

WORLD BASEBALL SOFTBALL CONFEDERATION

Game Time!

# **Executive Board 16th Meeting**

By videoconference 4th February 2021



## Minutes

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## WBSC Executive Board 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting

By videoconference 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021

#### **AGENDA**

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Roll call
- 3) Approval of the Minutes of WBSC Executive Board (EB) Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (by videoconference)
- 4) Any matters arising from the Minutes
- 5) President's Address
- 6) Update on the Integrity Unit
- 7) Update on the e-Game
- 8) Results of the Governance Questionnaire at Continental level
- 9) Financial Report
- 10) Prospective new Members
- 11) Call of the next WBSC Executive Board meeting
- 12) Any other business
- 13) Adjournment of the Meeting

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#### **ATTENDANCE**

#### Present (32/34):

President: Mr. Riccardo Fraccari
Vice President – Softball: Ms. Beatrice Allen
Vice President – Baseball: Mr. Willi Kaltschmitt

Executive VP – Baseball: Mr. Tom Peng Executive VP – Softball: Mr. Craig Cress

Secretary General: Dato' (Ms.) Beng Choo Low

Treasurer: Mr. Angelo Vicini

Members At-Large: Mr. Tommy Velázquez
Members At-Large: Mr. Ronald Finlay
Members At-Large: Mr. Paul Seiler
Members At-Large: Ms. Taeko Utsugi

Athletes' Rep – Softball: Ms. María José Soto Gil

Athletes' Rep. – Baseball: Mr. Justin Huber
Global Ambassador: Mr. Antonio Castro
Global Ambassador: Mr. Melitón Sanchez

#### **Baseball Division:**

Member at Large: Ms. Hiroko Yamada Member at Large: Mr. Luís Melero Continental VP Africa: Mr. Saber Jlajla Continental VP Americas: Mr. Nemesio Porras

Continental VP Asia: Mr. Xu Chen

Continental VP Europe: Mr. Didier Seminet
Continental VP Oceania: Mr. Laurent Cassier
Athletes Rep. – Baseball: Ms. Ashley Stephenson
Athletes Rep. – Baseball: Mr. Randolph Oduber

#### **Softball Division:**

Treasurer: Mr. Javier Anaya

Member at Large: Mr. Tirelo Mukokomani Continental VP Africa: Mr. Mashilo Matsetela Continental VP Americas: Mr. Antonio Morales Continental VP Asia: Mr. Hiromi Tokuda Continental VP Europe: Mr. Gabriel Waage Athletes' Rep. – Softball: Ms. Erica Polidori Athletes' Rep. – Softball: Mr. Bruno Motroni

#### Excused:

Member at Large: Mr. Benicio Robinson

Continental VP Oceania: Mr. Rex Capil

#### In attendance, also:

Mr. Michael Schmidt, Executive Director

Ms. Akiko Ito, Japanese interpreter

Mr. Chris (Chien Fan) Day, Chinese interpreter

Mr. Ding Feng, Chinese interpreter

Ms. Vivien Campos, WBSC interpreter

#### WBSC Staff Members:

Mr. Richard Baker (Communications & Media Director)

Mr. Valerio Cianfoni (B5)

Mr. Victor Isola (Anti-Doping)

Ms. Francesca Fabretto (Membership Department)

Ms. Naomi Bloetjes (Integrity Unit)

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#### 1. WELCOME

- 1.1 President Fraccari called this February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021 WBSC Executive Board (EB) Meeting, enlarged to WBSC Baseball and Softball Divisions, to order at 13:00 (Lausanne Time). He welcomed all the EB Officials and outlined the matters as listed on the Agenda for discussion in this Meeting.
  - 1.1.1 He explained that the items on the Agenda for discussion in this Meeting were mainly the matters that could not be completed at the previous 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 due to time constraint and were carried forward to 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 15<sup>th</sup> WBSC EB Meeting, enlarged to WBSC Baseball and Softball Divisions, held by videoconference on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, was sent to all EB Members prior to this Meeting.
- 3.2 There was only the request of one amendment that the office will apply; no other matters from the Minutes of the previous Meeting were brought up for discussion or amendment.

#### PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the Minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> WBSC Executive Board Meeting, enlarged to WBSC Baseball and Softball Divisions, held by videoconference on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Cress.

#### **DECISION:**

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the Minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> WBSC Executive Board Meeting, enlarged to WBSC Baseball and Softball Divisions, held by videoconference on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

#### 4. ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 4.1 All other matters arising, **EXCEPT** for the following, were listed on the Agenda for this Meeting for discussion and consideration. No further matters were brought up.
  - 4.1.1 It was noted that the Report and Recommendations of the respective Baseball and Softball Review Working Groups tabled at the EB Meeting held on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 was subsequently approved by the EB via e-mail confirmations.

#### 5. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

- 5.1 President Fraccari addressed the EB on the following matters.
  - 5.1.1 The U-15 Men Baseball and Women Baseball World Cups (WCs) 2020, scheduled to be in Mexico in March 2021, have been postponed to a later stage (dates to be determined) due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic which is seeing increasing numbers of infections in many countries/territories. WBSC needed to continue to discuss with the host Organising Committees (OCs) of the World Cups (WCs) to ascertain whether approved funds would still be available for postponed events.
  - 5.1.2 WBSC had to look into the hosting evets under a "bubble" system for the safety of all participants, as WBSC had financial commitments to the WBSC sponsors to hold the WCs and events.
  - 5.1.3 WBSC had also to consider travel restrictions imposed by governments not to allow international travel except for essential services as many teams would not be permitted to leave their respective country/territory and therefore unable to participate in the World Cups.
- 5.2 WBSC has been having numerous meetings with the International Olympic Committee (IOC):
  - 5.2.1 The IOC has published the IOC Playbooks for safe participation at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.
  - 5.2.2 Significant changes made include limitation of number of officials allowed to attend the Games; reduction of number of

- days athletes would be allowed to stay; and cancellation of social events.
- 5.2.3 For example, only athletes with events in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of competition would be permitted to attend the Opening Ceremony (for WBSC, it would be the Softball athletes) and athletes with events in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week, permitted to attend the Closing Ceremony (for WBSC, it would be the Baseball athletes).
- 5.2.4 The IOC and the Tokyo 2020 OC has yet to decide on whether on-site spectators would be permitted during the Games.
- 5.3 WBSC has started the implementation of the WBSC Strategic Plan 2021 2024, approved by the EB at its online Meeting held on 09 December 2020.
  - 5.3.1 For example, the WBSC Membership Department would carry out a review of the WBSC Member-National Federations (NFs) to gather up-dated useful information to enable WBSC to communicate with and serve its Member-NFs better.
  - 5.3.2 A WBSC Questionnaire Survey has been sent to all Member-NFs in November 2020, to gather more information and updates.
- 5.4 The plan was being put in place for the continuation and push of the LA2028 campaign.
  - 5.4.1 WBSC would need to map the strategy and action plan, and possible initiatives.
  - 5.4.2 All EB Officials and WBSC Members were requested to give their input and make efforts to play an active role to assist and contribute.
  - 5.4.3 Executive Director Mr. Schmidt stated the need for WBSC to strengthen existing and new relationships by identifying the decision-making landscape.
  - 5.4.4 He also stated that WBSC needed to look into the following:
    - (i) explore commercial opportunities and demonstrate alignment with the LA2028 OCOG objectives.

- (ii) leverage the popularity of the sport in the United States and worldwide, and the emotional aspect that the sport is the national pastime in the US, and to develop a compelling proposition that the inclusion of Baseball and Softball was a commercial and emotional necessity for LA2028.
- 5.5 President Fraccari added that WBSC was in discussion with Major League Baseball (MLB) for MLB to become an Associate Member of the WBSC. He added that MLB and WBSC have started discussion about the World Softball Classics.

#### 6. <u>UPDATE ON THE INTEGRITY UNIT</u>

- 6.1 Secretary General Low reported that the Legal Commission (LC) had completed the outline for the WBSC Integrity Code. Mr. Finlay reported the following as regards the drafting of the Integrity Code:
  - 6.1.1 The Integrity Code had the general purpose of safeguarding the integrity of the WBSC and would apply to WBSC activities and events.
  - 6.1.2 The structure would be a major overhaul of what was in current existence and the aim was to bring the WBSC Integrity Code in line with world's best practice and structured to suit an IF of the size of the WBSC.
  - 6.1.3 The WBSC Integrity Code would consist of the following:
    - The WBSC Code of Conduct.
    - The WBSC Anti-Doping Rules (the WBSC Anti-Doping Rules 2021 were approved and adopted by the EB at its online Meeting on 09 December 2020 and took effect on 01 January 2021).
    - The WBSC Preventing Manipulation Code.
    - The WBSC Safeguarding against Harassment and Abuse in sport.
    - The Procedures for the Investigation and Prosecution of Violations of the WBSC statutes, Rules and Regulations, and Integrity Code.

#### 7. **UPDATE ON THE E-GAME**

- 7.1 President Fraccari reported on the following as regards WBSC's e-Game/e-Sport:
  - In December 2020, a diverse group of people were tested on an advanced version of the e-Game, which had been developed for WBSC, with the aim of receiving the most comprehensive feedback possible. The results are being collated.
  - Currently, there are 2 global organisations for e-Game/e-Sports, namely, Global E-Sport Federation and International E-Sport Federation. The IOC and ASOIF had informed all IFs that those 2 organisations were not recognized by the IOC and that the IOC itself was looking into the possibility of embracing e-Game/e-Sports within the Olympic Movement.
  - WBSC has already started work on e-Game/e-Sport and steps have been taken for its inclusion in the Constitution at the next Congress.
  - Recently, the IOC communicated the launch of its "Virtual Sport Project Series" and presented a "General Framework for IFs" for the Project. The IOC invited the first group of 7 IFs recognized by the IOC as leaders in e-Game/e-Sport, to participate, namely, World Rowing, World Sailing, UCI, FIFA, FIBA, FIA and WBSC. WBSC is honoured to have been included in that first group of 7 IFs. The aim of the Project was to integrate the virtual forms of the respective sports with an existing digital platform, while leveraging on the investments already made by the IFs.
  - There would be new opportunities arising from the e-Game/e-Sport digital space, ranging from increased visibility and commercialization of the WBSC brand and events. WBSC would be able to boost fan engagement and potentially add millions of video game players to the WBSC global movement.
- 7.2 Executive Director Mr. Schmidt said that the IOC had pushed back its deadline for the IFs to give feedback, with all 7 IFs having a different approach; and there was an ongoing discussion with the IOC to analyse all the available options; it was important for the WBSC to be amongst the pioneers in this field.

### 8. REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE GOVERNANCE QUESTIONNAIRE AT CONTINENTAL LEVEL

- 8.1 Mr. Cianfoni briefed the EB on the importance of Governance, and the 2-phases of the WBSC Governance Project and Questionnaire at Continental level:
  - 8.1.1 Phase 1: Gathering an overview of the continental governance and identifying key areas for improvements.
  - 8.1.2 Phase 2: Work with the individual organizations to address the most pressing governance needs.
- 8.2 Ms. Bloetjes continued with the following report on the Project:
  - 8.2.1 The initial analysis enabled an overview of the status quo and screenshot of where the Continental Associations (CAs) were currently at.
  - 8.2.2 The CAs were scored on points based on their respective responses, and the results varied.
  - 8.2.3 The result of the assessment may not represent the true picture as the evidence provided by the respective CAs was not always helpful in the moderation exercise carried out by the WBSC team.
  - 8.2.4 The following strengths and weaknesses of the CAs were noted from the results:

Strengths: Transparency section; Websites were easy to

understand; Huge improvements regarding the evidence provided; Dedication to improve and

learn.

Weaknesses: Control mechanism section, Evidence of

implementation; Publication of documentation;

Defined policies in place; Data protection.

- 8.2.5 The following next steps were proposed:
  - (i) In Q1 2021: Presentation of individual results.
  - (ii) In Q2 Q3 2021: Support to continents in targeted areas; Design of Phase 2 Questionnaire-Survey.
  - (iii) In Q4 2021: Presentation and approval of Phase 2.

#### 9. FINANCIAL REPORT

- 9.1 Treasurer Vicini presented the WBSC Budget Report for the year 2021, for the EB's consideration and reported as follows:
  - 9.1.1 The Administration and Accounts Department is working with a new accounting software program.
  - 9.1.2 During the past year (2020), the main concern was related to the cash flow difficulties, mainly because of the postponement of the WBSC events. The allocations by the IOC, the loans from the Swiss Government and the integration of the WBSC mortgage loan helped solve the WBSC's cash flow issues.
  - 9.1.3 For 2021, although some expected revenue would not be received due to the postponements of the WBSC WCs and events, WBSC would still be able to manage its financial situation.
  - 9.1.4 The total budgeted income for 2021 will be USD 8,159,000 and the total budgeted expenses for 2021 shall be USD 8,110,000, giving a budgeted surplus of USD 49,000 to be added to the reserve funds.
  - 9.1.5 The 2021 Budget, despite the current situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, demonstrated a positive and encouraging future for WBSC.
- 9.2 Mr. Kaltschmitt congratulated WBSC for this positive budget despite the challenges caused by pandemic.

#### **PROPOSAL**

To consider and approve the WBSC Budget Report for 2021 as presented by Treasurer Mr. Vicini, and as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Kaltschmitt.

#### **DECISION:**

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the WBSC Budget Report for 2021 as presented by Treasurer Vicini.

#### 10. PROSPECTIVE NEW MEMBERS

- 10.1 Secretary General Low informed the EB that there were no new applications for membership for the EB's consideration.
- 10.2 WBSC Executive Director Mr. Schmidt informed that the WBSC Secretariat were in discussions with various parties on the formation of the NFs for Baseball-Softball in the following countries:
  - 10.1.1 Ordinary Membership: Bhutan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan.
  - 10.1.2: Merger of Baseball and Softball NFs: Denmark, New Zealand, Palau.
- 10.3 He informed that they were discussion with Major League Baseball (MLB) as regards WBSC associate membership.

#### 11. CALL OF THE NEXT WBSC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

11.1 President Fraccari informed the EB Members that the next EB Meeting was scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2021.

#### 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 12.1 Mr. Mashilo queried whether the World Cups 2021 (WCs) to be hosted in Lima Peru (U18 Women Softball WC) and Argentina (U23 Men Softball) would still take place in 2021 as scheduled.
  - 12.1.1 Executive Director Mr. Schmidt confirmed that as of then, there were no changes but that the WBSC was still monitoring the situation.

#### 13. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

- 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 15:10 with a vote of thanks to the Chair. [End]

These Minutes, originating from the WBSC Executive Board Meeting held by videoconference, on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021, are formally confirmed as correct by:

	Day	Month	Year	
	City			
	City			
Signed by		;	Signed by	
Riccardo Fraco President	cari		Beng Choo Low Secretary General	