



THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

**MINUTES OF THE 7th MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Orlando, Florida
Friday, 28th September at 09:30**

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
Mrs Chen Zelan, Member
Mr Paul Janicki, Member
Mr Jan Kamras, Member
Mr Eric Laurant, Member
Mr Eitan Levy, Member
Mrs Kari-Anne Opsal, Member
Mrs Sheena Rayner, Member
Mrs Janice Seamon-Molson, 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 Josef Harsanyi, Former Member
Mr Panos Gerontopoulos, Honour and Advisory Committee Member
Mr George Retek, Honour and Advisory Committee Member
Mrs Esther Sophonpanich, President of Zone 6
Mrs Lilian Sun, interpreter

Excused

Mr Giorgio Duboin, Member
Mr Bernard Pascal, Member

The President called the meeting to order at 09:30. He declared that there was a quorum, and the meeting proceeded as follows.

1. International Events & Relations with International Organisations – Agenda item 17

1.1 Ourgame – agenda item 17.6

Mr. Choy reported that Our Game is a publicly listed company on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. Recently it appears the company is not in healthy financial condition. Having not been profitable in 2017, the loss in 2018 first half extended to over US\$ 55+ million. What is more concerning is that since May this year, the company has been under the shadow of gambling scandals. In May, six employees of Our Game Poker Business Unit, Beijing Lianzhou Co. Ltd., a subsidiary of the group, were arrested. The Chinese Police Ministry is currently extending the investigation of this purportedly gambling crime to the senior management.

Given this situation, it is impossible that Our Game can fulfil their contractual obligations relative to the World Wide Bridge Contest with WBF.

Considering the great support given by Ourgame in the past years, it was unanimously agreed that in the meantime the WBF should terminate the contract with Ourgame, prepared to re-install it if the company recovers.

2. WWBC – agenda item 18

The 8 sessions of the 2018 WWBC were held earlier in the year with 24 pairs qualifying for the Final which had been planned to be stated in Sanya during October. However, considering the situation of Ourgame, as above discussed, another sponsor has been found and the final will be delayed to January 2019. It is hoped to sign the contract for this shortly and to find a further sponsor for future events.

3. Zonal Matters – returning to agenda item 12.2

Mrs. Heth, chairman of the The Constitution & By-Laws Committee, reported about the meeting concerning the situation of Zone 4: it was remarked that Zone 6 and Zone 4 cannot be combined, but if BFAME will be dissolved, APBF will welcome all its NBOs. Mrs Sophonpanich suggested that the President and the Secretary of Zone 4 be elected from the same country. Mr. Jafri remarked that the problem is not that the Zone does not function, rather that there is no harmony among the member federations.

The Executive Council, having heard concerns expressed that Zone 4 appeared to be stagnating and appeared limited in its ability to function as an active Zonal authority, resolved, with the negative vote of Mr. Jafri who wished for his reservation to be minuted, as follows:

The Zonal Conference for the Bridge Federation of Asia and the Middle East be required to urgently meet to discuss methods for its members to work together and perform as an active Zonal Authority. It is expected that it will produce an action plan to include its proposals for:

- (a) the proper administration of the Zone;*
- (b) arrangements to ensure that all members in the Zone are included in Zonal activities;*
- (c) the promotion of bridge within the Zone;*
- (d) compliance with the Statutes and By-Laws of the WBF.*

The Zonal Conference is asked to provide the WBF with details of such considerations and a time scale within which it hopes to fulfil those objectives.

The WBF will provide such help and assistance as is necessary to facilitate this process.

The Zonal Conference is reminded that the EC has the power to determine the Zone within which Member Federations shall be placed; within the Continent of Asia there are currently 2 Zonal Conferences.

Mr Jafri wished for his reservations to be minuted.

The Executive Council approved, with the contrary vote of Mr. Jafri, that an official letter will be sent to Zone 4 to say they have 6 months in which to put things right, if not the E.C. will provide to adopt the necessary actions.

4. Bridge on Line – agenda item 16

4.1 WBF Robot Bridge Tournaments

Mr Al Levy reported on the first WBF Robot Bridge Tournaments. These had started well but patronage had been disappointing. There was now a lot of competition from Fun Bridge and others. Various ways of increasing our numbers were discussed. Mr. Damiani remarked that it's a problem of promotion and publicity and that the WBF has urgently to intervene in this field. The President invites the Technological Committee to take the appropriate strategies.

4.2 22nd World Annual Computer-bridge Championship – agenda item 16.4

Mr Al Levy reported that the six-day event took place at this championship, from September 29th through October 4th. This year there are 9 entries from around the world. There have been two other inquiries from Universities that many enter next year. An official website with complete results and write-ups was maintained. The site includes all the past history and many articles that appeared in bridge and other gaming publications. Mr. Levy publishes an article every year in the International Computer Games Association and journalist also pick up deals played to write about. The IBPA initiated an award for the best write-up of a deal from the robot championship. The first award is going to Ron Tacchi. Mr. Levy thanked the ACBL and WBF for supporting this event.

The meeting congratulated Mr. Levy for the great job done and excellent result achieved,

5. Data Protection & Privacy – agenda item 13

5.1 European union 2018 Reform – agenda item 13.1

General Counsel provided an overview of the scope and application of the General Data Protection Regulations ("GDPR") that came into force within the European Union on 25th May 2018. He reminded the EC that the WBF's Privacy Policy is set out and can be viewed on the WBF website.

The Global Association of International Sport Federations ("GAISF") produced a series of workshop seminars to assist IFs in dealing with the requirements of

GDPR. General Counsel reported on his attendance at those workshops with Simon Fellus.

General Counsel explained that the WBF is relatively fortunate in its limited involvement with individual data that it obtains; the majority of the data gathered and processed is related to various contractual and legal requirements and is not dependent upon obtaining consent from individuals. There is sensitive personal data that is obtained and used in connection with our WADA obligations and that data is subject to strict control. Data contained on various personal laptops will need to be scrutinised to clarify the extent to which it is caught by the regulations.

General Counsel confirmed that the WBF would fully embrace the principles that are set out within the regulations and will ensure that the organisation complies with its obligations under the GDPR. It is possible that in the future the WBF may need an external agency to monitor and certify that the WBF is GDPR compliant.

6. Systems Committee – agenda item 31

Mr Wignall had agreed to continue in office as Chairman of the Systems Committee while a complete review of the Policy is undertaken. After this, the Guide to Completion would be revised and then the Alerting Policy.

He suggested that the Committee consist of two people from Zone 1, two from Zone 2, a member from Zone 6 and one from Zone 7 which with himself would total 7.

When the Systems Policy had been decided, the conditions of Contest for each event would decide its category.

7. Seniors Committee – agenda item 32

Mr Janicki reported on the meeting of the Seniors Committee which discussed both Master Point Awards in Seniors events and the possible creation of Senior World Championships separate from the Open Championships.

8. International Events & Relations with International Organizations – agenda item 17

8.1 MSI Workshops for IFs – agenda item 17.7

Mr Fellus gave his report on his attendance at MSI workshops for IFs.

9. Communications & Secretariat – agenda item 39

Mr Fellus reported on his activities.

The President thanked Mr Fellus for making an extremely good job of his multiple activities.

10. Zonal Reports – agenda item 29

10.1 Zone 1 – agenda item 29.1

Mr Kamras read his report. The President congratulated Mr Kamras on his election and on his excellent and interesting report on his activities since taking

over as President. Mr Eitan Levy called for closer cooperation between the EBL and WBF committees.

10.2 Zone 3 – agenda item 29.3

Mr Caracci presented his report. The President thanked Mr Caracci and said that he is aware that the situation is not easy in his Zone.

10.3 Zone 4 – agenda item 29.4

The President noted that for the 3rd time the president of Zone 4 had not provided a report or informed the representative of Zone 4 about what information should be given to the Board. The Executive Council signalled their extreme disappointment with this situation.

10.4 Zone 5 – agenda item 29.5

Mrs Rayner reported on the activities in her Zone. As a footnote, she confirmed that Bridge has now been recognized as an official sport in Guatemala. Their official name is "Asociación Deportiva de Bridge de Guatemala" and they are members of the National Sport Association of Guatemala – in Spanish "CDAG" – Confederación Deportiva Autònoma de Guatemala. When they are able to open a second chapter, they will get the title of the Bridge Federation of Guatemala.

The President congratulated Mrs Rayner on all her hard work trying to bring all the different NBOs together. He also suggested Bermuda should start making plans for the 75th anniversary of the Bermuda Bowl in 2025.

11. Bridge & Science – agenda item 23

11.1 Stirling University Activity – agenda item 23.3

Prof Samantha Punch, Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Stirling was welcomed into the meeting to present the research she has been doing for the WBF Bridge and Science Committee. She reported that she was €10,000 short to complete this study. Prof Punch has a researcher who is available to work 3 days a week to finish the study in the next 9 months. Mr Kevin Judge, the first student to read a 3-year PhD in bridge, will be learning to play bridge while doing research.

11.2 Commission Activity & Program – agenda item 23.1

Mr Malysa made a presentation on the activities of the WBF Bridge & Science Committee, among others in the field of research into the benefits of bridge on people suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

11.3. A.I. in Bridge

Dr Véronique Ventos from Paris Saclay University gave a presentation on research into AI in bridge.

The meeting expressed its appreciation to the speakers and thanked them for their reports.

12. Zonal report – agenda item 29

12.1 Zone 7 – agenda item 29.7

Mr Wignall read his report. The President thanked Mr Wignall for all his years of service and Mr Wignall was given a long ovation by the members of Executive.

12.2 Zone 6 – agenda item 29.6

Mrs Sophonpanich gave her report, first thanking Mr Wignall for all his assistance over many years.

13. WBF Publications – agenda item 38

The President noted that all members had received a copy of the Lyon 43rd World Teams Championship Book and the book for this year will be available in April 2019 and written by Brian Senior as usual.

The 2019 WBF Directory will need to be produced and the President proposed either printing it or having it in an electronic version. It was the consensus that this did need to be in printed format to be able to show our presence. This was approved unanimously with one abstention (Mr De Pauw).

Each member is required to send Mr Fellus an updated CV and all relevant personal information – name, address, telephone number and email address. Also, each member must provide a copy of the Minutes of the meeting at which they were elected as a delegate to the WBF, with a note saying that they accepted this position.

In 2008, Mr Jaime Ortiz-Patiño published the History of the WBF 50 Years. The President would like to produce another History of the WBF 60 Years but believes that this can be in electronic format, giving mandate to Mr. Gerontopoulos to provide. The Executive Council unanimously approved.

14. Laws Committee – agenda item 30

The President reported that there was no news on the Laws. These had been re-issued 2017 and the Committee is in the process of trying to produce a Commentary on the Laws.

15. The WBF Virtual Museum & Hall of Fame – agenda item 34

The President said that he wishes to create a virtual museum of photos, videos, etc. showing the 60-year history since the WBF is probably the only sports Federation that does not have one. He will prepare a proposal also for the Hall of Fame to be presented at the next meeting. Both these proposals were very welcomed and received green light by the Executive Council.

16. Election & appointments for the Legislature 2019-2022

The President noted he had the honour and duty to propose the Officers for election by the Executive Council as follows:

First Vice President, Alvin Levy
Second Vice President, Patrick Choy
Treasurer, Marc De Pauw
Hon. Secretary, Georgia Heth

The Executive Council unanimously approved the proposal and the Officers elected accepted.

The President proposed creating the position of "Senior Member of the Executive Council". This was approved. On the proposal of the President Mr. Mazhar Jafri was unanimously elected by the Executive Council.

On the proposal of the President the Management Committee were unanimously appointed as follows:

Gianarrigo Rona (Chairman), Alvin Levy, Patrick Choy, Marc De Pauw, Georgia Heth, Mazhar Jafri, Jan Kamras, Giorgio Duboin alternatively with Janice Seamon-Molson.

Mr. José Damiani has been reconfirmed in the honorary position of Chairman Emeritus.

The other WBF Committees have been unanimously approved as follows:

Advisory Committee: José Damiani (Chairman), Chen Zelan, Patrick Choy, Marc De Pauw, Georgia Heth, Panos Gerontopoulos, Mazhar Jafri, Alvin Levy, Peiyang Zen, George Retek, Gianarrigo Rona, John Wignall, Robert S. Wolff (Members), Simon Fellus (Secretary)

High Level Players Commission: Ata Aydin, Ashley Bach, Philippe Cronier, Giorgio Duboin, Chip Martel, Marion Michielsen, Janice Seamon- Molson, Bauke Muller, WenFei Wang (Members), Simon Fellus (Secretary).

Credential Committee: Georgia Heth (Chairman), Marcelo Caracci, Patrick Choy, Marc De Pauw, Eric Laurant, Bernard Pascal, Ben Thompson (Members), David Harris (Consultant), Simon Fellus (Secretary).

Constitution & By-Laws Committee: David Harris (Chairman), Marc De Pauw, Mazhar Jafri, Eitan Levy, Georgia Heth, Kari-Anne Opsal, Gianarrigo Rona (Members), Simon Fellus (Secretary).

Finance Committee: Marc De Pauw (Chairman), Marcelo Caracci, Patrick Choy, Eric Laurant, Alvin Levy, Bernard Pascal, Sheena Rayner (Members), Dirk De Clerq (Secretary).

Admission Committee: Georgia Heth (Chairman), Marc De Pauw, David Harris, Mazhar Jafri, Gianarrigo Rona, Esther Sophonpanich, Merlin Vilhauer (Members), Simon Fellus (Secretary).

Rules & Regulations Committee: Gianarrigo Rona (Chairman), Georgia Heth, Maurizio Di SaCCO, Giorgio Duboin, Jan Kamras, Eitan Levy, Howard Weinstein (Members), Anna Gudge (Secretary).

Championship Committee: Gianarrigo Rona (Chairman), Jan Kamras (Co-Chairman), Philippe Cronier, Marc De Pauw, Maurizio Di Sacco, Simon Fellus, Georgia Heth (Members), Armand Trippaers (Secretary).

Awards Committee: José Damiani (Chairman), Zelan Chen, Marc De Pauw, Mazhar Jafri, Alvin Levy, Gianarrigo Rona, Janice Seamon-Molson (Members), Arianna Testa (Secretary).

Tournament Directors Committee: Josef Harsany (Chairman), Philippe Cronier, Maurizio Di Sacco, Bertrand Gignoux, Laurie Kelso, Antonio Riccardi, Matt Smith (Members), Peter Eidt (Secretary).

Systems Committee: John Wignall (Chairman), Fu Qiang, Paul Janicki, Laurie Kelso, Eitan Levy, PO Sundelin, Kit Wolsey (Members), Maurizio Di Sacco, Ben Thompson (Consultants), Anna Gudge (Secretary).

Master Points Committee: Gianarrigo Rona (Chairman), Simon Fellus, Gianluca Frola, Jan Kamras, Janice Seamon-Molson, Merlin Vilhauer (Members), Mark Newton (Member & Secretary).

Laws Committee: Ton Kooijman (Chairman), Maurizio Di Sacco, David Harris, Eitan Levy, Fu Qiang, Matt Smith, Howard Weinstein, Adam Wildavsky (Members), Laurie Kelso (Member & Secretary).

Technological Commission: Alvin Levy (Chairman), Peter Belcak, Traian Chira, Duccio Geronimi, Hans van Staveren, Merlin Vilahuer, Marcin Waslowicz (Members), Gianni Baldi (Consultant), Fotis Skoularikis (Secretary).

Protocol & Ceremony Committee: Sevinç Atay (Chairman), Georgia Heth, Sheena Rayner, Janice Seamon-Molson (Members), Silvia Valentini (Member & Secretary).

Bridge & Science Committee: Marek Malysa (Chairman), Piotr Blajet, Paolo Walter Gabriele, Samantha Punch, James Sternberg (Members), Anna Gudge (Secretary).

E-Bridge Laws Committee: José Damiani (Chairman), Philippe Cronier, Maurizio Di Sacco, Josef Harsanyi, Ton Kooijman, Alvin Levy, Peter Talygas (Members), Simon Fellus (Secretary).

Youth Committee: Ata Aydin (Chairman), Sevinç Atay, Philippe Cronier, Simon Fellus, Micke Melander, Gilad Ofir, Gianarrigo Rona (Members), Paolo Clair (Secretary).

Kids Sub Committee: Sevinç Atay (Chairman), Simon Fellus, Gilad Ofir, Deone Menezes, Eduardo Rosen, Joseph Stokes, Jannan Wang (Members), Gianni Bertotto (Secretary).

University Bridge Sub Committee: Geert Magerman (Chairman), Paolo Clair, Marc De Pauw, Simon Fellus, Gilad Ofir (Members), Harry van de Peppel (Secretary).

Women Committee: Sevinç Atay (Chairman), Georgia Heth, Esther Sophonpanich (Members), Anna Gudge (Member & Secretary).

Seniors Committee: Paul Janicki (Chairman), Marcelo Caracci, Patrick Choy, Michael Bambang Hartono, Eitan Levy, Marek Malysa, Ben Thompson (Members), Maurizio Di Sacco (Member & Secretary).

Medical & Prevention Commission: Paolo Walter Gabriele (Chairman), Giovanni Capelli (Vice Chairman), Elizabeth (Liz) Newton, James Steinberg, Jaap Stomphorst (members), Matteo Vallini (Consultant), Anna Gudge (Secretary).

Antidoping TUE Sub Committee: Jaap Stomphorst (Chairman), Giovanni Capelli, Paolo Walter Gabriele (Members), Anna Gudge (Secretary).

Disciplinary Commission Panel: Ata Aydin, Jurica Caric, Francesca Carnicelli, Françoise Lejuste, Dominique Portal, Ron Gerard (Members), David Harris (Prosecutor), Herman De Wael (Secretary).

Antidoping Hearing Panel: Ata Aydin, Jurica Caric, Francesca Carnicelli, Giovanni Capelli, Françoise Lejuste, Jeffrey Polisner (Members), David Harris (Prosecutor), Herman De Wael (Secretary).

WBF/EBL Assets Committee: Marc De Pauw, Maurizio Di Sacco, Jan Kamras, Eric Laurant, Gianarrigo Rona.

Communication & Media Development Committee: Gianarrigo Rona (Chairman), Marc De Pauw, Simon Fellus, Anna Gudge, Fernando Lema, Gilad Ofir, Carlotta Venier (Members), Arianna Testa (Secretary).

The following Special Appointments were unanimously approved:

Operations Director: Maurizio Di Sacco; *Communication & General Liaison:* Anna Gudge; *Assistant Treasurer:* Dirk De Clercq; *Technological Systems Co-ordinator:* Gianni Baldi; *WADA Liaison:* Giovanni Capelli; *Youth Bridge Development Coordinator:* Gilad Ofir.

Mr Jafri drew attention to the retirement of Mr Wignall who had been a member of the Council since 1986. On behalf of his fellow Councillors he thanked him for his years of service and wished him well in his retirement.

The President joined Mr. Jafri expressing his personal gratitude to John Wignall for his support, friendship and closeness in the eight years of his presidency and to Mrs. Carol Von Linstow who with this last meeting will leave her position of Secretary to the Council after more than 30 years of outstanding services to the WBF. The meeting unanimously applauded Mr. Wignall and Mrs. Von Linstow.

Mr. Jafri thanked the President for chairing the meetings and for his hospitality.

The meeting was adjourned sine die at 17:10.