

# Annual General Meeting

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## Minutes

Of the Annual General Meeting of Members of the International Table Tennis Federation held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2001, at the Osaka Convention Centre, Osaka, Japan, at 9:00.

1. **Welcome and Opening Address**

The General Director of the Japan Table Tennis Association, Mr. Koji Kimura, welcomed the Assembly to Osaka on behalf of the Organising Committee of the 46<sup>th</sup> World Table Tennis Championships and the Japan Table Tennis Association. He hoped the Championships would be a success and fruitful for the future of table tennis and wished those present an enjoyable stay in Osaka. The ITTF Executive Committee presented Mr. Koji Kimura with a small token of appreciation.

Mr. Adham Sharara in turn welcomed all to Osaka and thanked the Japan Table Tennis Association and the City of Osaka for the excellent organisation and very high standards provided at this event. He began the meeting by presenting an award to all Associations that had organised the Pro Tour at least once since its origins in 1996 (Australia, Austria, Brazil, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Poland, Qatar, Sweden, United States of America and Yugoslavia) including a special award to the four Associations that had organised the Pro Tour every year (China, Japan, France and Sweden) and the two Associations that had organised an event every year in addition to the Finals (China and Japan).

2. **Appointment of Chairman of Meeting**

Mr. Adham Sharara was appointed Chairman of the General Meeting. Mr. Sharara explained procedures and said a few words in view of allaying the fears of some members who felt that too much change was taking place too quickly. He said that if change was not needed it would not happen and that if the ITTF wished to make table tennis a sport which attracted thousands of spectators and where its top athletes would be recognised in the streets then change would be needed. He asked the AGM to support the proposals, which were seeking a fundamental change in the game in order to make table tennis even more exciting for the future.

3. **Roll Call and Verification of Proxies**

The President took the roll call and verified proxies. A total number of 112 Associations were present and in addition there were 13 proxies for a total of 125 votes.

4. **Appointment of Scrutineers**

Twelve (12) scrutineers were appointed (2 from each Continent).

5. **Minutes of Previous General Meeting (23<sup>rd</sup> February 2000, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)**

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2000) were approved and signed by the President as a true record of the meeting. There was no business arising from the Minutes.

6. **Report of Standing Orders Committee (document A17)**

In addition to the written report, Mr. Yuri Posevin, Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, made an oral presentation of the work that had been accomplished by his Committee regarding the formation of Committees to be appointed in Osaka. Mr. Adham Sharara thanked Mr. Yuri Posevin for his hard work.

7. **Membership Applications**

There were no new applications.

**Samoa** was accepted as a full member of the ITTF which brought the count to 187 member Associations (Samoa was previously a provisional member).

**8. Executive Committee Reports**

- 8.1 President - Adham Sharara**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 8.2 Deputy President - Pierre Albertini**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 8.3 Executive Vice President - George Segun**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 8.4 Executive Vice President – Nils Bergström**  
The report was accepted as presented
- 8.5 Executive Vice President – Yang Shuan**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 8.6 Executive Vice President (Finance) – Han Sang Kook**  
The report was accepted and it was noted that in the financial report a printing error occurred showing the same line twice. This was corrected accordingly.

**9. Continental Vice-Presidents' reports**

- 9.1 Africa (document A6)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 9.2 Asia (document A7)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 9.3 Europe (document A8)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 9.4 Latin America (document A9)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 9.5 North America (document A10)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 9.6 Oceania (document A11)**  
Mr. Adham Sharara congratulated Mr. Neil Harwood for his work at the Sydney Olympic Games and for having presented the sport of table tennis in the best possible way in Sydney. Mr. Sharara also announced that the Oceania Development Officer would be starting work at the ITTF on a ten months trial basis as ITTF Development Manager, from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2001.  
The report was accepted as presented.

**10. Executive Director's report**  
The report was accepted as presented.

**11. Reports from Committees and Commissions**

- 11.1 Equipment (document A12)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 11.2 Media (document A13)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 11.3 Olympic (document B3)**  
The report was accepted with a correction made to the title on the English version of the report: "Sydney 2000" replaced by "Athens 2004".

- 11.4 Ranking (document A14)**  
Mr. André Damman apologised for the delays that had been caused at the beginning of the year due to technical problems caused by change of computer systems and announced that the new ranking list would be delivered immediately after the finals in Osaka.  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 11.5 Rules (document A15)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 11.6 Sports science (document A16)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 11.7 Technical (document A18)**  
The report was accepted as presented.
- 11.8 Athletes' (document A19)**  
Ms. Claude Bergeret informed the Assembly that she had attended the ITTF meeting with the IOC in order to plead the case for Mixed Doubles at the Olympic Games. The decision regarding the addition of Mixed Doubles would be made known to all as soon as the IOC rendered its decision.

#### Interlude

- On behalf of the ITTF, Mr. Adham Sharara presented gifts to Messrs. Colin Clemett (Rules Committee Chairman), Rufford Harrison (Equipment Committee Chairman) and André Damman (Ranking Committee Chairman) thanking them for many years of service to the ITTF as Committee Chairmen.
- Mr. Sharara announced the retirement of Dr. Harrison.
- The AGM unanimously accepted the President's proposal to induct Dr. Rufford Harrison as a member of the President's Advisory Council.

#### 12. Revised Constitution

Mr. Adham Sharara informed that even though the Rules Committee Chairman had prepared a draft, it had been decided by a common consensus that it would be wiser to present the revised Constitution at the next AGM. Therefore, AGM's "Resolution 1" to be voted later, if accepted, would ensure that timelines are met and that member Associations would have more time to study the draft.

#### 13. Receive Audited Financial Statements and Appointment of Auditors

Mr. Adham Sharara made a comprehensive presentation of the financial situation of the ITTF. The Financial report presented was based on the report by Mr. Han Sang Kook and the audited financial reports. He highlighted the fact that the desired reserve legacy fund of USD 2.25 million had already been reached and that the steadily increasing income from marketing revenues and Olympic income meant increased funding for the Continental Development Plans and increased equipment distribution.

Mr. Ranga Ramanujan remarked that it would be preferable to receive the audited statements earlier for better comprehension and study and requested that they should be given well in advance.

In answer to Mr. Rufford Harrison's question about how investments would be handled, Mr. Adham Sharara explained that several short term investments had been made in Switzerland and that negotiations were being made with the City of Lausanne to buy office space in Switzerland and invest in real estate in the long term. He also said that the ITTF was exempt of taxes in Switzerland.

Several participants congratulated the ITTF on its significantly improved financial position. Mr. Alan Ransome said he hoped that more funds would be invested in television and development.

Mr. Adham Sharara thanked Mr. Han Sang Kook for overseeing the finances and for developing the new policies put in place. He also thanked the Lausanne and Ottawa offices for their good work.

The Financial statements were accepted as presented. It was decided that the same auditors, "BDO Dunwoody" would be maintained for the rest of the quadrennial.

14. **Propositions and Resolutions (document B4)**

**RESOLUTIONS FOR AGM (Simple majority required)**

1. **Proposed by Executive Committee**

That the Executive Committee present to the Member Associations a draft of the revised Constitution by 31 August 2001 and that the member Associations have until 31 October 2001 to provide input and feedback. The final draft of the revised Constitution would be sent to the member Associations not later than 31 December 2001 for final adoption at the 2002 AGM.

**ACCEPTED.**

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2. **Proposed by Executive Committee**

That the AGM, to conform with the IOC's objectives, elect a woman as a member of the Executive Committee for a 2-year mandate starting in 2003 (AGM), provided that the AGM agrees to expand the Executive Committee to 7 members.

**ACCEPTED.**

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3. **Proposed by India**

That a World Junior Table Tennis Championship may be started as a new World Title event.

**ACCEPTED.**

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**PROPOSITIONS FOR AGM (require a majority of 2/3 votes cast)**

A. **Proposed by Executive Committee**

1.2 and 1.7

1) That the following sentence be included in the ITTF's Constitution as per Swiss law requirement:

"The ITTF is a not-for-profit Association (Federation), governed by Article 60, and its derivatives, of the Swiss Civil Code. It is endowed with legal status. Its members, officers and employees are not responsible for its debts".

**ACCEPTED.**

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2) That to respect incorporation laws, the name of the "Council" shall be changed to "Board of Directors" effective immediately.

*This is required now that the ITTF has been incorporated with its head office in Lausanne.*

**ACCEPTED.**

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B. **Proposed by Executive Committee**

1.6

That there shall be 5 Executive Vice Presidents effective after the 2003 AGM elections.  
*This would increase the size of the Executive Committee by one.*

**ACCEPTED.**

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- C. **Proposed by Brazil** 1.9  
That at least 5 Continents shall be represented on the Executive Committee, that no Continent shall have more than 2 members and that at least 1 member shall be a woman.

DEFEATED.

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- D. **Proposed by Brazil** 1.9  
That the functions of Executive Vice Presidents shall be defined from time to time by the President.  
*This would mean that all Executive Vice Presidents would be elected without specific duties.*

DEFEATED.

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- E. **Proposed by Executive Committee** 1.19 (new)  
That Officers and members of the Council (Board of Directors), Committees, Commissions and Working Groups and Auditors shall be elected in odd numbered years, unless decided otherwise by the AGM.  
*This would preserve the existing procedure, now that a General Meeting is held annually.*

ACCEPTED.

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- F. **Proposed by Executive Committee** 1.19 (new)  
That as of the year 2005, elections be held according to the Olympic Quadrennial in the year following the summer Olympic Games for a four-year term.

ACCEPTED.

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(The following propositions concern the Laws of table tennis and require a majority of 3/4 of votes cast)

- G. **Proposed by Rules Committee** 2.1.2  
That "vertical" is inserted before "sides".  
*This would make clear that the vertical faces of the table-top are not part of the playing surface.*

ACCEPTED.

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- H. **Proposed by Rules Committee** 2.5.2  
That the words "until it touches . . . the wrist, or" be deleted.  
*The provisions of the deleted wording are covered elsewhere in the laws and it is unnecessary here (2.6.2, 2.6.3, 2.7.1 and 2.10.1.3).*

ACCEPTED.

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- I. **Proposed by Rules Committee** 2.5.8  
That the ball is obstructed if it is intercepted above the playing surface before it has struck the correct court.  
*This introduces no new principle and is intended only to make clear the intention of the present law that the ball is obstructed if it is intercepted over the playing surface.*

ACCEPTED.

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- J. **Proposed by Rules Committee and England** 2.6  
 That the present 2.6.1, 2.6.4 and 2.6.5 be replaced by:
- 2.6.1 Service shall start with the ball resting freely on the open palm of the server's free hand.
- 2.6.4 From the time at which the ball leaves the server's hand until it is struck it shall be above the level of the playing surface and behind the server's end line.
- 2.6.5 When the ball is struck, no part of the body or clothing of the server or of his doubles partner shall be in a line (area, space) between the ball and any part of the net.

*The purpose of the proposed change is to prevent the service being hidden from the receiver by requiring (1) the ball to be above the playing surface from the time at which it is projected until it is struck, and (2) no part of the server's body or clothing to be within the triangular area formed by the net and imaginary lines between the ball and ends of the net when the ball is struck.*

**ACCEPTED with the implementation date being 1<sup>st</sup> September 2002 and with a clearer definition of the "space" which is to be kept "clear".**

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- K. **Proposed by Germany** 2.6.5  
 That when the ball is struck in service it shall be above the server's forearm.

**WITHDRAWN.**

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- L. **Proposed by Germany (if previous proposition is not accepted)** 2.6.5  
 That when the ball is struck in service it shall be between the server's end line and the front of his body.

**WITHDRAWN.**

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- M. **Proposed by Athletes' Commission and EC** 2.11, 2.13.3, 2.13.6
- That a game shall be won by the player or pair first scoring 11 points unless both players or pairs score 10 points, when the game shall be won by the player or pair first scoring subsequently 2 points more than the opposing player or pair.
  - That the server shall change after every 2 points (even number) until the score 10-10, after which the players or pairs shall serve alternately.
  - That in the last possible game of a match the players or pairs shall change ends when first either player or pair scores 5 points.

**ACCEPTED**

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- N. **Proposed by Finland** 2.11  
 That a game shall consist of either 11 points or 21 points  
*This would allow both 11 and 21 point games to continue for the time being, with the situation being reviewed at the next AGM.*

**WITHDRAWN.**

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- O. **Proposed by Athletes' Commission, Executive Committee and Finland** 2.12.1  
 That a match shall be the best of any odd number of games, and that the number of games in a match for particular types of competition would be specified in the regulations applying to those competitions.  
*This would also change rule 3.7.4.4.*

**ACCEPTED.**

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Propositions P, Q, R, S and T relate to games of 11.

- P. **Proposed by Finland** 2.13.3  
That the server shall change after every odd-numbered total of points until the score 10-10, after which the players or pairs shall serve alternately.  
*This is the system used in lawn tennis tie-breaks.*

**WITHDRAWN.**

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- Q. **Proposed by Latvia** 2.13.3.  
That the loser of each rally shall serve for the next rally.

**WITHDRAWN.**

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- R. **Proposed by Finland** 2.13.6  
That the players shall not change ends in the last possible game of a match.

**WITHDRAWN.**

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- S. **Proposed by Athletes' Commission, Executive Committee and Finland** 2.13.7  
That in the last possible game of a doubles match the receiving pair shall change their order when first either pair scores 5 points.

**ACCEPTED.**

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**Proposed by Athletes' Commission and Executive Committee** 2.15.1, 2.15.3  
That the expedite system shall be introduced when a game has lasted 10 minutes, unless both players or pairs have scored at least 9 points, and that if a game lasts 10 minutes all subsequent games of the match shall be played under the expedite system.

**ACCEPTED.**

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- U. **Proposed by Rules Committee** 2.12.2  
That item 2.12.2 (Play shall be continuous throughout the match except for authorised intervals) be transferred to item 3.4.4. "Intervals".  
*This would associate the continuity requirement with the definition of authorised intervals.*

**ACCEPTED.**

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## 15. Future World Championships

- 15.1 **Selection for 2003**  
France, by secret ballot, was selected to host the 2003 World Championships for individual events. Mr. Adham Sharara thanked both bid countries (France and Brazil) for their very good presentations and wished France every success in their preparations. Mr. Gérard Velten, President of the French Table Tennis Association, thanked everyone for their support and said that the French Federation would do its best to ensure that hospitality would be of the highest quality. He hoped that everyone would be present in Paris in 2003.

- 15.2 **Selection for 2004**  
Brazil withdrew its application and Qatar was selected automatically to host the 2004 World Team Championships. The President of the Qatar Table Tennis Association, Mr. Khalil Al Mohammadi, thanked the President and the Assembly for their support and said that Qatar would do its best to make the 2004 Championship a memorable one. The President of the Arab Table Tennis Union, Mr. Mohammed Al-Hussaini, in

turn thanked the Assembly for supporting Qatar and said that it was an honour for all Arab countries to be given the privilege of hosting a World Championship in the Arab world.

**15.3 Future Years**

Mr. Adham Sharara informed the Assembly that the Board of Directors (BOD) would be deciding at its next meeting whether the ITTF would be continuing to hold separate championships for individual and team events. If the decision were taken to continue in this direction then the selection of the host for the 2005 World Championships would be voted at the AGM in 2002. However, bids would be opened immediately for 2005. Mr. Claude Diethelm, President of the Swiss Table Tennis Association announced that Switzerland would be applying for 2005. The debate that followed indicated that many were in favour of giving precedence to the Continents that had never hosted a World Championship. However, it was also felt that favouring one Continent at the outset would only discourage any others that may wish to apply.

**16. Election of Board of Directors (Formerly the Council)**

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that due to an internal error the BOD had elected 33 members instead of 32 according to Continental quotas. Asia had one member more than its entitled number. He therefore proposed to the AGM, as a formal motion, to keep the number at 33 until the next AGM at which time the number would be reduced by one Asian member. The motion was accepted.

**17. Election of Committees**

The AGM adopted the list of Committee Members as presented by the Standing order Committee with some minor modifications. Chairmen of Committees would be elected at the next BOD meeting.

**18. Election of Officers (2-year term)**

**18.1 President**

Mr. Adham Sharara (Canada) was re-elected by acclamation.

**18.2 Deputy President**

Mr. Pierre Albertini (France) was re-elected by acclamation.

**18.3 Executive Vice President (Finance)**

Mr. Han Sang Kook (Korea) was re-elected by acclamation.

**18.4 Executive Vice Presidents (3)**

Mr. George Segun (Nigeria), Mr. Nils Bergström (Sweden) and Mr. Yang Shuan (China) were re-elected by acclamation.

**18.5 Continental Vice Presidents**

The following Continental Vice Presidents were elected:

- Mr. Chérif Hajem (Tunisia) - Africa
- Mr. M. C. Chowhan (India) - Asia
- Mr. Stefano Bosi (Italy) - Europe
- Mr. Miguel Delgado (Guatemala) - Latin America
- Ms. Sheri Pittman (USA) - North America
- Mr. Neil Harwood (Australia) - Oceania

**19. Next AGM – 2002**

**19.1 Proposal from Zagreb**

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the Croatian Table Tennis Association had kindly offered to host the next AGM of the ITTF during the European Championships to be held in Zagreb Croatia. Mr. Sharara invited the President of the Croatian Table Tennis Association, Mr. Ivo Goran Munivrana, to say a few words. Mr. Munivrana confirmed that the ITTF was most welcome to host its meeting in Zagreb on **Friday the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2002.**



## 19.2 Proxies

Due to the fact that there would not be a World Championship at the same time as the 2002 AGM, it was decided, as an exceptional measure, and without precedence, to allow each Association to hold two proxies at the AGM in 2002.

## 20. Any other business

### • 1937 world Champions

Mr. Tim Boggan explained that on recommendation from the Council at its meeting on 24 April, the ITTF would like to redress an unfair episode in the annals of table tennis History when in 1937 the Women's singles title had been declared vacant due to a time-limit rule in force at the time. It was decided to declare the two players, Trude Pritzi of Austria and Ruth Aarons of the USA Co-Champions in the Women's singles in 1937. A certificate and medals were offered to representatives from the Austrian and USA Associations.

- It was confirmed that the new Umpires and Referees Committee would use the final document presented by the Umpires & Referees Task Force as a basic work document for their duties.
- The list of names presented for the Standing Orders Committee was approved by the AGM.
- Mr. Afshin Badiie announced that Professor Yuza of Japan (organiser of the ITTF Sports Science Congress) had been taken ill to hospital and wished him a speedy recovery.
- In answer to the delegate from Guernsey who wished to know if the ITTF had plans to balance the difference between attacking and defensive play which had now accrued due to the development of faster material, Mr. George Segun answered that the ITTF was doing research with several laboratories and that the effect of defensive play was one of its concerns.
- Mr. Ahmed Boughnim, President of the Tunisian Table Tennis Association, announced that the Mediterranean Games would be held in Tunisia in September and invited the Executive Committee to participate in the event. He also proposed a vote of thanks for the President, Mr. Adham Sharara, for his dedication to the ITTF.
- The delegate from Azerbaijan proposed that the ITTF should try to ensure that all National Associations had an e-mail account. He also said that it was important for the ITTF to have a professional promoter to promote its events. He also suggested that the ITTF should organise at the time of the AGM, a tournament for officials.
- On a proposal by Mr. Olabanji Oladapo, it was agreed that all PAC members should be made Personal Honorary Members of the ITTF. Mr. Adham Sharara said that it would be formalised in a written communication in due course.
- Mr. Alan Ransome recommended that Mr. Rufford Harrison should be made a Personal Honorary member of the ITTF. This was accepted.
- Ms. Sheri Pittman (USATT President) presented Mr. Yang Shuan and Mr. Yao Zhenxu of China with a gift to commemorate 30 years of friendship between the two countries, following the invitation that China made 30 years ago to a table tennis delegation from the USA to visit China.
- Mr. Adham Sharara thanked Mr. Bruce Burton (Canada), who was leaving the Executive Board, for his valuable work and advice over the last four years.

## 21. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 17:45.

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Adham Sharara, Meeting Chairman

## Associations Present at AGM (112)

Angola	Hong Kong	Norway
Argentina	Hungary	Pakistan
Armenia	Iceland	Palestine
Australia	India	Paraguay
Austria	Indonesia	Peru
Azerbaijan	Iran IR	Philippines
Belarus	Iraq	Poland
Belgium	Ireland	Portugal
Bermuda	Israel	Puerto Rico
Bhutan	Italy	Qatar
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Ivory Coast	Romania
Botswana	Japan	Russia
Brazil	Jersey	San Marino
Brunei	Jordan	Saudi Arabia
Bulgaria	Kazakhstan	Scotland
Burundi	Kenya	Slovak R.
Canada	Kiribati	Slovenia
Chile	Korea DPR	South Africa
China	Korea R	Spain
Chinese Taipei	Latvia	Sri Lanka
Colombia	Lebanon	Sweden
Costa Rica	Libya	Switzerland
Croatia	Liechtenstein	Syria
Cyprus	Lithuania	Tahiti
Czech Republic	Luxembourg	Thailand
Denmark	Macao China	Tunisia
Ecuador	Malaysia	Turkey
Egypt	Maldives	Uganda
El Salvador	Malta	Ukraine
England	Mexico	U.A.E.
Estonia	Moldova	U.S.A.
Finland	Mongolia	Venezuela
France	Morocco	Vietnam
Germany	Netherlands	Wales
Ghana	Netherlands Ant.	Yemen
Greece	New Caledonia	Yugoslavia
Guatemala	New Zealand	
Guernsey	Nigeria	

## Proxies (13)

Bahrain	Guinea	Oman
Burkina Faso	Isle of Man	Palau
Central Africa	Madagascar	Senegal
Congo	Namibia	Tajikistan
Federated States of Micronesia		