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WBSC

WORLD
BASEBALL SOFTBALL
CONFEDERATION

Game Time!

Executive Board 20th Meeting

By videoconference
11th January 2022

Minutes

WBSC Executive Board 20th Meeting

By videoconference

11th January 2022

AGENDA

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Roll call
- 3) Approval of the Minutes of the WBSC Executive Board Meeting held on 4th October 2021 (by videoconference)
- 4) Any matters arising from the Minutes
- 5) President's Address
- 6) WBSC Congress 2022 & Workshops
- 7) E-Sport: update on the contracts
- 8) 2022 WBSC events overview
- 9) Financial Report: 2020 Profit and Loss Account
- 10) Changes to the WBSC By-Laws
- 11) Prospective new Members
- 12) Any other business
- 13) Adjournment

ATTENDANCE

Present (13/13):

President:	Mr. Riccardo Fraccari
Vice President – Baseball:	Mr. Willi Kaltschmitt
Vice President – Softball:	Ms. Beatrice Allen
Executive VP – Baseball:	Mr. Tom Peng
Executive VP – Softball:	Mr. Craig Cress
Secretary General:	Dato' (Ms.) Beng Choo Low
Treasurer:	Mr. Angelo Vicini
Member At-Large:	Mr. Tommy Velázquez
Member At-Large:	Mr. Ronald Finlay
Member At-Large:	Mr. Paul Seiler
Member At-Large:	Ms. Taeko Utsugi
Athletes' Rep – Softball:	Ms. María José Soto Gil
Athletes' Rep. – Baseball:	Mr. Justin Huber

In attendance, also:

Mr. Michael Schmidt, Executive Director
 Ms. Akiko Ito, Japanese interpreter
 Mr. Chris (Chien Fan) Day, Chinese interpreter
 Ms. Vivien Campos, WBSC interpreter

WBSC Staff Members:

Mr. Marco Ienna (COO)
 Mr. Valerio Cianfoni (B5)
 Mr. Richard Baker (Media & Communication)
 Mr. Joan Garcia (Events)
 Mr. Victor Isola (Anti-Doping)

1. WELCOME

- 1.1 President Fraccari called to order this 11th January 2022, WBSC Executive Board (EB) Meeting at 13:10 (Lausanne time). He welcomed all the attendees and outlined the matters as listed on the Agenda for discussion in this Meeting.

2. ROLL CALL

- 2.1 Secretary General Low completed the Roll Call as per the attendance list above and confirmed that there was a quorum for this Meeting to proceed.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- 3.1 Secretary General Low informed that the Minutes of the 19th WBSC EB meeting enlarged to WBSC Baseball and Softball Divisions held on 4th October 2022, by videoconference, were sent earlier to all EB Members and there was no request for amendments received by the WBSC Office.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the Minutes of the 19th WBSC Executive Board meeting enlarged to WBSC Baseball and Softball Divisions held by videoconference on 4th October 2022, as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Cress.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the Minutes of the 19th WBSC Executive Board meeting enlarged to WBSC Baseball and Softball Divisions held by videoconference on 4th October 2022.

4. ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 4.1 There were no matters arising brought up.

5. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

- 5.1 President Fraccari stated that the global Covid-19 situation was still affecting all events and that this Meeting was called to obtain and discuss inputs from the EB Members for decisions to be made to move forward with WBSC events, in particular as the current where Omicron Covid-19 variant has been described as very contagious but less severe in the health consequences. Each of the EB Members gave a brief overview of the Covid situation in his/her respective country/territory.

- 5.2 President Fraccari presented the IOC (International Olympic Committee) Report (dated 25 November 2021) on the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 (T2020) Games-Time Data Collection, which provided the IOC extensive data during the T2020 for ongoing analysis of the Olympic Games (OG), to provide valuable feedback to the International Federations (IFs) on their sports, disciplines and events during the OG, and in order to assess the performance of the sports/disciplines/events at Games-time. The Report covered all 33 sports in the T2020, and included data collected on television and digital media viewership, as well as on general public feedback and press articles.
- 5.3 He requested WBSC Media Executive Mr. Baker to make a more detailed presentation on the IOC Report and Data Collected, with the following highlighted by Mr Baker:
- 5.3.1 Television Viewership: 83 territories, 633 million hours of Baseball and Softball recorded, three times more than the median value of 233,680 hours. The top territories per continent for total maximum audience (Sport level) were Japan, United States, Brazil, United Kingdom and Korea.
- 5.3.2 Digital Viewership: 25 territories, Baseball and Softball registered over 40 million hours of digital viewership of live streaming in estimated hours and 470 million page views (100 million more than the median of 371 million) of page views on Most Popular Websites (10 websites per territory). The top digital viewership by territory (in estimated hours) were China, Korea, Australia, United States and Japan.
Mr. Baker explained that the difference among countries/territories was mainly determined by the rights distribution, the availability of Baseball and Softball in the countries/territories and the time difference with Japan. Baseball and Softball were also above average at 76.3 million, (the median was 548 million) for unique visitors on most popular websites (an indication of the size of the fan-set for each sport during T2020 and therefore a “good gauge of popularity”).
- 5.3.3 Social Media: 234 million Baseball and Softball articles were shared, which was 10 times more than the median 29 million.
In reply to Mr. Seiler’s query as to whether the social media data was only on the IF brand or if it also included the Baseball and Softball team brands, Mr. Baker clarified that the numbers referred only to the IF brand. Mr. Seiler said it would be interesting to understand if the national brand could do a better job to improve the score of the IF brand.
- 5.3.4 Press: Based on the monitoring of five press titles in each of 50 countries/territories, Baseball and Softball ranked on average 1,331 articles compared with the 1,356 average.
- 5.3.5 Survey: General Public (Favourite sports): Baseball-Softball 5.5 million

(Median 5.9 million, maximum 7 million). It also helped to indicate in which countries/territories our sport was among the favourites, especially among the youth (13-19 years of age).

- 5.4 There was general discussion on the IOC Report and the following remarks were noted:
- 5.4.1 Whilst the Report referred sometimes to average and sometimes to median, the median was the more consistent value.
 - 5.4.2 The youth-oriented attention given to our sport as, for example, social media was more effective than traditional press releases and press articles.
 - 5.4.3 Whilst in past OG editions the ticket-sales revenue was important, in the T2020 edition, it was evident that a set of new more global parameters in the digital platforms and social media was more important, and there was growing interest in e-sports.
 - 5.4.4 The IOC Report on each IF was given only to the specific IF and we could not track the results of other IFs. Whilst there was no official ranking of sports by the IOC, ASOIF (Association of Summer Olympics International Federations) has its own ranking; and it was interesting to note that our sport achieved some outstanding data results in media and communications.
 - 5.4.5 It was important to share the data results with IOC Members to make the success of our sport stand out.
 - 5.4.6 WBSC needed to continue to step efforts to make changes to modernise and improve the popularity of our sport, and to continue with good communication of its modernisation to the IOC.
- 5.5 President Fraccari pointed out the above average results achieved Baseball-Softball in many segments, especially in our popularity and reach to some of the countries/territories involved, particularly amongst the youth. He said that despite the success, it continues to be important to modernise our sport and make it more attractive to the younger generation. He added that the IOC Executive Board played a very important role in the decision of sports, disciplines, and events for inclusion in the Olympics before it is taken to the IOC Session (IOC Members).
- 5.6 President Fraccari next reported on the latest decision of the IOC to include three sports (skateboarding, surfing and rock climbing) in the LA 2028 Olympic Games and stated that the LA2028 OCOG (Organising Committee of Olympic Games) may propose other new sports. He stated the reality of our sport being team sports (and the large number of athletes) and that efforts were needed in new frontiers. He added that the WBSC responded by meeting with the IOC and OCOG, as well as the

professional leagues, to discuss new formats and the proposal to play some of the OG games in other cities during the OG period (it was noted that in T2020, some softball-baseball games were played in Fukushima – outside of Tokyo.). He informed that a deeper analysis on the involvement of the professional leagues was being made by WBSC and would be shared with the EB Members.

5.7 President Fraccari then requested Mr. Ienna to report on the results of the WBSC Extraordinary Congress held in written form on 18th December 2021:

5.7.1 The WBSC Congress approved by 222 votes (92,12%) in favour (with 18 votes against – 7,47% - and 1 abstention – 0,41%) (which is more than the qualified majority of 2/3 of the quorum as per article 13.5 of the WBSC Statutes), the amendments to the WBSC Statutes as proposed by the WBSC EB.

5.7.2 The WBSC Congress approved by 225 votes (93,36%) in favour (with 12 votes against – 4,98% - and 4 abstentions – 1,66%) (which is more than the qualified majority (2/3 of the quorum as per article 13.5 and 13.9 of the WBSC Statutes), the amendments to the WBSC Code of the Divisions as proposed by the WBSC EB.

5.8 President Fraccari reported that in November 2021, the European National Federations (NFs) agreed to form the merged WBSC-Europe and would be holding its historic Congress to approve its new statutes for the new merged entity of WBSC Europe, which would govern baseball and softball together on the continent and hold elections for its new governing board.

5.9 Upon President Fraccari's request, Mr. Cianfoni presented the Baseball5 Handbook which would soon be shared with all WBSC NF-Members to further promote and develop Baseball5 at all levels, including in schools, and amongst educators.

6. WBSC CONGRESS & WORKSHOPS

6.1 President Fraccari requested for the views of the EB Members as to the mode of the coming WBSC Congress 2022 (which was scheduled in March 2022), that was, whether to hold it as a fully physical presence Congress, or as a hybrid (physical presence and virtual-online), or completely as a virtual (online) Congress, in view of the on-going Covid pandemic making air-travel and other logistics complex, pointing out that the approved WBSC Statutes provided for virtual-online congresses and meetings.

6.2 There was extensive discussion, with general consensus on the following:

6.2.1 WBSC needed to consider the safety and welfare of its members.

- 6.2.2 A physical congress was preferred whilst noting the difficulties and high costs of travelling, as well as strict quarantine requirements for some who travel back to his/her own country/territory, and if that is not possible, to look at a hybrid format or virtual (online) format.
- 6.2.3 There was no urgency to hold the Congress in March since the WBSC's current leadership was carrying out its duties and responsibilities well.
- 6.2.4 All possibilities could be considered and that the WBSC Congress should be held in 2022, with a prior notice of 3 months given to members as stated in the Statutes.
- 6.2.5 Other IFs have held their congresses and elections virtually.
- 6.2.6 Mr. Peng and CTBA (Chinese Taipei Baseball Association) remained fully committed to organising the physical Congress in the best possible way when the restrictions allow it, with CTBA already negotiating hotel room and meeting room rates and looking into availability dates.
- 6.2.7 It was important to exercise caution based on the progress of the pandemic and restrictions imposed by the health authorities, and that it was possible to monitor the situation for another few more months before deciding on new dates for the Congress.
- 6.2.8 There was general consensus that new dates in June 2022 onwards could be considered.

PROPOSAL:

To further postpone the scheduled date of March 2022 for the WBSC Congress 2022, and to continue to monitor the progress of the pandemic and restrictions imposed by health authorities before deciding on the date and modality of the same.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved to further postpone the scheduled date of March 2022 for the WBSC Congress 2022, and continue to pose monitor the progress of the pandemic and restrictions imposed by the health authorities before deciding on the date and modality of the same.

7. E-SPORT: UPDATE ON THE CONTRACTS

- 7.1 Mr. Schmidt reported on the WBSC's development of E-Sports based on the three pillars (mobile, pc/console and hybrid). He informed that the WBSC was discussing

MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) with several companies as WBSC moved forward with the development in each of the three pillars:

- 7.1.1 Mobile: WBSC was developing an application called “PlayBall” that was already downloadable in Beta version and was working with another company for the creation of another new application for Baseball5.
- 7.1.2 PC/Console: over the next two years, in partnership with Konami, WBSC would develop a game based on the Premier12 tournament.
- 7.1.3 Hybrid: WBSC closed an agreement with Newdin (a Korean company) to develop a hybrid game that could be available to be played globally this year (2022).
- 7.2 Mr. Schmidt also reported on other aspects, such as virtual reality (which was a new area where WBSC sees opportunities to develop and promote as a new frontier, for example, virtual seating in a physical tournament). and NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens).
- 7.3 In response to Mr. Kaltschmitt’s query as to whether WBSC would be included in the next OVS (Olympic Virtual Series), Mr. Cianfoni informed that the WBSC and IOC were in on-going discussions for the next (2nd series) OVS scheduled for later 2022.

8. 2022 WBSC EVENTS OVERVIEW

- 8.1 Mr. Garcia presented a short report on the last two WBSC World Cup events organised in 2021, namely, the U-23 Baseball World Cup played in Mexico in September, and the U-18 Women’s Softball World Cup played in Peru in December. He reported that both events were successfully held and completed safely, with the observation of strict Covid countermeasures and measures.
- 8.2 Mr. Garcia continued his report with a brief description of the WBSC 2022 events global calendar.
 - WBSC Congress 2022.
 - World Games Birmingham USA 2021 (in 2022) – Women Softball.
 - U-12 Men Baseball World Cup 2022 (postponed from 2021).
 - U-12 Mixed Gender Softball World Cup 2022 (postponed from 2021).
 - U-15 Men Baseball World Cup 2022.
 - U-18 Men Baseball World Cup 2021 (in 2022).
 - U-23 Men Baseball World Cup 2022.
 - U-23 Men Softball World Cup 2022 (postponed from 2021).
 - Men Softball World Cup 2022 (postponed from 2021).

- 2022 Baseball5 World Cup (Open Category).

8.3 Mr. Garcia then presented the following two bids from Mexico to host the U-15 Baseball World Cup 2022 and the Baseball5 World Cup 2022 for the Board's consideration.

PROPOSAL 1:

To consider and approve the bid by Mexico to host the 2022 U-15 Baseball World Cup.

DECISION 1

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the bid by Mexico to host the 2022 U-15 Baseball World Cup.

PROPOSAL 2:

To consider and approve the bid by Mexico to host the 2022 Baseball5 World Cup.

DECISION 2

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the bid by Mexico to host the 2022 Baseball5 World Cup.

PROPOSAL 3:

To consider and approve the award of the wild card of the 2022 U-12 Baseball World Cup to USA.

DECISION 3

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the award of the wild card of the 2022 U-12 Baseball World Cup to USA.

9. FINANCIAL REPORT: 2020 PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

9.1 Treasurer Vicini presented the WBSC 2020 Profit and Loss Account for the EB's consideration. He highlighted the following:

- 9.1.1 Pricewaterhouse & Coopers was no longer the WBSC auditors because they could not guarantee completion of the audit within WBSC's requested timeframe. He informed that after reviewing various offers, FIBEXA SA Société Fiduciaire was found to be able to meet the licensing and independence requirements as stipulated by Swiss law and was appointed to take over the audit.

- 9.1.2 The figures were generally in line with the 2020 budget previously approved by the EB. As of 1st January 2020, the WBSC assets, after deduction of the liabilities, amounted to USD 17,176,626, and as at 31st December 2020, the total amount was USD 17,756,544, with the following summary:

Total Income for 2020	= USD	9,560,132
Total Expenses for 2020	= USD	8,825,213
Provisions for BASE and GAME TIME SSDRL	= USD	718,497
Surplus for 2020	= USD	16,421
Reserve Funds and Fixed Assets (minus Liabilities) on 31/12/2020	= USD	17,756,544

- 9.1.3 It was apparent from the 2020 P&L Statement that despite the enormous difficulties resulting from the pandemic and noting the investment made for the new WBSC headquarters, the same positive assets as at the beginning of the year (2020) was maintained. However, it was important to act carefully to consolidate this trend in order to guarantee WBSC a more solid stable future.

- 9.2 Treasurer Vicini informed that the external auditors, conducted their examination of the WBSC accounts books and completed their audit in June 2020 in accordance with the Swiss Standard. He reported that after having examined the financial statements, (balance sheet, statement of income and expenditure, and auditor's notes), the auditors have declared, "Nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law and the Company's articles of incorporation."
- 9.3 Mr. Finlay stressed the importance for the audited WBSC 2021 Profit and Loss Accounts to be ready and presented at the 2022 Congress. Treasurer Vicini replied that the administration is currently working on completing the accounts for audit despite the difficulties encountered and that the 2021 audited accounts should be ready for a congress in June 2022.
- 9.4 To Mr. Kaltschmitt's request for clarifications on some of the funds received by the WBSC in 2020, Treasurer Vicini replied that the WBSC applied for, and obtained, Covid-19 financial support from IOC and the Swiss Confederation authorities.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the WBSC 2020 Profit and Loss Account, and for such Account to be presented at the next WBSC Congress, as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Kaltschmitt.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the WBSC 2020 Profit and Loss Account, and for such Account to be presented at the next WBSC Congress.

10. **CHANGES TO THE WBSC BY-LAWS**

- 10.1 Mr. Ienna explained that following the approval of the amendments to the WBSC Statutes and WBSC Code of the Divisions, other regulatory documents have been reviewed with amendments proposed, including those to be in line with the ASOIF governance workshop, relating to electoral rules and processes for IFs.
- 10.2 Mr. Finlay briefed the EB on the proposed amendments to the following, which the WBSC Legal Commission had worked on and drafted:
- 10.2.1 WBSC By-Laws relating to Commissions.
- 10.2.2 WBSC Elections By-Laws.
- 10.3 To Mr. Cress' query as to whether the Slow-Pitch Commission would remain, Mr. Schmidt clarified that it would remain as a Working Group.

PROPOSAL 1:

To consider and approve the amended version of the WBSC By-Laws relating to Commission, as proposed by Ms. Allen and seconded by Mr. Kaltschmitt.

DECISION 1

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the amended version of the WBSC By-Laws relating to Commissions.

PROPOSAL 2:

To consider and approve the amended version of the WBSC Elections By-Laws, as proposed by Ms. Allen and seconded by Mr. Seiler.

DECISION 2

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the amended version of the WBSC Elections By-Laws.

11. **PROSPECTIVE NEW MEMBERS**

- 11.1 Mr. Schmidt informed that there were no applications for new membership or dismissal of membership for the EB's consideration. He said that the WBSC Office was working with several parties on new memberships.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 There was no other matter brought up.

13. ADJOURNMENT

13.1 President Fraccari thanked all who attended the Meeting. He also thanked the WBSC staff and the interpreters for their efforts in ensuring the success of the meeting.

13.2 There being no other matters, the Meeting adjourned at 15:30 with a vote of thanks to the Chair. [End]

These Minutes, originating from the WBSC Executive Board Meeting held by videoconference, on 11th January 2022, are formally confirmed as correct by:

Day _____ Month _____ Year _____

City _____

Signed by _____
Riccardo Fraccari
President

Signed by _____
Beng Choo Low
Secretary General