

Executive Board

Minutes

of the Executive Board Meeting of the International Table Tennis Federation, held on Saturday the 16th September 2000 at the State Sport Centre, ITTF Conference Room, Sydney, Australia, at 15:30.

1. Roll Call

Present

Adham Sharara	President and CEO
Pierre Albertini	Deputy President
George Segun	Executive Vice-President
Nils Bergström	Executive Vice-President
Yang Shuan	Executive Vice-President
Han Sang Kook	Executive Vice-President (Finance)

M. C. Chowhan	Executive Vice-President (Asia)
Chérif Hajem	Executive Vice-President (Africa)
Miguel Delgado	Executive Vice-President (Latin America)
Bruce Burton	Executive Vice-President (North America)
Neil Harwood	Executive Vice-President (Oceania)

Invited to participate

Claude Bergeret	Chairwoman Athletes' Commission
Colin Clemett	Chairman Rules Committee
Jean-François Kahn	Chairman Sports Science Committee
Xu Yinsheng	Chairman President's Advisory Council
Yao Zhenxu	Chairman Technical Committee

In attendance

Eve Williams	Administration Director
Anders Thunström	Marketing Director
Jordi Serra	Technical Director
Lilamani de Soysa	Administrative and Project Co-ordinator
Christian Véronèse	ITTF Marketing Manager for Europe
Peter Jensen	Media & Communications Manager
Li Tiefeng	Interpreter

Excused

Stefano Bosi	Executive Vice-President (Europe)
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2. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda was accepted as presented.

3. President's opening remarks

Mr. Adham Sharara welcomed the EB to Sydney and transmitted greetings from Mr. André Damman and Mr. Hans Giesecke who wished everyone a very successful time at the Games. Mr. Sharara said that he had visited the venue and that the facilities were excellent.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

4.1 Approval of minutes of previous meeting (Seville)

The Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting held on 26th May 2000, in Seville, Spain were signed by the President as a true record of the Meeting, with following amendments:

Item 5: Mr. Jordi Serra referred to the amended document that had been sent to the EB beforehand and explained that the distribution of Olympic money had been done on a 20% / 80% basis for the period 1996-1999 and not on a 15% / 85% basis as stated in the Minutes. He said that Central Africa had not figured in the distribution and had now been included which slightly modified the initial amount.

Item 9.2: Mr. Anders Thunström wished it to be recorded that he had expressed concern about too many experiments being made at Pro Tour events.

4.2 Business arising from minutes (not covered by Agenda)

No further business except that covered by the Agenda.

5. Sydney 2000

5.1 Update report

Mr. Neil Harwood briefly explained that in general the Games were under way without any major problems. Minor complications with the results system, scoreboard and transport for example would be solved in due course. He said he was very happy with the venue and the facilities in place. Mr. Adham Sharara also announced that the ITTF was working on its own web site independent of IBM and the IOC.

5.2 Doping infraction and decision (Cuba)

Mr. Adham Sharara communicated the information that a Cuban player had committed a doping infraction. Mr. Miguel Delgado said that the Cuban Federation had asked the Cuban National Olympic Committee to suspend the player for life. It was decided that Mr. Jean-François Kahn would ask the Cuban Olympic Committee for their decision and if it was not in agreement with ITTF suspension rules, act accordingly.

5.3 Issues

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that he was striving to clarify and resolve several impending issues such as the lack of direction signs outside the competition venue, the relationship with IBM and IBM responsibility. There were several problems with IBM such as late results, incorrect historical results, missing biographies and the inability to present the draw and the schedule on the same sheet. However, he said he felt confident that all problems would be resolved in due course.

5.4 Racket Control

Mr. Adham Sharara said he had met with the Technical Delegates and was satisfied with the system in place for racket control.

5.5 Policy regarding disqualified player

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that a proper practical solution would have to be found and implemented in Osaka regarding the replacement of a player disqualified because of doping or racket control. It was decided that when a vacancy was created by disqualification the last person to lose would fill the vacancy. Mr. Colin Clemett was instructed to inform the referee of this decision.

5.6 EC and Staff responsibilities in Sydney

Mr. Adham Sharara referred to the document, which allocated responsibilities to staff and all ITTF members present in Sydney.

Mr. Neil Harwood said that one of the best decisions he had made was to hire Mr. Zlatko Cordas who was an invaluable help.

Mr. Pierre Albertini insisted on the importance of making maximum use of the VIP lounge for meeting people and promoting our sport. The EC and EB members were also asked to make maximum publicity to promote and support Ms. Deng Yaping who was running for election to the IOC Athletes' Commission.

5.7 Jury and Technical Delegates

The Chairman of the Jury Mr. Han Sang Kook reported that roster duty had been assigned for the jury members and that two members would be on duty at every session.

5.8 Daily Meeting with Organisers

It was decided that Mr. Nils Bergström, Mr. Jordi Serra and Mr. Yang Shuan together with the Technical Delegates would meet every morning to discuss daily issues and to establish co-operation with the organisers.

5.9 Web site

Mr. Adham Sharara announced that the ITTF web site was continually improving and running extremely well. Mr. Christian Véronèse would be responsible for the web-site during the Games with a representative from Sportal.

5.10 Reports (Internal, SOCOG and IOC)

Mr. Adham Sharara said that a certain number of reports would have to be submitted at the end of the Games from the ITTF to the IOC as well as a report, which could be submitted to the Athens Organising Committee.

5.11 ITTF Lunch – 25 September 2000

Mr. Adham Sharara confirmed the invitation for the 25th of September, which would gather about 70 ITTF officials and guests on a lunch cruise in the Sydney harbour.

6. Olympics

6.1 Update and modify rules for 2004 Qualifications and substitutions

It was decided that the Technical Delegates would advise the ITTF after the Olympic Games if or how the rules should be modified for qualifications and substitutions for 2004 and a final decision would be made at the next EB meeting in Yokohama.

6.2 Review qualification system (Continental and final)

Mr. Adham Sharara requested that the EB should review the ITTF qualification system and make sure that everyone understood its importance. He said he would keep on fighting to make sure that all qualified players are allowed to participate in the Games. Mr. Miguel Delgado said that it was important to respect Continental quotas and if a player was disqualified then the next player from the same Continent should fill the vacancy. Ms Claude Bergeret said that the Athletes' Commission endorsed this recommendation and would make a proposal in this sense in Osaka.

6.3 Competition Manager for Athens

It was reported that Mr. George Seliniotakis of Greece had been appointed Competition Manager for Athens.

6.4 Mixed Doubles request update

Mr. Adham Sharara briefly explained that the ITTF was still fighting to get the mixed doubles event included in the Olympic Games. Mr. Yao Zhenxu recommended that the mixed doubles should be included in the Pro Tour as a preliminary step towards proving its firm intention to the IOC. Mr. Sharara explained that the Pro Tour events are based on the Olympic games events.

6.5 Recommendation regarding qualifiers not participating in Games

The Athletes' Commission would present a proposal in Osaka recommending that Continental quotas be respected when a disqualified player is replaced (see item 6.2 above).

7. Equipment

7.1 Rubber 888 withdraw approval – Equipment Committee

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the surface of rubber 888 was too shiny and that the Equipment Committee had made an initial recommendation of withdrawing it from the market immediately. It was decided however to study the problem further, with a visit by the Equipment Committee to the manufacturer, and a final decision to be made after 1 January 2001 (at the EC meeting in Yokohama).

7.2 Approval of new table models for Yokohama and Osaka

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the table sponsors for Yokohama and Osaka had developed new tables based on new concepts and designs, which had to be approved rapidly by the ITTF. It was decided that the Equipment Committee would test the tables and initiate the approval process immediately. The ITTF would take the approval fees out of the sponsorship money paid by the manufacturers.

8. Development Plans

8.1 Involvement of Development Advisory Board

Mr. Adham Sharara said that he would like to involve the Development Advisory Board, headed by Mr. George Segun, in all its future development activities. The time had now come to modify and improve the plans in place.

8.2 Evaluate 2000

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the initial development plan was a two-year plan and the next will be a quadrennial plan in keeping with the Olympic cycle. So far, except North America, all the other Continents had signed a development plan with the ITTF for the year 2000. A plan for North America would be in place by the end of this year and once that is in place an evaluation of the year 2000 would be made.

8.3 Prepare 2001

Mr. Miguel Delgado said that it would be interesting for the Continental Development Officers to meet and share their experiences before preparing plans for 2001. Mr. Jordi Serra said that it would be also important to take the new Olympic Solidarity quadrennial plans and new policies into consideration within the ITTF plans.

8.4 Youth Development (Competition Circuit in 2001)

Mr. Adham Sharara gave an account of his visit to the Hungarian Youth Festival, which he said was very successful. Participants came from 36 countries and 5 Continents. He said that the ITTF had to support some of the Youth programmes that were already in existence and create a competition circuit for the young.

Mr. M. C. Chowhan proposed the organisation of a Youth World Championship. It was decided that a questionnaire would be sent to find out who organised youth events and who would be willing to host a youth World Championship. The results would be discussed in Osaka.

9. Research

9.1 ITTF Scientific and Training Support Centre (CAR) Barcelona

Mr. Adham Sharara announced that the Centro de Alto Rendimiento (CAR) of Barcelona, Spain, wished to be recognised as an International table tennis Centre. It was decided that an agreement with the CAR and the ITTF would be signed shortly. Mr. George Segun was requested to visit the Centre and finalise the agreement.

9.2 Optics software ready

Mr. Adham Sharara informed the EB that the CAR had developed a computer software that enabled the monitoring of visual reactions of athletes of a moving object (such as a ball). Mr. George Segun was requested to examine the software on his visit to the Centre and propose ways of making it available to National Associations.

9.3 Research project for South Africa and validation

Mr. George Segun explained that the Research Advisory Board had been considering a number of research projects and that it was time to study them and put them into practice. The ITTF had received a proposal from a University in South Africa, which was able to carry out the experiment of "Long reach Table Tennis". It was decided that the EC would approve the funds to be allocated for this purpose. It was further decided that the same experiment would be replicated in Barcelona at "CAR" to validate the results. Mr. Segun would provide the necessary information to the CAR in due time.

At this time the Meeting was adjourned at 18:32. The Meeting resumed at 09:00 on Sunday the 17th September 2000.

Present

Adham Sharara	President and CEO
Pierre Albertini	Deputy President
George Segun	Executive Vice-President
Nils Bergström	Executive Vice-President
Yang Shuan	Executive Vice-President
Han Sang Kook	Executive Vice-President (Finance)
M. C. Chowhan	Executive Vice-President (Asia)
Chérif Hajem	Executive Vice-President (Africa)
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Bruce Burton	Executive Vice-President (North America)

In attendance

Jordi Serra	Technical Director
Lilamani de Soysa	Administrative and Project Co-ordinator

Excused

Neil Harwood	Executive Vice-President (Oceania)
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10. International Training Centre

10.1 New policies to be developed

Mr. Adham Sharara gave a brief overview of the present situation regarding the two ITTF International Training Centres in Spain and Egypt. Both Centres were functioning more or less successfully and several training camps had been held both in Spain and Egypt. However, the implementation of programmes was more difficult in Africa due to communication and other logistical problems and it was necessary to find alternative solutions for the African Continent. The EB was requested to submit all new ideas to the Technical Director so that the new policies to be implemented could be decided in Yokohama.

It was decided that a draft policy would be sent out by November 2000, which would be discussed in Yokohama. All interested members were requested to submit ideas and plans to Mr. Jordi Serra who would then include them in the draft policy.

10.2 Recognise new centres in Italy and Brazil

Mr. Adham Sharara announced that the ITTF had received two more requests for Centres, one in Terni, Italy and another in Piracicaba in Brazil. The facilities in Terni were reported to be excellent but the

Brazilian Centre did not meet ITTF standards specially where the residential area was concerned. Mr. Miguel Delgado asked the ITTF to help the Brazilian Association to upgrade the Centre. It was decided that the Terni Centre would be recognised as an International Training Centre and the Piracicaba Centre as a Continental Training Centre until it was upgraded and could be promoted to International standard.

10.3 New applications for recognition (China, etc.)

It was also announced that two cities in China were interested in having ITTF approved training centres. Mr. Adham Sharara said that his aim was to have several training centres around the world, which offered camps all year round.

11. Constitution

11.1 New Constitution (update and steps)

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the main shareholders of the ITTF were the National Associations and as such the Constitution was made for and by them. Therefore it was necessary to consult the National Associations and clearly inform them of how and where it was possible to modify or ratify the existing Constitution. Some items in the Constitution could be taken out and integrated within internal regulations.

11.2 Questionnaire and input

It was decided that a questionnaire would be sent to all National Associations and Council members and based on the results Mr. Colin Clemett would be advised to include in a draft Constitution, which would be presented in Osaka.

11.3 EC size and composition

All National Associations would be consulted on this question (see 11.2 above) and the results included in the draft Constitution.

11.4 Board of Directors size and composition

The ITTF being now incorporated must have a Board of Directors. The new Constitution would also be subject to Swiss law. All National Associations would be consulted on this question (see 11.2 above) and the results included in the draft Constitution.

12. Web site update

Mr. Adham Sharara said that he had visited the ITTF web site and said he was very pleased with the result. Match results were available three minutes after the end of a match, the IBM system being slower. Christian Veronese would also implement "live" match coverage as of the quarterfinals or even sooner.

13. North & South Korea update and follow-up

Mr. Adham Sharara referred to his report sent in August informing the EB of the possibility of forming a joint North and South Korean team at the Osaka World Championships. He said that according to the priorities and deadlines set by the two countries, the first step had been achieved with the two teams marching together at the Sydney Olympics. The next step would be the table tennis World Championships but the decision was not in the hands of the

table tennis associations but should come from higher government authorities. He said that he would ask the Mayor of Osaka to host a meeting of officials from both North and South Korea. Mr. Han Sang Kook thanked the President for his efforts and assured him of the full support of the South Koreans in this endeavour. He also said that the South Koreans would like to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the last joint team, which participated in Chiba, Japan, in 1991 by inviting to Osaka those players who had been part of the team.

14. Next meetings

The next EB meeting will take place in Yokohama in January 2001 during the Pro Tour final. A meeting of the ITTF Pro Tour Management Group will also take place at the same time.

15. Any other business

- Mr. Adham Sharara gave an update of the World Club Championships and asked the question if China was willing to host the championship again in 2001. He said that the existing rules should be maintained, in particular the eligibility rule. Mr. Nils Bergström made further recommendations for future WCCs. He said that the playing system had to be improved so that teams that finish early should be found alternative matches to play during the rest of their stay.
- Mr. Yang Shuan announced that a renowned company in China, which was already sponsoring the Chinese Inter Club Championship, was interested in organising a top level ITTF special challenge. He asked the EB to think of ways to set up such an event.
- The EB was informed that a meeting between Mr. Joachim Kuhn of the Equipment Committee and the main 40mm ball manufacturers would take place in Yangzhou, China, during the Men's World Cup, in October. Mr. Adham Sharara also announced that an American junior delegation would attend the Men's World Cup after a training and competition tour of China.
- Mr. Miguel Delgado requested that a visit to Cuba by Ms. Deng Yaping should be organised at the beginning of 2001 under the ITTF's Women Development programme.
- Mr. Pierre Albertini announced that the city of Paris, France, had been selected by the French Table Tennis Federation to bid officially for the 2003 World Championships.

16. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11: 15.

Meeting Chairman - Adham Sharara