



THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

**MINUTES OF THE 1st MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Orlando, Florida
Saturday, 22nd September at 15:00**

In Attendance

Mr Gianarrigo Rona, President in the Chair
Mr José Damiani, President Emeritus
Mr John Wignall, 1st Vice President
Mr Al Levy, Executive Vice President
Mr Patrick Choy, Vice President
Mr Mazhar Jafri, Vice President
Mr Marc De Pauw, Treasurer
Ms Georgia Heth, Hon. Secretary
Mr Marcelo Caracci, Member
Mr Giorgio Duboin, Member
Mr Paul Janicki, Member
Mr Jan Kamras, Member
Mr Eric Laurant, Member
Mr Eitan Levy, Member
Mrs Kari-Anne Opsal, Member
Mr Bernard Pascal, 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, HLPC member
Mr Panos Gerontopoulos, Honour and Advisory Committee Member
Mr George Retek, Honour and Advisory Committee Member
Mrs Esther Sophonpanich, President of Zone 6

Excused

Mrs Chen Zelan, Member
Mrs Janice Seamon-Molson, Member

The President called the meeting to order at 15:00. He declared that there was a quorum, and the meeting proceeded as follows.

1. Opening & greetings

The President welcomed all the members to Orlando, in particular the President Emeritus, José Damiani and Mrs Esther Sophonpanich, President of Zone 6; he also welcomed and congratulated the new EBL delegates, the President Jan Kamras, Eitan Levy, Kari-Anne Opsal, Eric Laurant and, specifically, Marc De Pauw on his re-election.

2. Approval of the minutes of the E.C. meeting in Philadelphia

The Minutes of the Executive Council meetings in Philadelphia, which had been distributed previously, were approved.

3. President's Report

The President read his report. He asked the meeting to stand in respectful remembrance of Jean-Paul Meyer who had recently passed away. Jean-Paul had worked tirelessly both for the French Bridge Federation and the WBF for many years.

Congratulating again the new elected members of the E.C. he officially said "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.

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.

Much time had recently been spent in preparations for these World Championships in Orlando. They mark the end of a 4-year cycle and the beginning of a new one.

Initially the 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 championship, to improve and consolidate the development bridge, with particular regard at the youth bridge.

The WBF are now invited to all sessions of the IOC and the recent participation in the Asian Olympics marked a major break-through.

In the last months we had also to face the unpleasant and unexpected decision 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 as the IOC stated, an acquittal verdict is not in itself enough to guarantee the invitation: the Credentials Committee has the right to refuse or revoke any invitation.

His report was received with acclamation.

4. Disciplinary Matters – HLPC Report agenda item 14.3

Mr Duboin and Mr. Cronier reported that HLPC has worked this year in several different directions as follows:

1 – Actions against cheat and cheaters.

- a) *We accepted last year the principle of a Task force, with three or four experts able to react quickly whenever needed.*

Zia Mahmood joined, as well as Wen Fei. We're missing a European expert since Bauke Muller declined.

- b) *Express Line*

We didn't receive so much material after San Diego. The cases which have been submitted are more in relation with disciplinary and ethics than with cheating. We don't know really what to do with them.

On another hand, we received a request for expertise by Bernard Pascal. Bernard needed an advice on a dubious case, without fully involving HLPC, the deals coming from non-WBF events.

Task Force (without Wen Fei, Giorgio acting as a substitute) has worked and a report has been edited for Bernard Pascal. We think this process is interesting, in all cases (and in all Zones) where it's difficult to get experts' opinions.

- c) *"No cheat" movement*

HLPC has been involved since the origin of the "No cheat movement". This movement is born after Fulvio Fantoni's appearance in a Barcelona tournament. The idea was to bring players together in a group acting independently of the federations, in order not to be constrained, as they are, by the same juridical limits coming from the judgments rendered by tribunals.

The decided action has been the following: group members ask to bridge events' organizers, whichever these events are, official or not, to make a public communication, before the beginning, of which players will be playing in the event, amongst a short list. This list contains players who have been convinced to cheat in a bridge procedure and who have been "relaxed" by a civil procedure.

Group members can then decide to participate or not to the event.

This movement has been sustained by a lot of international players and a letter to summarize it has been published in the daily Bulletin of Spring NABC, in Philadelphia.

We got a lot of questions on this subject and it seems necessary to think to what will happen by now. Amongst these questions, what is the relationship between the movement and WBF?

2 - Other actions of HLPC

- a) *Championships organization*

We've been regularly associated to the discussions in relation with championships organizations, especially concerning Orlando. Some players questions have been collected and submitted to the OC, with usually a very good return.

These exchanges seem a good sample of cooperation between top players and WBF.

- b) *Asian Games*

Through the President, Antony Ching, Chief TD in charge of bridge organization at Asian Games in August, asked HLPC for help in TD decisions. He was afraid to have not enough free experts on stage to get indubitable answers. An experts' group has been built. Their task was to give a quick answer to problems which arose in Djakarta. The accepted time was 45 minutes, which was very short considering the differences in the time zones.

It was a bit difficult to deal with, but at the end process worked well. We got seven cases (not so many...) and gave every time a clear decision.

The meeting thanked and congratulated Mr. Duboin and Mr. Cronier for their detailed report and for the valuable job done. The President remarked that all the suggestions presented by the HLPC will be considered by the EC Committee and all the needed actions will be taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 18:00 to be reconvened on Sunday, 23rd September at 10:15.