary and the General Counsel. The Executive Council, on the proposal of the President, elects from amongst its members the two Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Secretary. The General Counsel is not a member of the Executive Council and is appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Council.

The honorary officers of the WBF are the President/s Emeritus, and the members of the Honour Committee.

The disciplinary bodies of the WBF are the Disciplinary Tribunal and the Anti-Doping Hearing Tribunal.

The technical advisor of the WBF regarding matters related to the organisation and the rules and regulations of the bridge competitions is the High Level Players Commission.

Standing or special Committees and appointments may be constituted and are subject to the applicable law and the By-Laws. The committees may (without limitation to the power of the Executive Council to establish and appoint further committees) include the Advisory Committee, the Finance Committee, the Statutes and By-Laws Committee, the Medical and Prevention Commission, the Competitions Committee, the Credentials Committee, the Rules and Regulations Committee, the Laws Committee, the Systems Committee and the Youth Committee.

The officers, honorary officers, advisors, committees and any further special appointments, are further described in the By-Laws.



Chapter 6 The Congress

Article 20 - Status

The Congress is the supreme authority of the WBF.

Article 21 - Composition & Attendance

The Congress is composed of the authorised delegates of the members. Each member in good standing shall be entitled to be represented at the Congress by one delegate.

The President chairs the Congress but shall not have any voting rights.

The members of the Executive Council, the Candidates for Elections, the President/s Emeritus, the Honour Committee members, the General Counsel, the HLPC's Chairman, the Chairmen of the WBF Committees, the other WBF Officers and the Presidents of the Zonal Conferences are entitled to attend the Congress but shall not have any voting rights and shall not act as a proxy.

Article 22 - Nature and sessions

The Congress may be held on an ordinary and extraordinary basis.

The ordinary Congress is held every two years in the even numbered years.

An extraordinary Congress may be called by the President and or the Executive Council when deemed necessary at their discretion and must be called upon request of one fifth of those entitled to vote at the Congress. The request must be addressed in writing to the President. At least thirty days' notice shall be provided of an extraordinary Congress, and the business is limited to that on the agenda distributed with the notice. Notice may be given by email or by postal mail. An extraordinary Congress has no powers not held by an ordinary Congress.

An extraordinary Congress may be convened together with an ordinary Congress but with separate agendas.

Article 23 - Functions and power of an ordinary Congress

The Congress shall have the powers and functions explicitly conferred upon it by these Statutes and the By-Laws of the WBF, including:

- a) To amend the Statutes, subject to a majority of two-thirds of the members present;
- b) to hear and approve the report of the President;
- c) to examine the balance sheet and accounts for the two years following the last ordinary Congress and hear the auditors' report;
- d) to define or to delegate the Executive Council to define, every four years, membership dues;
- e) to ratify the admission and removal of members decided by the Executive Council;
- f) to carry out elections, every four years, in accordance with these Statutes;
- g) to bestow the title of President Emeritus;
- h) to afford the status of Associated Member, subject to a majority of two-thirds of the members present.

The decisions taken at the Congress come into effect immediately unless otherwise decided by Congress.



Article 24 - Quorum

One third of the members shall be present for a vote to be validly carried out (quorum).

For the election of members to the Executive Council the quorum shall be one half of the members plus one.

To vote on the dissolution of the WBF, the quorum shall be four fifths of the members.

Article 25 - Ballots, Number of Votes

Each member is entitled to one (1) vote.

The elections shall be conducted by secret ballot.

Voting on any other matters shall take place by a show of hands unless a secret ballot is requested by a majority of the members present.

Whether on a secret ballot or a show of hands, only delegates and duly appointed proxies present at the Congress may cast votes.



Chapter 7 The President

Article 26 - The President

The President represents the highest single authority of the WBF as the Chief Executive Officer.

The President presides at meetings of the Congress, the Executive Council and the Management Committee and may represent the WBF legally in all circumstances or by authorizing someone to act on his behalf. He represents the WBF on all formal occasions and takes precedence over all other members. He takes all measures necessary to ensure the good conduct and progress of the affairs of the WBF and protect the image of the WBF subject to the subsequent approval of his actions by the Congress, the Executive Council or the Management Committee. He is invited to attend the meetings of all the Committees of the WBF but shall have no vote unless he is otherwise a member of such committee.

The President submits for the approval of the EC the election of the Officers and members of the Management Committee.

Apart from the cases expressly foreseen in the Statutes, the President, with the approval of the EC, appoints and/or revokes the Committees, the Commissions, the special groups or any other person useful to the management of WBF.

In particular, but not limited to the following, the President:

- supervises the day-to-day business and functioning of the WBF;
- chairs all meetings of the Congress, the Executive Council and the Management Committee;
- signs every official WBF document, including minutes, rulings and certificates;
- represents the WBF in all matters involving the IOC and other international sports bodies, political authorities and before judicial courts and tribunals;
- convenes the Congress;
- presents to the Congress a report on the WBF activities;
- appoints and removes from office the General Counsel;
- other duties upon delegation by the Executive Council or the Congress.

The President may be represented in his duties by a duly empowered person; a power of attorney shall be given in writing by the President.

Article 27 - Election

The President shall be elected by the Executive Council at the first meeting of the newly installed Executive Council following the (ordinary) Congress in the electoral year (as defined at article 31 below). The current President and Treasurer shall be entitled to vote in this election.

A President elected for his first term must be a member of the Executive Council at the time of his election and in order to preserve continuity and to ensure experienced leadership, must have been member of the Executive Council for at least two years of a legislature. The President, upon assuming office, shall resign as a zonal representative.

The rules and procedure for the candidacy and the election of the President are provided by the By-Laws.



The term of office of the President shall be of four years and shall commence on the 1st January directly following his election. The President may be re-elected but may not under any circumstances serve more than three full terms of four years.

Article 28 - Vacancy

Should the position of President become vacant for any reason or the President is unable as a result of incapacity to fulfill his duties, the first Vice-President will provisionally fulfill the functions of the President.

Should the vacancy or incapacity be permanent, a new President shall be elected at the next ensuing Executive Council meeting for the remainder of the four-year term of the former President.



Chapter 8 The Executive Council

Article 29 - The Executive Council

All executive and administrative powers relevant to the effective supervision and administration of the affairs and activities of the WBF (consistent with the WBF Statutes) are vested in the Executive Council.

The Executive Council consists of the President and up to 24 other members, including:

- up to 19 (nineteen) members elected by the Zonal Conferences;
- 2 (two) members elected by the High Level Players Commission.
- 3 (three) members elected by the Congress. The President/s Emeritus and the General Counsel are entitled to attend the Executive Council meetings with consultative powers but no voting rights.

The members of the Honour Committee may be invited by the President to attend meetings without voting rights: they must be invited when the agenda includes the election of new members of the Honour Committee, in which event they shall have voting rights on that issue.

Article 30 - Executive Council Members elections

The rules and regulations for the election and the installation of the Executive Council are provided and set-out in the By-Laws. In any event:

- The election of the members of the Executive Council shall take place every fourth year from and including 2022 (each such year being an “electoral year”) save that the initial election of members elected by Congress will take place at the Congress in 2020 with those elected serving for a term of two years.
- Each Zonal Conference has the right to elect its own representative member(s) as per the By-Laws.
- All elections by the Zonal Conferences or the HLPC must be made in advance of the (ordinary) Congress taking place in the electoral year; such elections must be notified immediately to the WBF Secretary.
- Candidates to be elected to the Executive Council by Congress shall be in good standing with their NBO. The three persons elected must be from three different Zonal Conferences.
- The HLPC shall elect one representative of each gender, who shall be from different Zonal Conferences.
- The term of office of the Executive Council members shall start on the day following their election and shall cease in the subsequent electoral year at midnight on the day on which the relevant body (i.e. Zonal Conferences, HLPC and Congress) elects its representatives for the next Executive Council.
- Notwithstanding the foregoing, the President and the Treasurer shall assume these functions on the 1st January directly following their election to such positions and shall serve in those functions for four full calendar years; consequently, the term of the President and Treasurer as Executive Council members shall be extended by such period as is necessary (being less than 12 months in all circumstances) to allow them to serve in those functions for the four calendar years.
- The body that elected the Executive Council member serving as Treasurer in the electoral year shall, when making its elections to the Executive Council, specify that



the term of one of the relevant persons shall start on 1 January of the following calendar year (as opposed to on the day following the election).

- Where a new President is elected from amongst those persons elected by the Zonal Conferences or the HLPC, the relevant body shall elect a replacement as soon as reasonably practicable following the election of such President and, in any event, before the end of the electoral year; where the Congress elects one or more candidates to the Executive Council who have already served a previous term on the Executive Council, the Congress shall also elect a fourth person as an alternate for the eventuality that one of the persons elected to the Executive Council by Congress is then elected as President by the new Executive Council. The alternate would then assume office as an Executive Council member on the day on which the President assumes office i.e. on the 1 January following his election.

Article 31 - Functions of the Executive Council

Without limitation to its powers and obligations, the Executive Council has the following functions:

- a) to elect the President of the WBF and, on the proposal of the President, the two Vice Presidents, the Treasurer and the other officers indicated in the above article 19 unless the competence to elect such officers is explicitly reserved for another body.
- b) to study all proposed amendments to the Statutes before they are submitted to the Congress;
- c) to issue rules of procedure, including the By-Laws;
- d) to uphold the spirit of the Olympic Charter and the strict observation of the WBF Regulations;
- e) to monitor the running of the Zonal Conferences and members;
- f) to appoint representatives to carry out functions relating to the promotion and co-ordination of bridge in a region, country or member;
- g) to consider and, if it judges appropriate, to adopt the proposals of the committees that fall within its powers;
- h) to prescribe an Ethics Code, Disciplinary Code and/or Code of conduct with rules of procedure and sanctions;
- i) to issue Anti-Doping Regulations in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Code;
- j) to issue the Laws of Bridge, guidelines and rules concerning the sport of bridge, the participation in the bridge competitions and the related organisation and management;
- k) to maintain good relations with the IOC, sports organizations, public authorities and other international organizations;
- l) to elect, upon proposal of the President, the members of the Management Committee;
- m) to elect the members of the Honour Committee and to award medals and recognitions;
- n) to appoint the Auditors;
- o) to ratify the decisions of the Management Committee and decisions taken by the President in urgent circumstances;
- p) to remove members subject to the ratification of the Congress ;
- q) to review any application to become a member of the WBF and issue recommendations to the Congress in this respect;



- r) to define the international calendar in consultation with the Zonal Conferences and to grant the WBF patronage to different proposed events;
- s) to deliberate and decide on any other matter relating to the organisation and governance of the WBF that is not explicitly reserved for another person, body or organ.

Article 32 - Meetings, Quorum, Votes, Minutes

The Executive Council meets at least once a year. The Executive Council is convened by the President or upon the request made to the President of at least half plus one of its members. No proxy is allowed.

Half plus one of the total members of the Executive Council must be present for a vote to be validly carried out (quorum) and, unless provided otherwise in these Statutes, voting is by majority.

Each member of the Executive, including the President, shall be entitled to one vote on all matters within the Executive's jurisdiction. In the case of a tie the President or the person who presides over the meeting has the casting vote.

The minutes of the deliberations of the Executive Council are the responsibility of the Secretary and signed by the President.



Chapter 9 Management Committee

Article 33 - Composition

The Management Committee consists of the President, the two Vice Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer, up to three other members of the Executive Council (including one of the two representatives of the HLPC and one of the members elected by the Congress) elected upon proposal of the President by the Executive Council. There shall be at least one man and one woman.

The President/s Emeritus and the General Counsel are entitled to attend the meetings of the Management Committee with consultative powers but with no voting rights.

Article 34 - Powers

The Management Committee shall have and may exercise, when the Executive Council is not in session, all the powers of the Executive Council except those requiring a qualified majority.

Article 35 - Meetings

The President may convene meetings of the Management Committee, either in person or via conference call, at any time, and shall convene meetings at least twice a year, without formality and with reasonable notice. Proxies are not allowed.

The President may invite other members of the Executive Council and/or other persons to participate, without voting rights, in meetings of the Management Committee where they are involved in activities and matters to be discussed.

The minutes of the meetings of the Management Committee are the responsibility of the Secretary and signed by the President. The minutes shall be sent for information to all members of the Executive Council and a summary shall be published on the WBF Website.

Article 36 - Forfeiture

If for any reason the President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer or Secretary forfeit their office, they shall be replaced by newly elected officers as soon as reasonably practical.



Chapter 10

Dispute resolution

Article 37 - Disciplinary Panels

A Disciplinary Panel of not less than five members and no more than seven ~~is~~ shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Council. The members of the Disciplinary Panel may not be Officers of the WBF or Zonal Conferences, or from the WBF or Zonal Conferences Executive Councils or the WBF Advisory Committee. The WBF Disciplinary Code may provide further restrictions.

Disciplinary cases will be referred to the WBF Tribunal comprised of three members of the Disciplinary Panel.

The eligibility, appointments, functions and duties of both the Disciplinary Panel and the WBF Tribunal and the applicable procedures are provided by the WBF Disciplinary Code as adopted by the Executive Council.

Violations of WBF Antidoping Code will be referred to the WBF Antidoping Hearing Tribunal as set out in the By-Laws.

Article 38 - By-Laws

The Executive Council shall adopt a set of By-Laws providing *inter alia* for the rules of enforcement of the Statutes, the procedures and rules of conduct of the organisation and of the governing bodies and the regulation and management of the affairs of the WBF. Thereafter, the By-Laws or any part of them may be amended by the Executive Council by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all its members entitled to vote.

Any amendment shall come into force on the date of the decision of the Executive Council. The amendment shall be notified to the members of the WBF as soon as practicable. If a majority of the members addresses a written objection to the amendment to the President within 60 days from the entry into force of the amendment, the amendment shall be considered as null and void.

Article 39 - Eligibility requirements

To be eligible to fill any election and appointment foreseen in the Statutes, By-Laws and any other WBF Rules & Regulations a person has to be of majority age according to the Swiss Law and fulfill the requirement set out in the By-Laws.

A President and/or a member of the Executive Council elected for his first term must not have reached his 76th birthday at the date of election. A President and/or a member of the Executive Council cannot be re-elected if at the end of his current term he has already reached his 80th birthday.

If at the end of his current term the President has served three full terms, he is no longer eligible to be re-elected.

No person who has a material source of income from playing bridge or from commercial activities related to bridge shall be elected as WBF President. The same provision is applied to the Members of the Executive Council and WBF Officers, except the HLPC members, and to the members of the Disciplinary Bodies or Auditors.



In any event no person shall be elected or appointed to, or continue to serve in respect of any position envisaged within these Statutes who:

- a) has been convicted of a crime by the ordinary justice with a binding restrictive sanction or with a binding sanction which include disqualification from holding public office for a period of one year or more;
- b) has been convicted by the sport justice (WBF, Zonal Conferences, NBOs, IOC, WADA, International and National Sport Organisations) with a binding sanction for a period of one year or more.

A failure to meet either of the above requirements (or a discovery of such failure) will result in the immediate automatic forfeiture of the position held.

Article 40 - Personal determination

Membership on the Executive Council or on any of the Committees of the WBF is a personal determination and is granted on the clear understanding that such members are not elected to represent their federations but to serve the international bridge community at large.

Elected WBF Council or WBF Committee members must not accept any position or function which can be in contradiction with his / her function as an elected member or presents conflicts of interests with the WBF. However, serving on the board of a Zonal Conference, an NBO or another bridge organisation does not constitute a conflict with the interests of the WBF.

Article 41 - Candidatures and Elections

The procedure and rules for the candidatures and elections of the President, the Executive Council Members and HLPC Members are provided for in the By-Laws

Article 42 - Jurisdiction for disputes

Any dispute arising from the present Statutes, their By-Laws and/or any WBF Regulation and not explicitly subject to the jurisdiction of another body according to the same shall be submitted exclusively to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland, which will resolve the dispute definitively.

Article 43 - Accounts and Financial Year

The financial year and the accounting system operate from the January 1st to the December 31st.

The accounts, which have been approved by the Executive Council, shall be examined and certified by the Auditors.

Article 44 - Allowance

Any office-holders' allowance shall be fixed and approved by the Executive Council.

Article 45 - Official Events

The official events of the WBF are described and set out in the By-Laws.

Article 46 - Transparency & Good Governance

The minutes of the meetings of the governing bodies of the WBF as well as the annual report of the Treasurer have to be published on the WBF Official Website.



Article 47 - Official Language

English is the official language of the WBF for all purposes, including for meetings, competitions, disciplinary matters and proceedings, any other activity and for the Statutes, By-Laws, Laws, Rules and Regulations, minutes and all the official documents published by the WBF.

Article 48 - Dissolution & Liquidation

The Congress shall have the exclusive power to resolve upon the dissolution of the WBF. This decision requires a two-thirds majority of 75% of all Delegates to the Congress. If the WBF is dissolved, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on the WBF shall be fully discharged and its remaining assets, if any, shall be donated to organisations active in activities similar to bridge.

Article 49 - Supremacy of Statutes

The Statutes of the WBF are the final and paramount authority and nothing contained in any Regulations shall prevail over or otherwise operate to circumvent or lessen the force and effect of the Statutes.

Article 50 - Modifications

The Statutes can only be modified by the Congress (subject to a majority of two-thirds of the members present).

Article 51 - Interpretation

Whenever the context indicates, the masculine gender shall encompass the feminine and neuter, and the singular shall encompass the plural, or vice versa. The headings are solely for organisation, convenience and clarity. They do not define, limit or describe the scope of these statutes or the intent in any of the provisions.

Certified as the Official Statutes of the World Bridge Federation, as approved by the Congress on 27th September 2018 and effective from 28th September 2018

Gianarrigo Rona, President

David R Harris, General Counsel



“Bridge for Peace”

International Sport Federation (IF) recognized by the International Olympic Committee

WBF By-Laws Preamble

Article 1 – Preamble

According to Article 38 of the WBF Statutes, the Executive Council (“EC”) shall adopt a set of By-Laws providing *inter alia* for the rules of enforcement of the Statutes, the procedures and rules of conduct of the organisation and of the governing bodies and the regulation and management of the affairs of the WBF.

Chapter 1 Offices & Finance

Article 2 – Offices

2.1. Headquarters

According to Article 3 of the Statutes, the official headquarters and administrative offices of the WBF are based in Lausanne, Switzerland, but by resolution of the EC, may be moved to another Swiss location; such resolution requires a majority of three quarters of the total votes.

2.2. Other Offices

The WBF may also have secondary offices at such other places as the EC may from time to time determine, or as the business of the WBF may require.

Article 3 – Finance, Books & Records

3.1. Dues and Fees.

The amount and time for payment of all dues, fees and other charges shall be as from time to time fixed and determined by the EC subject to review by the Congress.

3.2. Funds

The monies of the WBF shall be deposited in the name of the WBF in such bank or banks or trust company or trust companies as the EC shall designate and shall be drawn out only by the President, the Treasurer or by their designees authorised in writing.



Headquarters: Maison du Sport International – 54 av. de Rhodanie – 1007 Lausanne – Switzerland

Tel.: +41 21 544 7218 – Fax: +41 21 601 2315

President's Address: Via Moscova 46/5 – 20121 Milano – Italy

Tel.: +39 02 367 04 987 – Fax: +39 02 367 05 962



3.3. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the WBF shall begin on the first day of January in each year, unless otherwise provided by the EC.

3.4. Compensation

The compensation paid to any officer, agent, consultant or employee of the WBF shall be fixed and approved by the EC.

3.5. Books and Records

The books, accounts and records of the WBF, except as may be otherwise required by law, shall be kept at its principal office or at such other place or places as the EC may from time to time appoint. The EC shall determine whether and to what extent the accounts and books of the WBF or any of them, shall be open to inspection of the members, and no member shall have the right to inspect any account or book or document of the WBF except as conferred by law or by resolution of the EC.

Chapter 2 Members

Article 4 – Membership

4.1 Organisation

Membership in the WBF is by Federations and consists of affiliated membership. A National Contract Bridge Organization (“NBO”) of any country may apply for membership in the WBF and be elected thereto by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the EC present at any meeting at which a quorum is present, provided that all the needed requirements are fulfilled.

4.2 Application procedure

Each NBO wishing to affiliate with the WBF must forward to the WBF the request for admission and affiliation, undertaking, in writing, to respect the Statutes, Laws and Rules & Regulations of the WBF.

The WBF will forward to the applicant Organisation the necessary official application form and questionnaire and will inform the President of the Zonal Conference (“ZC”) of the application asking for the position of the ZC in respect of the application.

These documents, duly completed, must be returned to the WBF together with the following:

- a) two copies of the Statutes of the applicant Organisation, one of which must be in English, together with an undertaking to keep the WBF informed of any changes which might be made subsequent to affiliation to the WBF;
- b) a Certificate, signed by one of the authorities described above, authorising the application to be submitted;
- c) a detailed report on the structure of the organisation and its activities in the field of bridge.



Article 5 – Admission

The WBF President shall be provided with the request of affiliation, the relevant documents and the report of the Zonal President.

The President may request supplementary information and once satisfied the application is complete will list the matter for consideration at the next meeting of the EC.

Any application for admission is examined by the EC which, if necessary, will appoint one of its members to investigate the application. The investigation will be specific to the activity in the applicant country.

If satisfied that all the requirements for membership of the WBF have been met, the EC may grant membership to the applicant Federation and report to the next Congress for its ratification.

If the EC grants the membership, the Applicant, the Zonal President and all Federations will be notified.

The membership is effective upon approval of the EC.

Article 6 – Resignation

Any affiliated member wishing to resign its membership must inform the WBF in writing.

The President will put the Resignation on the agenda for the next meeting of the EC.

The resigning NBO, the Zonal President and all Federations will be notified of the resignation by the WBF. In addition the resigning NBO will be reminded of its outstanding financial or other obligations.

In the case of possible litigation on any question (financial or otherwise) the WBF may make representations to the National Organisation which endorsed the application for admittance of the Federation, now resigning, or to any other national body under which the Federation operates.

Article 7 – Suspension

The EC is responsible for dealing with the suspension of affiliated members and, where necessary, reporting this matter to the Congress.

An affiliated member may be suspended for any of the reasons set out in the Statutes.

The suspended Federation, Zonal Conferences, all the affiliated members and the National Organisation which endorsed the application for admittance of the suspended Federation and/or any other national body under which the suspended Federation operates, will be notified in writing by the WBF

The Honorary Secretary will inform the suspended Federation of its outstanding financial or other obligations to be fulfilled.

In the case of suspension for reasons of financial default, the suspended Federation may re-instate its position by payment of any amount/s outstanding, plus a fine of 10% or such amount as may be approved by the EC.



Article 8 – Removal

The removal of a Federation for cause may be determined by the EC subject to the ratification of the next Congress.

The Federation in question will be invited by the WBF to present its defence before the EC; such representation may be presented orally or in writing.

If the EC decides removal, the Removed Federation will be notified in writing with copies sent to the Zonal President, all the affiliated members and the National Organisation that endorsed the application for admittance of the removed Federation and/or any other national body under which the removed Federation operates.

Article 9 – Re-admission

Re-admission of removed Federations can be at any time decided by the affirmative vote of two thirds of the EC on such conditions as the EC may prescribe and is subject to the ratification of the next Congress.

If a Federation has been removed for financial reasons, it must comply with the provisions for the suspended Federations before re-admission may be considered.

Such provisions shall include settlement of all outstanding financial or other questions with its own or other Zonal Conferences, other Affiliated Federations and Sport Organisations.

Article 10 – Membership rights

Affiliated Federations are entitled:

1. to vote at the Congress;
2. to submit proposals to the Congress;
3. to make nominations for office in the WBF
4. where appropriate, to make nominations for positions on the elected structures of the WBF;
5. to participate in the official events of the WBF
6. to use the WBF logo in the format prescribed by the EC

Article 11 – Membership Obligations

Affiliated Federations have a continuing obligation to satisfy the admission requirements that are set out within Article 7 of the Statutes.

Affiliated Federations are obliged to pay an annual fee. Subject to changes in the economic situation, the fees - which are fixed in USD - are established for four-years by the Congress.

Fees are due on January 1st in each year and must be paid before June 30th in that year. Late payments are subject to a fine of 10%.

Fees are due in their entirety for federations admitted before the 30th June in any year and for those that have resigned. If admission has occurred after June 30th, one-half of the annual fee is payable for the remaining part of that year.



Chapter 3

Zonal Conferences & Associate Members

Article 12 – Zonal Conferences

The Zonal Conferences of the WBF are:

- Zone 1, Europe
- Zone 2, North America (including Mexico)
- Zone 3, South America
- Zone 4, Asia and Middle East
- Zone 5, Central America and Caribbean
- Zone 6, Asia Pacific
- Zone 7, South Pacific
- Zone 8, Africa

Article 13 - ZC Formation

The NBOs in each Zone shall unite in a Zonal Conference. The ZC shall decide any question in which different organizations dispute the right to be the NBO for a country within the Zone. A Zone designated by the EC that does not have a ZC shall establish one as soon as practical after designation of the Zone. The NBO in the Zone with the largest membership shall have primary responsibility to establish the ZC but, in the event of no ZC within six months after designation of the Zone, the EC may assign to another NBO within the Zone the responsibility to organize the ZC is established within such period as may be fixed by the EC. After a ZC has been established for a Zone, no NBO within its Zone may become or remain a member of the WBF unless it is also a member in good standing of the ZC.

Article 14 – Logos

Each ZC has its own Logo approved by the WBF EC

Article 15 – Communication

The ZC shall be responsible for the notification, in writing, to the WBF of:

- the address of their headquarters, all the related data and the updating of any changes or modifications
- the name and related data of the President and members of the Board as soon as elected
- the information concerning events, championships and any other relevant activity, in particular concerning any disciplinary action taken with regard to the integrity of sport of bridge.

Article 16 – Zonal Representation on EC

In accordance with the Statutes the ZC are entitled to elect up to nineteen members of the WBF EC.

All such members shall be elected by the ZC in accordance with its rules and must fulfil the requirements of the WBF Statutes and By-Laws.



Each ZC shall be responsible for the notification, in writing, to the WBF of the name, address and all other relevant data of each such member, as soon as elected.

In case of vacancy, for any reasons, of the member or members during their term the ZC shall select their replacement and notify the WBF accordingly.

ZC 1, Europe and ZC 2, North America, shall each be entitled to elect five members; ZC 6, Asia Pacific, two members and each other ZC one member. Each ZC that is allocated two or more representatives shall elect at least one representative of each gender.

The EC shall have the authority, based upon such factors as it may deem relevant, to increase the entitlement of any ZC to elect an additional member to the EC, subject always to the maximum of nineteen.

The EC shall also have the authority to reduce the entitlement of any ZC and to eliminate a ZC's entitlement to any member of the EC under such conditions and based upon such factors as it may deem relevant, provided that in any such case a ZC with no members on the EC shall be entitled to an official observer, without voting rights, on the EC.

In the above case of reduction of the members, the EC shall have the authority to require the ZC to remove any member so that the ZC has only the number of members on the EC to which it is then entitled.

The member or members shall continue to serve in office for the full term of the legislature unless removed for cause by the EC or unless at any time a ZC's entitlement regarding the number of representatives is reduced.

Article 17 – Report to the WBF EC

The ZCs will report about their activity at the meetings of the EC.

Article 18 – Associated Members

The relations between the WBF and any Associated Member shall be defined in the relevant Memorandum of Understanding approved by the WBF EC by a majority of two thirds of its total members.

In any event, in accordance with Article 15 of the Statutes, only Congress shall afford the status of Associated Member.

Chapter 4 Authority

Article 19 – Reporting of Sanctions

In accordance with Article 18 of the Statutes, all disciplinary sanctions must be reported to the WBF in a timely manner by the Member NBOs and/or Zonal Conference imposing the same.

The reports shall be addressed to the WBF President who will arrange for such information to be circulated to the other Zones and Member NBOs.



Chapter 5 Organisation

Article 20 – Organisation

In accordance with Article 20 of the Statutes, the government of the WBF is vested in:

- the Congress
- the President
- the EC
- the Management Committee

The organisation of the WBF also includes:

- Officers
- Honorary Officers
- Disciplinary Bodies
- Technical Advisors
- Standing and Special Committees
- Special appointments

Chapter 6 The Congress

Article 21 – Generality

The Congress shall have the powers explicitly conferred upon it by Statutes and the By-laws. The Congress may also make recommendations to the EC in respect to any administrative or EC matters subject to the jurisdiction of the EC.

The Congress shall be entitled to receive reports on the affairs of the WBF and the business transacted by the EC at each of the meetings of the Congress.

Article 22 – Meetings

A regular meeting of the Congress in Ordinary Session shall be held every two years in even numbered years at the place and time of the World Bridge Championship or at a place and time otherwise decided by the EC.

An extraordinary Congress may be called in accordance with Article 22 of the Statutes.

Article 23 - Convocation

The date, the place and the agenda of the Congress is the responsibility of the EC, whilst the convocation is made by the President.

The convocation of the Congress shall be published on the WBF Website and forwarded electronically by the Honorary Secretary to all affiliated members and other persons entitled to attend, at least 60 days prior the date of the meeting.



Any affiliated member may submit in writing to the Honorary Secretary, at least thirty days before the Congress, a matter for discussion to be put on the Agenda. The EC has the right to refuse the inclusion.

If updated, the Agenda shall be delivered prior to the start of the meeting.

Article 24 - Agenda

The Agenda shall include:

1. Roll Call to determine the quorum
2. Appointment of the Scrutinising Committee
3. Approval of minutes of preceding meeting
4. Report of the President
5. Report of the Treasurer
6. Election of the members of the EC, when required
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Adjournment

Article 25 - Accreditation

The delegates and other persons allowed to attend the Congress must register at the Accreditation Desk before the opening of the meeting and must be accredited by the Honorary Secretary.

To be accredited to the Congress, the delegates must submit:

- a) If NBO President, an identification document
- b) If NBO Bona Fide Member, an identification document together with an official letter from the NBO confirming his appointment

Article 26 - Proxy

If an NBO, for any reason, is unable to be represented by its own delegate it may give a proxy to another NBO accredited delegate, filling and signing the official WBF Proxy Form, to be submitted to the Accreditation Desk and to be accredited by the Honorary Secretary.

No delegate shall have more than one proxy and cannot cast more than two votes, including his own.

Article 27 - Scrutinising Committee

The Scrutinising Committee, composed of 3 members, one of them acting as chairman, shall be appointed by the Congress on the proposal of the President.

The Committee shall be comprised of delegates.

The duty of the Committee consists in the explanation to the delegates of the voting procedure, the counting of votes, the control of the regularity of the ballots and the report of the results to the President of the Congress.

Article 28 - Minutes

The minutes of the deliberations of Congress are the responsibility of the Honorary Secretary and signed by the President.



Article 29 – Candidates for election

Nominations for EC members to be elected by the Congress must be in writing or e-mail and received together with a CV of the Candidate by the Honorary Secretary at least 30 days before the date of the Congress.

The Candidates must be in good standing with the NBO of the Country of which the candidate is a citizen or a bona fide resident and must fulfill all the Statutes and By-Law requirements.

Once the deadline for nominations has ended, the candidatures will be circulated via e-mail to the affiliated NBOs and published on the WBF website.

Candidates must be physically present at the Congress at the time of the election, save in cases of *force majeure*.

Article 30 – Candidates from the Floor

If, and only if, there are insufficient candidates, NBOs may present further candidates subject to the following conditions:

- a) the candidates must be presented at the opening of the Congress;
- b) the presentation must be made by the delegate of the NBO;
- c) all the other conditions of admissibility must apply.

Article 31 – Election

The election of the EC members takes place by secret ballot.

The three candidates with the highest number of votes shall be elected, subject to the provision within the Statutes that no more than one candidate may come from the same Zonal Conference.

In the event of a tie there are further secret ballots amongst the candidates up to the breaking of the tie.

Chapter 7 The President

Article 32 – Role and functions

The role and functions of the President are described in the Statutes and By-Laws

Article 33 – Election

Any individual fulfilling all the Statutes and By-Law requirements may be elected by the EC to the presidency of the WBF.

A majority of three quarters of the total votes shall be required for the first three ballots. Should no candidate reach the relevant majority in the first three rounds of voting, a simple majority of the total votes shall be required for the following ballots.

If there are more than two candidates and none reaches the relevant majority, after each round of voting the candidate(s) receiving the least number of votes will be eliminated until only 2 candidates remain.



Chapter 8

The Executive Council

Article 34 – Role and functions

The role and functions of the EC are described in the Statutes and By-Laws

Article 35 – Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the EC shall be held in conjunction with the Championships conducted by the WBF as notified by the President.

Notice of the date and venue for the meeting must be given by the President at least one month before except in the case of an emergency. The notice of the meeting should be accompanied by the agenda.

Article 36 – Special Meetings

If circumstances so require, special meetings may also be convened at the call of the President upon at least fifteen days' written notice setting forth the time, place and purposes of the meeting.

Any one or more members of the EC (or any Committee thereof) may participate in a special meeting of the EC (or such Committee) by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time; participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such meeting.

Article 37 – Action without a Meeting

In lieu of a meeting, any matter within the jurisdiction of the EC, not requiring a qualified majority of votes, may be acted on, at the call of the President, by written ballot. In such case, at least one week notice setting forth the matter to be acted on shall be given to each member of the EC.

Article 38 – Presiding

The President presides over meetings of the Council. In his absence the First Vice-President shall preside. If the First Vice-President is also not available the Second Vice-President shall preside. The President may authorise one of the Vice-Presidents to preside at any particular time.

Article 39 – Minutes

The minutes of the deliberations of the EC are the responsibility of the Honorary Secretary, signed by the President or by the presiding person and by extract published on the WBF Website.



Chapter 9 The Officers

Article 40 – Vice-Presidents

Two Vice-Presidents are elected by, and from among, the members of the EC on the proposal of the President who will indicate the order of precedence; the Vice-Presidents must be from different Zones. They assist the President and can be charged with special duties.

The Vice-Presidents in order of precedence shall exercise the functions of the President during the absence or disability of the President.

Article 41 – Treasurer

The EC, on the proposal of the President, shall elect from among its members a Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall have the custody of all monies and securities of the WBF and shall keep regular books of accounts. He shall disburse the funds of the WBF in payments of just demands against the WBF or as may be ordered by the EC, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and will render audited accounts covering each calendar year and an interim report at each meeting of the EC and the Management Committee setting forth an accounting of all his transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the WBF. He shall perform all duties incident to his office or which are properly required of him by the EC. The Treasurer shall also be Chairman of the Finance Committee.

The Treasurer is responsible, in particular:

- for the preparation and presentation at appropriate times, of the financial reports, the budgets and the financial plan; once approved, he is responsible for implementing the plans and monitoring the budgets;
- for the financial administration of accounts in accordance with the financial rules approved by the EC and by the Management Committee.

Article 42 – Honorary Secretary

The EC, on the proposal of the President, shall elect from among its members the Honorary Secretary and is responsible for prescribing, in addition to the specific functions prescribed by the Statutes, By-Laws and other WBF Laws, Rules & Regulations, the terms, conditions and requirements of the appointment.

Article 43 – General Counsel

The General Counsel shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the EC.

He shall be the Chief Counselling Officer of the WBF in all legal matters and is entitled to attend, without voting rights, meetings of the EC, Management Committee and Congress, and to formulate proposals and give suggestions. He shall also be the Chairman of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

The General Counsel shall not be a Zonal Representative nor a member of the EC.



Chapter 10

The Honorary Officers

Article 44 – President Emeritus

The title of the President Emeritus shall be honorary and may be awarded by the Congress to the outgoing or former WBF President. He need not be a Zonal Representative. The President Emeritus shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the EC, Management Committee and the Congress, but shall have no vote unless otherwise qualified to vote. The President Emeritus (the first awarded if more than one) shall preside over the Advisory Committee.

Article 45 – The Committee of Honour

The Committee of Honour of the WBF shall consist of those individuals elected thereto by the EC in recognition of their unselfish efforts in making a significant contribution to the enhancement and growth of bridge throughout the world. The Committee of Honour shall not exceed thirteen living members, assuring that at least one representative of each gender is included.

Nominations and elections may be held at meetings of the EC with nominations to be made by a minimum of three EC members from three different zones. Election to the Committee shall require the affirmative vote of three-quarters of those entitled to vote who shall include: voting members of the EC, and any of the Presidents Emeritus or existing members of the Committee of Honour who are present. Voting for election to the Committee of Honour shall be by secret ballot. Induction to the Committee shall occur on the occasion of an official ceremony of the particular World Championship at which time the individual shall be presented with a suitable pin designating his election to the Committee of Honour.

Chapter 11

The Committees

Article 46 – The High Level Players Commission

The technical advisor of the WBF regarding matters related to the organisation and the rules & regulations of the bridge competitions is the High Level Players Commission (“HLPC”)

The HLPC consists of not less than seven and not more than nine members, representing at least four ZCs. One member shall be appointed by the WBF Youth Committee and the others are appointed by the EC on the proposal of the President; those appointed by the EC shall include at least two males and two females and must be chosen from among the WBF World Grand or Life Masters who participated in a World Championship in the previous eight years.

At its first meeting of each legislature the HLPC shall elect from among its members a Chairman.

The HLPC shall advise the President and the EC on general matters concerning sport activity and carry out such other duties as may be assigned by the President and the EC.

The HLPC shall elect two of its members, who must be of opposite genders and from different Zones to serve as members of the EC with full voting rights.



The procedure of conduct of the meeting, described for the other WBF Committees, shall apply to the meetings of the HLPC.

Article 47 – Committees

Standing Committees shall be appointed, and Special Committees may be appointed, including their respective Chairman and Secretary, by the President with the approval of the EC.

Save for cases expressly foreseen in the Statutes and By-Laws, the Committees shall consist of not less than five and no more than seven members including the chairman. The WBF President is an *ex officio* member of all Committees without voting rights unless otherwise qualified.

All committees shall keep regular minutes of their meetings and shall report the same to the President and then to the EC at its next meeting.

A quorum for any WBF Committee shall consist of a majority of the members of the Committee; provided appropriate notice thereof has been given, the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at the meeting, or the written approval of a majority of all the members of a Committee without a meeting, shall be sufficient for the approval of any matter within the jurisdiction of such Committee. Each such Committee shall fix its own rules of procedure and shall meet as provided by such rules or by the direction of the EC.

Notice of the meeting must be forwarded by the convener to the WBF President and a budget, if required, must be previously forwarded to the WBF Treasurer for his approval or otherwise.

Article 48 – Standing Committees

The Standing Committees of the WBF are:

48.1. Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee shall include the President/s Emeritus and members of the Committee of Honour. The Committee will make known its recommendations to the EC.

48.2. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall include the Treasurer, who shall act as Chairman. The function and duty of the Finance Committee shall be to consider and take account of the financial affairs of the WBF and to formulate the financial policies of the WBF for submission and approval by the EC.

48.3. Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee shall including members from at least four Zones. The function and duty of the Committee shall be:

- to determine all questions relating to the rights and eligibility of players or entries nominated to participate in any WBF contest: the list of players, as well as non-playing captains, coaches and other representatives in teams events, nominated by a ZC or NBO as entrants for a forthcoming contest shall be furnished to the Chairman of the Credentials Committee or other designated representative as soon as registered and in any case



not later than established deadline of the registration provided by the Conditions of Contest.

- to refuse to invite (or to revoke the invitation to) any player, as well as captain or coach or other representative in teams events, to participate in any WBF contest. No reasons need to be given by the Credentials Committee for a refusal to such persons.

To be effective, any refusal or revocation must be approved with the majority of two thirds of the total members, otherwise the case has to be decided by the EC with the majority of two-thirds of the members.

All issues of eligibility to participate in world championship events, as well as in all qualification events which may be run by a Conference Zone or NBO, are governed by regulations to be enacted by the EC that may be amended from time to time.

48.4. Constitution and By-Laws Committee

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee shall include the General Counsel, who shall serve as Chairman, and the Secretary. The function and duty of this Committee shall be to consider and take account of all matters pertaining to the Constitution and the By-Laws of the WBF and to formulate and recommend to the EC any desirable alterations, amendments or repeals relating thereto.

48.5. Rules and Regulations Committee

The Committee shall include the Honorary Secretary and the General Counsel. The function and duty of the Committee shall be to consider and take account of all matters pertaining to the Rules and Regulations of the WBF competitions and to formulate and recommend to the EC any desirable additions, amendments or repeals relating thereto.

The Rules and Regulations established by the Committee for each contest must mandatorily include that to be eligible for participation in WBF Tournaments, each contestant, as a condition of admission, agrees to abide by the Olympic Charter as well as all applicable Rules and Regulations of the WBF governing the contest, completing and signing the WBF Commitment Form.

The WBF Commitment Form must include the respect and acceptance of all the Laws, Rules and Principle governing the WBF and its activity and notably:

- respect the spirit of fair play and non-violence, and behave accordingly in the playing areas both at and away from the bridge table;
- refrain from using substances and procedures prohibited by the rules of the IOC, WADA and WBF;
- respect and comply in all respects with the applicable stipulations of the IOC Medical Code as to the non-use of prohibited drugs by contestants;
- consent to the power of the WBF through constituted authority to enforce proper behavior and to discipline an offender;
- agree to resolve any dispute or grievance arising out of any decision of the EC and/or of a Committee or an appellate body established by the WBF, in the event such decision affects or prejudices his rights with regard to his participation and play in a WBF Tournament, through recourse to



the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in accordance with its Statutes and Regulations.

In the event a team or pair refuses to play in any round or match against another team or pair, the match shall be recorded as forfeited and the offending team or pair and/or the NBO or Zone nominating such team or pair shall be subject to referral to the Disciplinary bodies.

48.6. Laws Committee

The Committee shall include members representing at least three Zones. The function and duty of this Committee shall be to consider and take account of all matters relating to the Laws of Duplicate Bridge. The Committee shall make whatever changes in the laws it deems appropriate, subject to approval by the EC. The Committee shall interpret the laws; shall periodically review the laws; and at least once each decade shall make a comprehensive study and updating of the entire laws structure. The Laws Committee shall fix its own rules of procedure and shall act as provided by such rules or by direction of the EC.

48.7. Youth Committee

The function and duty of this Committee shall be to consider and take account of all matters relating to Youth Bridge and its development everywhere in the world, to take any appropriate initiative to promote and support teaching bridge in the schools, to stimulate the participation at the youth championships and events organised by the WBF, to consider important related issues and make recommendations to the EC for implementation.

The activities and the initiatives of the Youth Committee shall be subsidised by the Youth Fund instituted by the WBF. The Committee has to submit to the President and the Treasurer for their approval, on or before the 30 September, the program and the related budget for the coming year.

48.8. Medical & Prevention Commission

The Commission has the following key responsibilities:

1. Supervising the provision of health care and doping control services during the World Championship.
2. Delivering evidence-based education to athletes and their entourage.
3. Developing and promoting the adoption of ethical standards in sports science and medicine.
4. Exploring the potential of new technologies to optimise athletes' health, and preventing their potential damaging effects.
5. Promotion of health and mental activity among the bridge players

Article 49 – Special Committees & Individual Appointments

Special Committees and Individuals may be appointed from time to time, being invested with such powers as the EC may see fit, in particular:

49.1. Organizing Committee

For each championship and tournaments conducted by the WBF, the President shall appoint an Organising Committee. The members of the Committee shall include the



President, the Treasurer, the Honorary Secretary, a member of the EC who is a member of the HLPC and the WBF Operations Director and such other persons as the President may select after consultation with the President of the NBO of the host country. Subject to the approval of the President, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Organising Committee may be designated by the NBO of the host country provided such designation is made in writing to the President at least six months before the scheduled starting date of the tournament.

Subject to approval of the President, it shall be the function and duty of the Organizing Committee to make all necessary arrangements incident to the staging of the tournament. The Organizing Committee will remain in charge until the day prior to the start of the Championship.

49.2. Championship Committee

The President will appoint a Championship Committee which will be in charge from the day before the start of the Championship until the end of it: in this Committee the Host will appoint the On-site Organizer.

The Committee shall include the WBF President, WBF Treasurer, WBF Honorary Secretary, a member of the EC representative of the HLPC, the WBF Operation Director and the Chairman of the Rules & Regulations Committee.

The Committee is the governing authority of the Championship, as per the Laws of Duplicate Bridge and the WBF Rules & Regulations and will provide its managing and running.

The duty of the Committee is also to consider important related issues and make recommendations to the EC for implementation.

49.2. Reviewer

Within any bridge event organised by the WBF a player who receives a ruling from a Tournament Director may ask for the process that produced the ruling to be reviewed. A Code of Practice shall be established and published for the conduct of reviews.

The President shall appoint such number of Reviewers as are necessary and appropriate for the good running of a Championship.

Article 50 – Removal

With the approval of the EC, any member of the Committees and any individual appointment may be removed or replaced by the President.

Chapter 12 Dispute resolution

Article 51 – Quorum

Except as otherwise required by the Constitution or the By-Laws or by special rules of procedures adopted by a duly constituted body of the WBF a majority of members of any body of the WBF shall constitute a quorum and the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present in any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be sufficient for the approval of any matter.



Article 52 – Indemnification of Members of the EC and Officers

The WBF shall indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, by reason of the fact that he, or the executor or administrator of his estate, is or was a member of any EC or any officer of the WBF or served another corporation of any type or kind, domestic or foreign, or any partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, in any capacity at the request of the WBF, to the extent permitted by law. The WBF may purchase and maintain indemnity insurance to the extent permitted by law.

Article 53 – Notices & Waiver

53.1 Notices.

Whenever the provisions of the Constitution or these By-Laws require notice to be given to any member of the EC or Delegate to the Congress or Officer, they shall not be construed to mean personal notice; such notice may be given in writing and transmitted by air mail post paid or electronic mail to the address as shown on the WBF records and the time when same is transmitted shall be the time of giving such notice.

53.2 Waiver.

A waiver of any notice in writing signed by an EC member or Delegate, or Officer, whether before or after the time stated in said waiver for holding a meeting, shall be deemed equivalent to a notice required to be given to any such EC member, Delegate, or Officer.

Article 54 – Amendments

Alterations, amendments or repeal of the By-Laws may be made in accordance with Article 38 of the Statutes.

Article 55 - Interpretation

Whenever the context indicates, the masculine gender shall encompass the feminine and neuter, and the singular shall encompass the plural, or vice versa. The headings are solely for organisation, convenience and clarity. They do not define, limit or describe the scope of these statutes or the intent in any of the provisions.

Certified as the Official By-Laws of the World Bridge Federation, approved by the Executive Council on 24th September 2018, endorsed by the Congress on 27th September 2018 and adopted by the Executive on 28th September 2018 and in effect according to Article 38 of the Statutes from that date.

Gianarrigo Rona, President

David R Harris, General Counsel



"Bridge for Peace"

International Sport Federation (IF) recognized by the International Olympic Committee

President's Report to the WBF Congress Orlando, 2018

Mrs. Chen Zelan President of IMSA, Mr. José Damiani, WBF President Emeritus, dear Colleagues, dear Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Friends, good morning and welcome to Orlando for the celebration of the WBF Congress.

Before going more deeply into our matters, I would like to remember with you the Friends who have sadly passed away and were with us at the time of the last Congress in Wroclaw.

I particularly remember Anna Maria Torlontano, Member of the Committee of Honour of the WBF and Honorary Vice President of the European Bridge League. For decades Anna Maria was the soul of the women bridge, of its development and its affirmation everywhere in the world. Her enthusiasm, passion, dedication, dynamism professionalism and competence entrained everyone not only who had the privilege to work and cooperate with her but also who had just the occasion, the opportunity to meet her. Anna Maria was a great, unforgettable friend of all of us.

Unfortunately other Friends sadly passed away since Wroclaw, leaving us grieved. Extending to them a warming thought, for all of them I want, on this occasion, remember Jean-Paul Meyer, who suddenly left us a very short while ago.

Jean-Paul, who last year was in Lyon with us, coordinating and supervising the Daily Bulletin, the Vu-graph and the Internet Broadcasting, was a great eclectic personality, champion, administrator, officer, journalist: in two words Mister Bridge as José remembered him.

To them and to all the other Friends who sadly passed away, we pay tribute with gratitude and fondness and I ask you to honour their memory with a moment of respectful silence.

Two years have passed since our Congress in Wroclaw and now here in Orlando we come to the end of this legislature and start the new. Here we are to summarize and evaluate the results achieved.

This year the Congress assumes great importance, not only because we are celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the foundation of the WBF, but above all because we are discussing and I hope approving the new Statutes and By-Laws that will give a more solid base at our organisation to guarantee its further development, consolidation and affirmation.

At the beginning of the legislature our objectives were to consolidate the organisational, juridical and economical structure of the Federation, to reinforce the relations with the Olympic Committee and the other international bodies, to increase and stabilize the interaction with the Zonal Conferences, to improve and update the standard of our



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championships, to improve and consolidate the development of bridge, with particular regard for youth bridge.

I think, and hope that you share my belief, that we have to be satisfied because we achieved all the aims determined at the start of the legislature, despite the very difficult and dramatic period in which we live and which of course influences our activity.

The structure and the legal status of the WBF are clearly defined with the incorporation in the Swiss Laws and the registration in the Commercial Register in accordance with art. 60 ff. of the Swiss Civil Code.

As reported at the Congress in Sanya the new step, unanimously shared by the assembly, was the introduction of a modern Statutes and its By-Laws and Rules of Enforcement, not only in conformity with the Olympic Charter and the IOC Principles, but definitively respecting the fundamental principles of democracy, transparency and division of the powers. A Charter that could guarantee the future of the Federation accordingly also to the evolution of the civil life and social relations. We worked a lot, in synergy with our lawyers, and finally we defined a text to be submitted today to your approval.

I think that we can archive the legislature 2015/2018 as very positive from the point of view of the organisation, development, management of our activity and the excellent results achieved in the economic field. I don't want to anticipate the Treasurer's Report, but for now I will just remark that this result is more consistent than expected and even more satisfying considering the investments made and the costs incurred in development and organisation. I want to underline that the policy of strict control of the expenses combined with the better use of internal and external resources (following the simple but secure principle that the ancient defined of the "Bonus Pater Familias": cautious exploitation of the resources and strict control of the expenses) was, once again as our tradition, the key to the result. It is a tribute to the careful programming of the Executive Council and its application made by the Treasurer I wish to congratulate on his excellent work.

Let me say once again that, as we all know, our aim is not to make money, to deliver dividends or to increase our fortune for another's benefit, but to invest and deliver our income both to the organisation and management of our institutional activity - including the adoption of professional competences in the field of communications - and to services to our affiliated members. At the same time we are and have to be aware that every project or programme can be realized step by step, brick by brick, only having the adequate resources and according to its sustainability.

Nevertheless our objective must also be to maintain sufficient capital to ensure financial stability and viability and provide for the administration of our activities at least for the following legislature.

Concerning the relations with the IOC and the International Bodies, I can say that we are living a magic moment.

Bridge has been admitted and very successfully participated, together with all the other sports, to the Asian Olympic Games in August in Jakarta. Michael Bambang Hartono, Ekawahyu Kasih and Esther Sophonpanich, greatly supported by the President of the Indonesian Olympic Committee, Rita Subowo and by the President of the Olympic Committee of Asia, Sheik Al Sabah, have done an outstanding job to achieve this great result. We owe a debt of gratitude to them as they helped us to open a big window that represents the first step to reach our dream to be part of the Olympic Games. Thank you dear Friends. Esther is



today here with us and I proud to call her at the stage to be awarded with the WBF Gold Medal and to receive your applause.

I am pleased to report to you that our relations with the IOC and the other international bodies are even more consolidated. In particular our presence in the IOC life is a concrete reality: I was invited to and attended the 132nd Session Meeting of the IOC in February in Korea, on the occasion of the Winter Olympic Games, and we will be invited to attend future such meetings.

We introduced Zonal Officers Seminars and have already organised the first two, in 2016 in Medellin, Colombia in cooperation with the Confederacion Sudamericana de Bridge and in 2017 in Cape Town, South Africa in cooperation with the African Bridge Federation. The third planned for 2018 in Pacific Asia has been moved to next year because the Asian Cup and the Asian Olympic Games did not leave space in the calendar for our event.

Let me repeat once again that we did and are doing a marvellous job - continuously implemented with new projects and initiatives - with the youth and in particular with the Under-16s, having been able to convince our NBOs to take care of its development and to start to teach bridge in the schools. We launched the Youth Mini-Site and the World Online Youth Championship with excellent results. We defined an agreement with the Swedish Bridge Federation to adopt their newly developed, exceptional teaching system to offer to all the affiliated NBOs. The Youth Committee and the Kids Sub-Committee, chaired by Ata Aydin and Sevinç Atay, gave the input to an impressive project, successfully realized and performed by Gilad Ofir, Simon Fellus, Micke Melander and Fernando Lema.

Less than one month ago in Wujiang we staged another exciting Youth World Championship, beating all the records with 77 qualified teams representing 29 NBOs and 7 WBF Zones. Apart from any other consideration, what is marvellous is that in the Kids (under 16) category 18 teams competed, representing 5 WBF Zones. This event with such a number of teams competing, adopting all the sophisticated tools at our disposal, as per the other WBF championships, has to be finally recognised as a main WBF event. I want to express my gratitude and congratulate the CCBA and the LOC for the excellent preparation and organisation of the event which assured its great success. I am very pleased that these records have been proudly achieved in Wujiang, since China is unquestionably the leading Country in developing youth bridge, achieving tremendous success.

Concerning the development, I am proud to remark that, thanks to the dedicated great job performed by Mazhar Jafri, Saudi Arabia officially recognised bridge as sport, under the umbrella of the Olympic Committee, lifting a taboo which seemed to be insurmountable and opening a huge window of opportunity to the development of our beloved discipline. This recognition successfully ends what José started with Mazhar years ago and that also I tried to keep alive in my relations with Sheik Al Sabah. I believe that the admission of bridge at the Asian Games has had an important role and was the determining factor. Thanks to the admission to the Asian Games we have affiliated other new NBOs, Vietnam and Haiti and are working to affiliate Mongolia, all of them under the umbrella of their National Olympic Committees.

We restructured and renovated our system of communication and information. We provided the restyling and the renovation, also under the point of view of the functionality, of our Website. We improved in our events the activity of daily films, interviews and a synthesis of the day. In Chennai we launched the "Live News from the Championship" which has been very welcome and well received by our audience, enriching our communication system. We have



improved our presence on the Social Networks. We have developed electronic and other tools to develop the image of bridge. We pay great attention to this aspect and we are continuously implementing this service.

Concerning our championship, we introduced in Wroclaw in the World Games, in addition to the Open, Women's and Seniors, the Mixed Teams and Pairs and we have now introduced the Mixed Teams, in addition to the Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup and d'Orsi Trophy, in the World National Teams Championship, starting from the 2019 edition, as well as increasing the number of the qualified teams to 24 per category, maintaining unchanged the duration and the format of the event.

Unfortunately not everything in our garden was rosy. We had to face the terrible situation of cheating which exploded just before Chennai 2015. This was not directly connected to our events, but caused us and our bridge world great concern and turmoil and a lot of serious and practical problems.

We approved an implementation of the Disciplinary Code, the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Unethical Behaviour. We defined new rules concerning the competence and jurisdiction and the eligibility to participate in our events, including them in our Constitution and By-Laws.

We involved the HLPC, introducing a confidential express line to forward complaints and report unusual or unacceptable behaviour, giving them the authority to investigate the cases and to refer to the prosecutor their advice about a possible disciplinary action.

To guarantee security we introduced and continuously implement new electronic tools, managed by Traian Chira, which enable the registration and online broadcasting all the data and the images related to a match and in addition here in Orlando we started with a new system of surveillance, managed by Marcin Waslowicz, with cameras which allow us to maintain the control of the tables and the rooms and to intervene immediately in case of infractions. We are continuing to update the tools according to the new technologies.

I can say that the situation is largely improved and from Chennai on we have not had any further serious cases complained about or reported. Of course we must not let up in the efforts already under way, which have already begun to achieve such good result, the momentum must be maintained, implementing the use of even more sophisticated tools as such possibilities arise.

In the last months we had also to face the unpleasant and unexpected decisions of the German Court and the CAS with regards to the cases of the German Doctors and the Fantunes.

We cannot discuss or cancel the decisions, but once again I want to remark that all the bridge competitions are by invitation only (and the Credentials Committee is in charge to grant or refuse the invitation) and as the IOC President Thomas Bach said at the IOC Session Meeting in PyeongChan, an acquittal verdict is not in itself enough to guarantee the invitation: in other words this doesn't constitute a laissez-passer which grants privileges and immunities to its holder.

This is the message clear and simple that cannot be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Before closing my report, I want to take the occasion to officially say "thank you" to the colleagues that ended their term and left the board, Sevinç Atay, Yves Aubry, Josef Harsanyi and Radek Kielbasinski expressing to them on behalf of the bridge family and personally the gratitude for their service to the WBF.



I should like to express my heartfelt thanks to all my colleagues of the Executive Council, the chairmen and the members of the Committees, the Consultants who cooperated with me in the quadriennium with friendship and dedication, with a big hug to Alvin Levy, Marc De Pauw, David Harris and Georgia Heth with whom I cooperate very closely. A special thanks to my mentor José Damiani, our President Emeritus, for his friendship, confidence and proximity with his always precious support, advice and stimulation.

To Anna, Carol, Dirk, Fotis, Gianluca, Gilad, Marina, Mark, Maurizio and Simon as well as to the marvellous staff of our championships I want officially to present our thanks and gratitude for their dedication and for the excellent work done, that always allowed us to be up to the task. Anna, Marina, Maurizio and Simon have continuously been under pressure and believe me that it's not easy to report the amazing pile of work that they made: all of them in addition could not escape my lumbering presence.

I want to thank all of you, dear friends, the representatives of the NBOs and of the Zonal Conferences, and express my gratitude not only for your remarkable work in your own countries, but for your confidence and for helping, supporting and stimulating me and my colleagues in friendship, always showing your co-operational spirit to achieve the common goal.

Last but not least today we have the privilege to honour a great friend, a great gentleman, an amazing person who offered outstanding services to bridge in the 32 years that he devoted at the WBF and that decided to leave at the end of this legislature, the 1st Vice President John Wignall, to whom, on behalf of the entire bridge family, I am proud to award the WBF Gold Medal.

Closing my speech, I want to thank my colleagues of the E.C for their confidence in giving to me the great honour and privilege of serving the WBF for a third term as President. I hope to be up to the task.

Thank you for your attention.

GA Rona

President, WBF