



INTERNATIONAL TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION

Development and Continental Council

MINUTES of the International Table Tennis Federation Development and Continental Council Meeting, held on the 18th of November 2011 at 9:00 at Gulf Hotel, Manama, Bahrain.

1. President's welcome and opening remarks

The President welcomed all members to the meeting and expressed his satisfaction with the organization of the ongoing Volkswagen 2011 World Junior Table Tennis Championships since the Bahrain Table Tennis Association evidently set the organization bar very high.

2. Roll call

Adham SHARARA	Chairman
Glenn TEPPER	Deputy CEO-Executive Director-Development (Co-chair)
Melecio RIVERA	Executive Vice-President – Development
Khaled EL-SALHY	African President
Tony YUE	Asian Representative
Stefano BOSI	European President
Oswaldo BORGES	Latin American President
Michael CAVANAUGH	North American President
Patrick GILLMANN	Oceania President

In attendance

Petra SORLING	Executive Vice-President – Global Junior Program & Women
Alena KANOVA	Athletes Commission representative
Judit FARAGO	CEO-Executive Director-Competitions
Mikael ANDERSSON	Executive Director-Education & Training
Leandro OLVECH	Deputy Executive Director-Development
Polona CEHOVIN SUSIN	Deputy Executive Director- Education & Training
Lilamani DE SOYSA	ETTU observer

Apology

CAI Zenhua	Asian President
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3. Approval of Agenda

The Development and Continental Council approved the agenda as presented.

4. Minutes

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December, 2010, in Bratislava, Slovakia, were approved.
- 4.2 There was no other business from the minutes not covered by the agenda.

5. Continental Updates and Proposals (Continental Presidents)

AFRICA (Khaled El-Salhy):

- the Continental President thanked ITTF for its support; the complete realization of the Development Plan for 2011 was in great part the result of this effective cooperation;
- it is suggested to add media and other marketing related content to the menu of courses that are run under the continental Development Program.

ASIA (Tony Yue):

- it was reported that the courses, training camps, the scholarships and the equipment assistance program were successfully implemented with the exception of Yemen and Syria due to the unrest in those countries;
- seven Global Junior Circuit events were also organized successfully;
- the Euro-Asia events were covered with TV, which enhanced the promotion of the event;
- a problem to be solved is still education for International Umpires and evaluations for Blue Badge IUs.

EUROPE (Stefano Bosi):

- ETTU changed its development policy, which resulted in an annex to the Agreement of Understanding between ETTU and ITTF;
- In spite of the fact that Europe is one of the most developed continents on the average there are still many Associations in need, which require a different approach and system;
- the Euro-Africa circuit is growing as well as the cooperation with ATTU.

LATINA AMERICA (Osvaldo Borges):

- since the continent has a new leadership since May 2011, the first tasks of the new President were related to the administration and organizational side of the management for an improved cooperation with ITTF and the other continents;
- the base of the continental development is the cooperation with ITTF, in particular the attractive Hopes program, but plans are focused also toward the field of IT, other new technologies and an intensified use of sport science, all with the aim to use them as a supportive tools for an even more systematic development of the sport;
- words of appreciation and gratitude were expressed to the ITTF President and ITTF Vice President, Mr. Rivera, for their support and guidance.

NORTH AMERICA (Mike Cavanaugh):

- North America successfully participated in the Hopes Program and young, promising players also made their way to the Hopes Team that will participate at the 2011 Global Cadet Challenge;
- three training centers from the States were made members of the ITTF Hot Spot Network and different activities are regularly held under the umbrella of that program;
- unfortunately the women's coaching course was cancelled, which was partly caused also due to the different coach education system that is put in place in Canada.

OCEANIA (Patrick Gillmann):

- the development program is running very well on the continent – all countries are offered at least one activity over a period of 2 years;
- the Oceania Cup was organized on a very professional level and also the marketing implementation and outcome were very successful; the collected funds are planned to be used for the support of the continental team attending the Global Cadet Challenge.

Glenn Tepper thanked all the Continental Presidents for their cooperation toward the implementation of the ITTF Development Plan and added that ITTF is working on an Administration Course, which should be of special interest for the Continents and National Associations; the manual is supposed to be ready by the end of 2012.

6. Continental Athletes Commissions

Alena Kanova, representative of the newly elected ITTF Athletes Commission, presented to the DCC the role, objectives and development plans of the Commission:

- the Commission is composed of 11 members; geographic distribution was observed as well as a fair representation of athletes from Para Table Tennis;
- the main objectives are: to represent the rights of the players, to strive for the improvement of their conditions, to make their voices heard and finally to make relevant recommendations to other ITTF bodies;
- a designated section on the ITTF webpage for reference, pathways and news was set up;
- a call to establish Continental Athletes Commissions was made and having their representatives in attendance of Continental Executive bodies' meetings.

It was reported that ETTU will start inviting European representatives to their Executive Board meetings from 2012 on; in North America there are regular meetings of Athletes Commissions from different Sport Associations, which proved to be very efficient and useful for sharing ideas and good practises.

7. Development Program update

Glenn Tepper thanked his staff and the numerous coaches and course conductors, who are the driving force of the Development Program.

- with 215 members ITTF is the second biggest International Sport Federation, after volley-ball, membership-wise; there are still six countries in Africa and two in Latin America, which have National Olympic Committees but are not ITTF members as yet. They are targeted under a special program developed in cooperation with Olympic Solidarity and stimulated by an equipment offer, donated by Stag;
- once again more than 100 development projects were held in 2011 – mainly coach education, URC courses, women courses and training camps;
- in addition, 34 Olympic Solidarity courses with a total of over US\$380,000 were held within the calendar year;
- equipment packages were provided according to the current agreements, provided by Stag, and additional opportunities were made available through different partnerships: XIOM, Butterfly, Nittaku, DHS, ESN-Tibhar, and the Chinese and German Associations.

7.1 Continental Agreements-2013-2016

Discussion and negotiations related to Continental Agreements for the new quadrennial will start in mid 2012.

7.2 Bonus points-US\$20,000 distribution

The current Development Program Bonus Points system was explained and the Continental Presidents informed about the outcome, the share of the available US\$20,000 that each continent earned.

The criteria of new members was raised by the European and Asian representatives: since some continents already reached full membership, it was suggested to consider this for future years.

It was explained that this represents only a small amount of funding, and is an encouragement to achieve 100% membership worldwide, which will be a good marketing point for all continents.

7.3 ITTF Coach Accreditation System

Reported under item 7. Development Program update – general.

7.4 Dream Building

Leandro Olvech reported about the ITTF Dream Building program, which is successfully run in partnership with the “Peace and Sport” organization, the International Paralympic Committee and the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace. The core projects are “Table Tennis for Peace”, with Peace & Sport, which are running in Colombia, East Timor and about to be launched in Burundi-Congo Democratic. Besides, several other programs are being implemented or planned for the near future – Qatar Peace and Sport Cup, Haiti – Post Earthquake Program, Nittaku Dream Building in El Salvador, School Program in Kenya in 2011 and the next Peace & Sport Project in Palestine-Israel in 2012. A pool of supporters and donors has been established over time and also thanks to their valuable contribution the goodwill projects are brought to life and continue making a difference around the world.

7.5 Women’s Development

Polona Cehovin Susin reported about the activities that were run under the Women’s Development Program, now mostly absorbed by the regular Development Program: a general increase in female participation at different development activities was recorded, mainly among coaches and players, while a shadow still lies over the number and percentage of officials – umpires and referees, and in the area of leadership or high executive positions.

Another edition of the Friendship Trophy was held at the occasion of the International Women’s Day, which celebrated its centenary in 2011 and the Women’s Working Group held a very well attended and interesting Open Session during the World Championships in Rotterdam.

8. Education and Training Update

Mikael Andersson reported that although the Department is still in its infancy, which means a moving and learning process, much work has been done in the past year and all the existing programs and projects are growing rapidly.

The Athletes Development Model, which can be used as an umbrella for all the other programs, entails ideas, captures positive movements and builds opportunities for athletes and coaches and shall thus be considered as the general guideline for all active support towards the development of athletes and also capture the global reach spirit. The picture is unveiled with the ITTF Hopes as global talent identification program, which is gradually upgraded by the Prospect Development (main focus on the Cadet Challenge and the Hot Spots Network), followed by the “Road to Nanjing”, i.e. Youth Olympic Games, and concluded with the Excellence Pathway represented by the “With the Future in Mind” program.

The principal stakeholders within the pathway are the National Associations and Olympic Solidarity.

8.1 ITTF Hot Spots

It is believed that the program has tremendous potential – many good things are happening in the 22 centers that were made part of the Network in the first phase. Some of the centers, like the Werner Schlager Academy and the ICC Center in the USA, have been successfully connected also to other Education & Training programs, in particular with the Hopes.

8.2 Online Learning

With the cooperation of Sport Accord – Real Winner as been launched recently and the result was the launch of the first ever online learning modules about Anti-Doping. As a test an incentive was published for the participants of the World Junior Championships, while completing the modules will be made compulsory for the participants of the Global Cadet Challenge 2011. If the system proves to work out effectively the next step could be the Global Junior Circuit and the Pro/World Tour.

8.3 Hopes Program

The 2012 edition was launched recently and similarly as in 2011 the registration is again web-based, whereby only National Associations can register in the first phase. The new edition has seen also a significant change for National Associations, which by registering and thus activating their flags become partners of the program and have to actively take part in it by launching the so called National Hopes Phase. The outcome will be the nomination of one girl, one boy and one coach for the ITTF Hopes Week and Challenge.

The show-case team that will be selected during the showcase event, the Hopes Week, and they will undergo a comprehensive training and education program, attending competitions and camps, crucial for their development in the given age.

9. Global Junior Program Update

9.1 Global Junior Circuit

Raul Calin presented the update of the Global Junior Circuit for 2011:

- 26 events (two more than in 2010) were held on 5 continents; 3 events were cancelled;
- 95 National Association, which represents 44.1% of the entire membership, attended at least one event;
- The number of individual entries also increased – from 3137 in 2010 to 3422 in 2011.

A preview of the 2012 GJC followed:

- 35 events – a new record, are scheduled to be held in 2012;
- There will be 5 new and 7 returning organizers in the 2012 Circuit

Adham Sharara explained the logic why the number of GJC events has been steadily increasing – it is the role of the ITTF to offer new opportunities – to players and new organizers, which reflects also in a broader promotion of the sport.

In a discussion the DCC members expressed their concerns about the future development of the Junior Circuit. Among other the following observations were made:

- the number of events is increasing year by year but it seems that some National Associations cannot follow the increasing demands related to participation (especially from the financial point of view) and are also struggling in changing the long-time used logic for planning – starting with the calendar and ending with individualised career development of their athletes;
- it is important to find a way to successfully and effectively bridge the gap between the junior and senior age category. The introduction of the Under 21 events and lately of the intercontinental circuit were some of the actions taken into this direction but still it would be beneficial if a comprehensive analysis was done for this purpose. The study should focus on the number of drop-outs during the mentioned transitional period and on the cases of good practise on the other hand whereby also other aspects for an in-depth evaluation of the current system should be included, like funding, manpower and benchmarking with other sports. If so established the necessary actions for an improved future model should be carried out.

9.2 World Junior Championships

It was acknowledged that the Bahrain Association did a great job with the current Championships, offering extremely high level conditions for the event, a warm hospitality and a highly cooperative Organizing Committee. Besides, TV coverage was assured from the very first match, while the only negative aspect remains the number of spectators.

Updates about future editions:

- 2012 South Africa: positive feedback was received from the 2011 African Junior championships, which were organized in April 2011 in Cape Town thus the ITTF is positive that the event will be organized well and professionally.
- 2013 India: the Indian Federation is highly motivated to organize the Championships on a high level also due to the fact that the event will be held in a brand new venue, which combined with the ambitions and experiences of the local team keeps everyone optimistic.

9.3 Global Cadet Challenge

Judit Farago and Raul Calin reported that the preparations for the event were running smoothly and also that a meeting with the Secretary General of the Puerto Rico Association was held in Bahrain, where the last organizational details were finalized.

9.4 Junior Commission update

Tony Yue reported about the proposals that were made after the 2010 meeting Bratislava, which all passed and were accepted by the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Of particular interest to the commission was the adoption of the old name of the Cadet Challenge, going from Global to World again, and the separation of the Cadet Challenge from the Global Junior Circuit Finals, which will come into effect in 2012.

The newly introduced playing system for team events at the World Junior Championships was discussed at length during the Junior Commission meeting held in Bahrain and the commission members decided to run a survey among the participating teams/delegations in order to get feedback from the field. After analysing the outcome of the survey and if needed a new proposal might be presented.

10. ITTF-Continental Restructure

10.1 Africa, Latin America, North America, Oceania agreements

The four agreements are stipulated and are successfully being implemented.

It is envisioned that a closer connection of continental to global/ITTF events will be established in the future, whereby marketing support, i.e. organization of courses and know-how transfer, will be implemented.

Based on the successful cases mentioned above the same offer will be done to ETTU and ATTU shortly.

Stefano Bosi welcomed the initiative especially in the light of a precious added value that would be made to different continental events, for example the ETTU TOP 12.

10.2 Continental Unions ITTF recognition

In order to achieve more connection between the continents and the ITTF a formal recognition procedure of Continental Unions/Federations should be put in place and thus transforming the relation into an AFFILIATION, for example valid for 4 years.

The DCC recommends to the Executive Committee to look into this matter present an adequate solution/proposal.

Moreover, the ITTF recommends the Continental Unions/Federations to adequately protect the names of their organizations and the events' titles that are held under their jurisdiction with the aim to regulate them as intellectual property/rights and for their self-protection.

Mr. Bosi was in favour of the Affiliation idea but would like that clear criteria be established in order to accept a Continental Federation as an affiliate of the ITTF. Mr. Sharara indicated that the members of the DCC would have full input in establishing the criteria.

The topic of the possible introduction of qualifications for the World title events was discussed; at the time being this system – continental qualification with the Continental junior Championships serving as a qualification proper, applies only within the Global Junior Program for the World Junior Championships. The matter it's still at an early stage therefore an in-depth analysis and a comprehensive discussion among the membership and other stakeholders should be put in place before the first proposal would be launched.

11. ITTF Staff Restructure

The new ITTF Staff Structure was presented: as of 1 July 2011 a CEO-Judit Farago and Deputy CEO-Glenn Tepper were appointed but both kept also their Executive Director positions, and each of the four departments has also a Deputy Executive Director now, which all together should reinforce the staff, professional side of the organization.

12. Any other business

Stefano Bosi informed the meeting about the EOC summit held in Sochi (RUS), where the option of introducing European Games was discussed. Europe is the only continent that doesn't feature such a multi-sport event but the continental sport unions are reluctant about the idea, predominantly due to busy calendars and additional funds that would be needed for the organization and participation.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:25.

Meeting Chair
Adham Sharara

28 December 2011