



THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

**MINUTES OF THE 2<sup>nd</sup> MEETING  
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
Lyon, France  
Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> August 2017 at 09:30**

**In Attendance**

Mr Gianarrigo Rona, President in the Chair  
Mr José Damiani, President Emeritus  
Mr John Wignall, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Mr Al Levy, Executive Vice President  
Mr Yves Aubry, Vice President  
Mr Patrick Choy, Vice President  
Mr Mazhar Jafri, Vice President  
Mr Radoslaw Kielbasinski, Vice President  
Mr Marc De Pauw, Treasurer  
Ms Georgia Heth, Hon. Secretary  
Mrs Sevinç Atay, Member  
Mr Marcelo Caracci, Member  
Mrs Chen Zelan, Member  
Mr Giorgio Duboin, Member  
Mr Josef Harsanyi, Member  
Mr Paul Janicki, Member  
Mrs Sheena Rayner, Member  
Mr Merlin Vilhauer, Member  
Mr Howard Weinstein, Member  
Mr David Harris, General Counsel

**Also in Attendance**

Mr Simon Fellus, WBF Secretary  
Ms Carol von Linstow, Secretary to the Executive Council

**By invitation of the President**

Mr Philippe Cronier, Chairman HLPC  
Mr Panos Gerontopoulos, Honour and Advisory Committee Member  
Mrs Esther Sophonpanich, President of Zone 6  
Mrs Lilian Sun, Interpreter

**Excused**

Mr Bernard Pascal, Member  
Mrs Janice Seamon-Molson, Member

The President called the meeting to order at 09:30. He declared that there was a quorum, and the meeting proceeded as follows.

## **1. WBF/Ourgame World Wide Bridge Contest – agenda item 10**

Mr De Pauw reported briefly on the Agreement with Ourgame. The first contest had been held last year with a final in Beijing in September. It had passed off extremely well and will certainly be repeated. A profit of approximately \$80,000 was expected for the WBF.

## **2. Affiliations, Suspension & Cancellations – agenda item 6**

The Treasurer reported on membership.

- In Zone 1 there is a small decline which is the same trend as the past years. A few countries have still not paid their dues but he does not think that this will be a problem.
- In Zone 2 there is no change other than a slight increase in membership.
- There are some problems in Zone 3. Ecuador is the most problematic but Mr Caracci believes that will soon be sorted out.
- Some NBOs in Zone 4 (Bahrain – Kuwait – Qatar) still owe their 2017 dues. The situation of Syria has been frozen, awaiting better times for this country. It was agreed that Qatar would be suspended.
- Mrs Rayner, President of Zone 5, suggested that Antigua should be suspended as the Zone has no contact with them at all. French Guyana should also be suspended. There is no contact with Virgin Islands either and they will be suspended. Once again there is no contact with Domenica Commonwealth and they should be removed from the list. With respect to Panama, the President is no longer prepared to carry on paying for them but it was believed that they should be given another chance. For the moment, Cuba is frozen.
- In Zone 6, Mrs Sophonpanich, Zonal President, reported that they want to keep Timor Leste. Therefore, contact must be made with them and some action needs to be taken. With respect to Kazakhstan, who sent a request to join the WBF, but there is no further news. The President will write to Kazakhstan.
- In Zone 7 there has been no contact with French Polynesia and New Caledonia for a few years and Mr Wignall suggested that they be suspended.
- For Zone 8, most of the problems were solved during the ABF General Assembly but it was decided to remove Cameroon, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Just a few months ago, a request was received from Uganda who would like to create an NBO. In Egypt, after the Revolution, the NBO lost many clubs but they are hoping to rebuild the federation. It was agreed that this year they should pay the minimum fees.

In conclusion the Executive Council unanimously approved to suspend Qatar, Antigua, French Guyana, Virgin Islands, Domenica (Comm.), French Polynesia and New Caledonia; to remove Cameroon, Nigeria and Zimbabwe; to maintain 'frozen' the situation of Cuba and Syria.

## **3. WBF Robot Bridge Tournaments – agenda item 11**

### *3.1 Technical organization – agenda item 11.1*

Mr Levy reported on the progress of the Robot Bridge Tournaments. We are looking to start the first tournament by the beginning of September 2017. The Executive unanimously approved.

### *3.2 Financial – agenda item 11.2*

Mr De Pauw raised certain concerns in respect to the financials of the “Robot Games”. First, the potential income derived from this activity must not put at risk the present fiscal situation of the WBF, under the Swiss tax laws. Legal advice on this aspect has been asked for from our Swiss lawyers. Potentially, a special purpose vehicle (SPV), controlled by our Federation, could be put in place. Secondly, the financial parameters to be put in the Agreements with the providers (who would be 3 for the moment: BBO, Funbridge and Ourgame), still need to be agreed upon. The idea being to close the various Agreements during the present Championships and start the games from early September on. Finally, the proposal is to split any net income derived from the games between the WBF (50%), the Zones (25%) and the NBOs (25%), crediting them against the yearly membership dues and/or the championships entry-fees. The Executive unanimously approved.

### *3.3 Agreement with Mark Newton – agenda item 11.3*

An agreement will be reached with Mark Newton to create the Master Points database for this event and to provide the maintenance of the site and the coordination of the activity. Mr Newton has already done a great deal of work related to the transmission and elaboration of the data from the various provider. The Executive unanimously approved, authorizing the President and the Treasurer to define and enter into an agreement with Mr. Mark Newton.

## **4. International Organizations & Events – agenda item 14**

### *4.1 International Olympic Committee, ARISF & GAISF – agenda item 14.1*

The President reported on his attendance at the **SportAccord Convention** that was held in Aarhus, Denmark. This Convention is an annual meeting, with the attendance of the IOC President and higher Officers, of SportAccord, WADA, the Olympic Associations, the International Sport Federations, the National Olympic Committees, the Sport Media, the Cities involved in Olympic and World events organisation, the Companies supporting and sponsoring sport.

There are 72 International Sport Federations – IFs – recognised by the IOC, and grouped in 3 IOC Recognised Associations: ASOIF (Association of the Summer Olympic Sports International Federations) counts 28 IFs members; AIOWF (Association of the Winter Olympic Sports International Federations) counts 7 IFs members; ARISF (Association of the IOC Recognised International Federations) count 37 IFs members. There is a 4th Association, AIMS (Alliance of Independent Recognised Members of Sport) composed by 22 International Federations, including Draughts (FMJD) and Go (IGF), that are members of SportAccord but are not recognised by the IOC and consequently are not members of ASOIF, AIOWF or ARISF.

The President had also attended the ARISF General Assembly and the SportAccord General Assembly in April.

As approved by the Management Committee at its meeting in Kansas City, the Memorandum of Understanding with the Olympic Channel Services has been signed, a copy of which was provided to the Executive.

Finally, in June he attended the Olympic Day in Lausanne which was an occasion to meet the IOC President Thomas Bach, the GAISF President Patrick Bauman, several political and sport personalities and IFs Presidents to reinforce relations.

### *4.2 IMSA & Elite Minds Games/SportAccord World Mind Games – agenda items 14.2 – 14.3*

Mr De Pauw reported on the recent meeting of IMSA the new President of which, Mrs Chen Zelan, is present at this meeting. During the meeting, a new member was admitted: the Mahjong International League.

#### *4.3 Yeh Online World Cup & Bridge Intercity – agenda item 14.4*

Mr Damiani reported on the meeting he had attended at the end of 2016 which launched the 1<sup>st</sup> Yeh Online World Bridge Cup. This involved 4 teams at different sites throughout the world. The USA event was held in Seattle with Bill Gates, Sharon Osberg, Bob Hamman, Jill Meyers, Fred Gittelman and Sheri Winestock. Europe was represented by the Lavazza team in Turin with Sylvie Willard, Bénédicte Cronier, Maria Teresa Lavazza, Norberto Bocchi, Giorgio Duboin, Agustin Madala and Emanuela Lavazza. In Beijing, China was represented by Mr Zeng Peiyan, Mr Guo Jinlong, Gu Ling, Sun Shaolin, Zhang Bangxiang and Li Jianwei. The Yeh team, also playing in Beijing, was made up of Mr Chen Yeh, Shih Juei-Yu, Chen Dawei, Sun Ming, Zhang Ya-Lan and Wang Ping.

The winner of the 1<sup>st</sup> Yeh Online Bridge World Cup officially was the Europe-Lavazza team, but with such great media coverage the real winner was the game of Bridge.

#### *4.4 Peace & Sport – agenda item 14.6*

On Thursday 6th April in Aarhus, on the occasion of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, at the presence of several officers and representatives both of the IFs and the Olympic Family, the President, as previously approved by the Management Committee, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (a copy of which was provided to the Executive) with Peace & Sport, joining our forces to promote Bridge as a tool for social development.

In order to develop sporting activities to promote dialogue, youth integration and sustainable peace in the areas in which it operates worldwide, P&S develops effective partnerships with different stakeholders that can help it meet this goal.

#### *4.5 Sport Integrity Conference, December 2016 – agenda item 14.7*

The General Counsel reported on his attendance at the Sport Integrity Conference held in Geneva in December 2016. Representatives from most International Sport Federations attended the Conference. The thrust of the conference was concerned with match fixing; however, there was also emphasis placed on the need for International Sport Federations to set a positive example by ensuring that they demonstrate good governance. The General Counsel stated that the WBF ensured that its commercial contracts were drafted to preclude the opportunity for personal benefit to any individuals. He also reminded the Executive Council of the need for the WBF to be deal with all its matters in a legitimate manner and in accordance with its Statutes and Rules.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:00 to be reconvened on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> August at 10:15.