



**MINUTES OF THE 2nd MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Wuhan, China
Monday, 16th September at 10:00**

In Attendance

Mr Gianarrigo Rona, President in the Chair
Mr José Damiani, President Emeritus
Mr Al Levy, 1st Vice President
Mr Patrick Choy, 2nd Vice President
Mr Marc De Pauw, Treasurer
Mr Giorgio Duboin, Member
Mr Jan Kamras, Member
Mr Eric Laurant, Member
Mr Eitan Levy, Member
Mrs Kari-Anne Opsal, Member
Mr Bernard Pascal, Member (leaves at 17:00)
Mr Douglas (Kip) Rotchell, Member
Mrs Esther Sophonpanich, Member
Mrs Suzi Subeck, Member
Mr Ben Thompson (arrives at 15)
Mr Adam Wildavsky, Member

Also in Attendance

Mr David Harris, General Counsel
Mr Simon Fellus, WBF Secretary
Ms Arianna Testa, Secretary to the Executive Council

By invitation of the President

Mr Panos Gerontopoulos, Honour Committee Member
Mrs Georgia Heth, Honour Committee Member
Mr Mazhar Jafri, Honour Committee Member
Mr John Wignall, Honour Committee Member

Excused

Mr Marcelo Caracci, Member
Mr Nader Hanna, Member
Mr Kirubakara Moorthy, Member
Mrs Janice Seamon-Molson, Member

The President called the meeting to order at 10:15. He declared that there was a quorum, and the meeting proceeded as follows.

1. Travel Insurance agenda item #4.7

The General Counsel illustrated the insurance conditions for WBF staff and members.

2. Membership agenda item #5

a) The President informed the EC about the critical situation with the Ukrainian Federation and asked Mr Kamras, EBL President, to report.

Mr. Kamras reported that in Ukraine the Bridge Federation in the past 20 years has been ruled by Mr Volodymyr Danylyuk. President Danylyuk received 6.000 Euros from the Sport Ministry. The policy of the UBF is to choose the members of the board without elections. The members of the Ukrainian Team asked for a meeting and Mr. Danylyuk refused. The EBL President asked for a report but Mr. Danylyuk did not replied. Mr Constantin Tretyachenko and Oleg Rovyshyn decided to found an alternative Association, the Ukrainian Bridge League, UBL (Constantin Tretyachenko (President); Oleg Rovyshyn (Vice President); Dmitriy Manankin (Executive Director)) UBL is waiting for formal recognition by the Sport Ministry and asks to be affiliated to EBL. In last period he had several contacts (copied to the WBF President) with the Ukrainian to try find a solution and in occasion of the Small European Federations Championship (20/23 October) he hopes to be able to call a table with both the parties. For the time being his proposal is to provisionally suspend Ukraine until the situation is not completely clarified. His idea is to invite in any case an Ukrainian Team to attend the Small European Federations Championship, not being an official championship to support reconciliation.

The President agreed with the proposal to temporary suspend the UBF while this controversy is not yet handled but reminded that the priority of the WBF in a case like this is to protect the players. If the players want to attend European or World Championship, they can participate under the flag respectively of the EBL or WBF as individuals in case of transnational events or teams in case of representative events.

The Executive Council, considered that according to the Statutes of WBF:

- every NBO must be open to all national or bona fide residents and accept them as members (art.7)
- 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 (art.9)
- only one NBO for each country may become a member of the WBF (Art 6)

unanimously approved the temporary suspension of the actual Ukrainian Bridge Federation postponing any further decision after the news from Mr. Kamras.

b) The Treasurer reported:

- Luxembourg is not interested in being a WBF affiliated member and did not paid the membership dues that up to last year have been provided by the French Federation
- There is a problem with the Canadian Federation about the number of registered members. The case needs further investigation to understand the gap between the 5.000 officially declared and the 18.000 effective players
- Montenegro is officially no longer affiliated member of the WBF (and EBL)

The President confirmed the affiliation of Montenegro has been already terminated and asked if it's the case to investigate about the Luxembourg Federation to know definitively if it's possible to maintain its affiliation, subject the payment of the membership dues or if the NBO has to be cancelled.

The Executive Council shared the position of the President, postponed any decision about Luxembourg and noted the position of Canada awaiting for the result of the investigation by the Treasurer.

3. World Online Championship 2020 agenda item # 18.3

Mr Damiani introduced Mr Olivier Comte, CEO of FunBridge, and together with him presented the World Online Championship. Mr Comte illustrated the format of the Championship. The players will use a platform that reunites BBO, Funbridge and CBO. After a qualification phase (individual play) that will start in March 2019 and end in August 2019, a determined number of players (500) will dispute the finals onsite. The winner of this competition will be awarded with World Title and Masterpoints.

Questions and answers followed the presentation and the Executive Council thanked Mr. Comte who left the room.

A discussion followed and in particular Mrs Sophonpanich commented that the aim of these projects must be to increase to population of bridge. The e-approach will attract newcomers and will give another way to compete for the medals, the Title and the Masterpoints. The online activities are the most important way to promote bridge today. Mrs Subeck suggested that this would be an interesting way to give the ACBL members the opportunity to know about the existence of WBF.

The members of the Executive Council showed their approval but were interested in knowing better further details.

The matter was discussed in depth and Mrs Opsal proposed to vote:

1. the EC is positive to the idea of creating an online World Championship.

2. to delegate to the MC his empower to describe the project in more details both technical and financial aspects for WBF, Zones, NBOs and the commercial partners.

The EC unanimously approved point 1. and with the dissenting vote of Mr Pascal point 2.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:10 to be reconvened in the afternoon at 15:00.

The President called the meeting to order at 15.00. He declared that there was a quorum, and the meeting proceeded as follows.

4. “Keep Bridge Alive” agenda item #28

The President introduced Prof.. Samantha Punch to illustrate the Keep Bridge Alive campaign, supported by WBF and EBL. Prof. Punch presented her research, underlining that KBA campaign very successfully started in Feb 2019 having the goal to raise awareness of benefits of bridge outside the bridge world.

The Executive Council congratulated Prof. Punch who left the room.

5. Approval of the minutes of the Executive Council Meeting in Orlando agenda item #2

The President submitted to the EC the minutes from the previous EC Meeting in Orlando to be approved.

Mr Eitan Levy objected that it is impossible for him to approve the minutes of a meeting one year after its sessions and received just before the session when the approval is requested. Mr. Wignall explained the procedure followed since now on. The President replayed that the decisions and statements of the E.C. are dictated and immediately in effect and can be modified, updated or changed only with a new decision/statement while the approval is related to possible notes or corrections in the part of the discussion. In any case there is no problem to forward earlier the minutes.

The EC members asked to have the minutes of the meetings in about 6 weeks after the sessions and the President agreed.

The EC approved the Minutes from the previous Executive Council Meeting with the abstention of the new Members.

6. Transparency and Publicity agenda item #36,1

The President reminded that according to the new Statutes and By-laws, approved by the Congress in Orlando, all the minutes have to be published by extract on the website.

The matters was discussed at the Management meeting in Lucignano, the first meeting after Orlando and the Management Committee decided the Executive Council in Wuhan will have to define the criteria of the publication.

On the proposal of the President, The Executive Council unanimously approved that minutes have to published omitting all the sensible data, info and documents that can violate the right to privacy of individuals or can result in reprisal against WBF or its organs and representatives.

7. World Bridge Teams Championship Wuhan agenda item #8

The President first of all wanted to thank once again the Chinese Contract Bridge Association, the Wuhan People Government and the Local Organising Committee for having given us the opportunity to hold our championship here in Wuhan.

He confirmed that this year in particular the championship is very important, more important than in the past, because the number of the qualified teams has been increased from 22 to 24 for each category and because for the first time the Mixed Teams have been introduced in addition to the Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup and d'Orsi Trophy, traditionally hosted in this event. This means that in Wuhan there are 96 teams, 24 per each category, representing 42 affiliated Federations, to compete for the titles of World Champions and for the Medals. Another reason to enjoy the championship this year is that, as President Thomas Bach remarked in his welcome message, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the recognition by the IOC of the WBF as International Federation. This is a great goal achieved, a great reward for our history, tradition and values.

He underlined that the venue looks perfect for such a bridge championship, very spacious, comfortable (both the playing area and the offices) and what is important for the participants very easy to reach walking from the recommended hotels and plenty of restaurants all around. Also the catering service arranged inside the venue looks very well organised and with cheap prices. Under the technical point of view, for this championship the surveillance has been implemented with 32 tables under control and 12 matches will be broadcast via internet.

The President concluded saying that the Championship just started and the Opening Ceremony was magnificent and very well welcomed by the participants, hoping that it will be a significant viaticum for the success of the event. Of course being at the beginning one needs to be careful and does not have to rush to judge so quick, having to be always on his guard, but the start was encouraging.

The Executive Council shared the considerations of the President.

8. Zonal Qualification Quota for 2021 World Bridge Teams Championship agenda item #17

After the presentation by the President, the Zonal qualification quota for 2021 World Bridge Team Championships was discussed and the Executive Council unanimously approved:

- I. Zonal Qualified teams for Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, d'Orsi Trophy & Mixed Teams (in addition to the Host Teams):
 - Zone 1 – 8 teams
 - Zone 2 – 3 teams
 - Zone 3 – 2 teams
 - Zone 4 – 2 teams
 - Zone 5 – 1 team
 - Zone 6 – 3 teams
 - Zone 7 – 2 teams
 - Zone 8 – 2 teams
- II. If any Zone does not fill its quota the first berth will be offered to Zone 1, the second to Zone 6 and the third to Zone 1.
 - Should there be subsequent withdrawals the following considerations will apply:
 - Zones 2 & 7 have allocated berths by agreement and thus are not considered for additional berths.
 - For the other zones the criteria for allocation of vacant berths will be:
 1. That at least 50% of their member NBOs participated in the Zonal Qualification Championships
 2. Then the highest ranked team not already having a berth will be taken from one of remaining qualifying Zones.
 3. In the event of more than one Zone being qualified, the Zone with the highest number of teams participating in their Zonal Championship will take precedence.

9. Election of the Credentials Committee

On the proposal of the President, the Executive Council unanimously approved the composition of the Credential Committee as follows:

Marc De Pauw (Chairman), Marcelo Caracci, Eric Laurant, Bernard Pascal, Ben Thompson, Esther Sophonpanich, Adam Wildavsky (Members), David Harris (Consultant), Simon Fellus (Secretary).

10. Headquarters, personnel, logistic organization agenda item #9

The President and the Treasurer reported that the Headquarters office in Lausanne in Bâtiment A of the Maison de Sport International is shared with EBL and starting from next year will move from the fourth to the third floor (Bâtiment A) where there will be more adequate space, sharing the floor with FIDE. The cost of the rent will be 60% at charge FIDE and 40% at charge WBF. The cost of WBF will be shared as follows: WBF 45%, EBL 45%, IMSA 10%. The Executive Council unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 18:10 to be reconvened on Tuesday, 17th September at 10:00.