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WBSC

WORLD
BASEBALL SOFTBALL
CONFEDERATION

Game Time!

Executive Board 26th Meeting

Pully – Lausanne
25th November 2023

Minutes

WBSC Executive Board 26th Meeting

Pully - Switzerland

25th November 2023

AGENDA

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Roll call
- 3) Approval of the Minutes of the WBSC Executive Board Meetings held on 22nd Jul 2023 and on 6th September 2023
- 4) Any matters arising from the Minutes
- 5) President's Address
- 6) 5th WBSC Ordinary Congress 2023
- 7) Los Angeles Olympics 2028 (LA28) & Beyond
- 8) Media report
- 9) 2023 activities report & major milestones
- 10) 2024 tournaments
- 11) Financial report
- 12) WBSC Continental Associations Development Fund Report
- 13) eSports Strategy Progress Report
- 14) Baseball Champions League (BCL) Steering Committee Report
- 15) Disciplinary Matters
- 16) Prospective new Members and Membership Updates
- 17) Any other business

ATTENDANCE

Present (12/16):

President:	Mr. Riccardo Fraccari
Executive VP – Softball:	Mr. Craig Cress
Executive VP – Baseball:	Mr. Jeffrey Koo Jr.
Vice President:	Mr. Willi Kaltschmitt
Secretary General:	Dato' (Ms.) Beng Choo Low
Treasurer:	Mr. Angelo Vicini
Member At-Large:	Mr. Ronald Finlay
Member At-Large:	Mr. Paul Seiler
Member At-Large:	Ms. Taeko Utsugi
Member At-Large:	Mr. Gabriel Waage
Athletes' Rep. – Baseball:	Mr. Randolph Oduber
Athletes' Rep. – Baseball:	Ms. Ayako Rokkaku (connected by videoconference)

Excused:

Vice President:	Ms. Beatrice Allen
Vice President:	Mr. Luís Rafael Mejía
Athletes' Rep. – Softball:	Ms. Monica Abbott
Athletes' Rep. – Softball:	Mr. Cole Evans

In attendance, also:

Mr. Michael Schmidt, Executive Director
 Mr. Vincenzo La Rocca, Legal Commission Member
 Ms. Akiko Ito, Japanese interpreter
 Mr. Chris (Chien Fan) Day, Chinese interpreter

WBSC Staff Members:

Mr. Marco Ienna, COO
 Mr. Richard Baker, Media & Communications Director
 Mr. Victor Isola, Executive Assistant to the President
 Mr. Guillermo Ramirez, Base Marketing Department Director
 Mr. Valerio Cianfoni, Protocol & Special Projects Department
 Ms. Yoori Jung, Protocol Department
 Ms. Mara Hidalgo, Apprentice
 Ms. Carine Esoua, Legal Department
 Ms. Francesca Fabretto, Membership Department
 Ms. Amy Park, Integrity Unit

1. **WELCOME**

- 1.1 President Fraccari called to order this 25th November 2023, WBSC Executive Board (EB) Meeting at 09:00 (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 WBSC EB Extraordinary meeting held on 22nd July 2023 and the 25th WBSC EB meeting held on 6th September 2023 by videoconference were sent earlier to all EB Members and that the requests for amendments received by the WBSC Office were attended to. There were no further requests from the EB members at the Meeting for any amendments.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the Minutes of the WBSC EB Extraordinary meeting held on 22nd July 2023 (by videoconference).

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the Minutes of the WBSC EB Extraordinary meeting held on 22nd July 2023 (by videoconference).

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the Minutes of the 25th WBSC EB meeting held on 6th September 2023 (by videoconference).

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the Minutes of the 25th WBSC EB meeting held on 6th September 2023 (by videoconference).

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

- 4.1 There were no matters arising brought up.

5. **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

- 5.1 President Fraccari expressed that it was a special day as it was the first time that the WBSC EB meeting was taking place in person after the 2020 pandemic and at this new WBSC HQ.
- 5.2 He pointed out 2 significant milestones achieved during this period:
- 5.2.1 One was the return of baseball and softball to the Olympic Programme for the Los Angeles Olympics 2028 (LA28), and
- 5.2.2 The second was that this year, 2024, was the 10th anniversary since the merger of International Baseball (IBAF) and International Softball (ISF) into the WBSC. He stated that WBSC has achieved many important and significant milestones and grown to be one strong recognised international federation (IF). He summarised the formation of the WBSC as follows:
- On 20th October 2012, the ISF Congress in Houston, USA, when the softball community decided and approved the unification with IBAF into the WBSC, by a majority of 71% of the votes.
 - On 14th April 2013, the IBAF Congress in Tokyo, Japan, when the baseball community unanimously decided and approved the unification with ISF into the WBSC.
 - The true unification of the ISF and IBAF was announced in 2014 with the approval of one joint statute to govern the WBSC.
 - On 10th May 2014 during the inaugural Congress in Hammamet, Tunisia, the two bodies applied the new Statutes and elected the new Executive Board. The same year (2014), the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recognised the WBSC as the sole governing IF for both baseball and softball.
- 5.3 He expressed that WBSC should celebrate the 10th of May 2024 to mark the very important milestone, with an EB meeting in this new Pully WBSC HQ and that guests be invited to join in to mark that date. He also stated that WBSC Members and the international baseball-softball community should be encouraged to organize special events to mark the occasion.
- 5.4 The EB discussed for the date 10th May to be named “World Baseball Softball Day” to mark the significant occasion.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve that the date 10th May be named the “World Baseball Softball

Confederation Day” to celebrate and commemorate the unification of Baseball and Softball, as proposed by Secretary General Low.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved and declared that the date 10th May be named as the “World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Day” to celebrate and commemorate the unification of Baseball and Softball.

6. 5th WBSC ORDINARY CONGRESS 2023

6.1 President Fraccari reflected on the progress of the WBSC:

6.1.1 Since the merger 10 years ago of the IBAF – ISF and approval of the WBSC constitution at the 1st WBSC Congress in 2014 in Hammamet, Tunisia, the very hard work and tremendous efforts put in by so many, and the continued constant reviews to enable the WBSC to become stronger and more competitive as an established internationally recognised IF.

6.1.2 With our 10th anniversary, it was time for WBSC to again review the organization and structure to reflect the true total unity within the WBSC by bringing together the two divisions, Baseball and Softball, under one main governing Executive Board (EB), and bringing on board the continental representatives and updating the WBSC Statutes. The goal was to have stronger unification and wider continental representation, with the Baseball and Softball Divisions to be re-structured as respective WBSC Commissions.

6.2 He reported that the WBSC Legal Commission, working with the WBSC Office had put together amendments to the WBSC Statutes, together with the relevant documents, to reflect this true and total unification. He informed that the documents for the amendments to the WBSC Statutes had been sent to the WBSC Members for approval at the online 5th WBSC Congress for vote by electronic mail, with the vote to close on 6th December 2023.

7. LOS ANGELES OLYMPICS 2028 (LA28) & BEYOND

7.1 President Fraccari reiterated that at the IOC Session in October 2023 in Mumbai, India, the IOC accepted and approved the LA proposal for the inclusion of Baseball & Softball on the Olympic Programme of LA28 (together with 4 other sports, namely, Cricket, Flag Football, Lacrosse, and Squash).

7.2 He recorded appreciation to all parties for all the tireless work and committed

support. He also thanked MLB (Major League Baseball) and all stakeholders as well as US Baseball and US Softball, in particular, Mr. Seiler and Mr. Cress, for all the diligent follow-up actions.

- 7.3 He informed that the WBSC would next have to continue working with the IOC, MLB, and all professional leagues as well as all other stakeholders on the organization of Baseball-Softball in LA28, including on the number of teams and number of athletes, identifying competition venues and other aspects. He stated that it was important for all parties to cooperate and work together to ensure the success of Baseball-Softball, not only in terms of revenue but more importantly, to showcase the popularity of our sport, and the tremendous support, not only in fans at the venues but also on social media.
- 7.4 Mr. Koo expressed gratitude to the media department, especially in the online and social media engagement which he said holds paramount significance to actively engage with younger generations. It was noteworthy that broadcasting companies are also active on social media platforms, emphasising the need to place increased emphasis on social networking sites (SNS).
- 7.5 President Fraccari stated that our e-Baseball viewership totalling 1.9 million during the recent Olympic eSports event in Singapore significantly exceeded that of other e-sports and underscored the online following and influence of our IF. He also informed that WBSC was in discussion with various parties, including the city of Lausanne and the IOC to host future e-Baseball tournaments, including an ePremier12 finals.
- 7.6 He stated that WBSC also needs to continue with efforts to focus the campaign next for inclusion of Baseball-Softball on Brisbane Olympics 2032 programme, and to review and develop a more strategic approach. He continued by stating that it was also important for WBSC to work with the respective Continental Associations (CAs) to continue with efforts for the inclusion of Baseball-Softball in the respective Continental Games, such as the Asian Games, All-African Games and Pan-American Games, and also for the continued inclusion of Baseball5 in the Youth Olympic Games.
- 7.7 Mr. Vicini conveyed appreciation to the WBSC team and the local organizers for the recent professional organisation of the U-18 Baseball5 World Cup. He said that the participation of diverse teams, including three African teams, held significant importance, and the commendable partnership with Alibaba Cloud indicated promising future initiatives.
- 7.8 President Fraccari added that when he attended the recent Asian Games Hangzhou 2023, Secretary General Low and he had a meeting with Alibaba Cloud representatives at their headquarters in Hangzhou China. During the meeting, Alibaba expressed a desire to collaborate with WBSC in future events and initiatives.

- 7.9 Mr. Koo informed that the BFA (Baseball Federation Asia) and he have been having on-going discussions with Chinese Baseball Association (CBA) and Chinese authorities to develop and grow the emerging baseball market in China. He informed that CBA reported that over 700 amateur teams involving over 100 million individuals were engaged in baseball activities and tournaments. He said that despite the complexities in the U.S.-China relationship, there is optimism about the potential for baseball in China, and that he was working hard to establish a professional league within the next few years, including the possibility of Chinese Taipei pro teams joining the Chinese league. He informed that the Taipei Dome was completed and that plans are in place for the construction of an eSports stadium soon.
- 7.10 Mr. Kaltschmitt emphasised the importance of prioritising the development of Baseball5, Baseball-Softball in China, and eSports.

8. MEDIA REPORT

- 8.1 Mr. Baker presented the media activities report and highlighted the following:
- 8.1.1 There was a 400,000 increase in views on WBSC website and platforms compared to 2021, with a total of 7.8 million page views, marking a 16% rise from the previous year.
 - 8.1.2 TikTok emerged as the fastest-growing platform, while Facebook maintained the largest community.
 - 8.1.3 Plans are in place for more social media activities targeting the eGaming community in Korea, China, and Japan. The strategy involved increased promotion with athletes and strengthened media relationships, such as with ESPN to promote baseball/softball using provided content. Additionally, new initiatives with MLB are being explored.

9. 2023 ACTIVITIES REPORT & MAJOR MILESTONES

- 9.1 Mr. Schmidt reported on the 2023 events, highlighting a total of 12 organised events, comprising 5 softball, 6 baseball, and 1 Baseball5 (including World Cup group stages tournaments). The events involved participation from 100 teams; and in the medallist summary, 4 continents secured medals, with the Americas winning 9, Asia 7, Europe 1, Oceania 1, and Africa 0.
- 9.2 He also presented consolidated media and TV data, emphasising the success of our 12 WBSC events that featured 380 fully produced games and 1,250-unit hours of broadcast.

- 9.2.1 Partnerships with 27 major TV and media outlets were established, reaching a global audience of tens of millions. This success was significant from both marketing and media perspectives.
- 9.2.2 Notably, our events, including the Baseball Champions League and the U-18 Baseball World Cup, made a positive impact.
- 9.2.3 The media value, estimated at \$10 million, reflected the coverage received. Overall, these achievements highlighted successful social impact and suggested a return on investment, making hosting such events advantageous for a city.

10. 2024 TOURNAMENTS

- 10.1 Mr. Schmidt reported on the 2024 WBSC calendar with a total of 16 tournaments-events. These include the following:
 - The U-15 Baseball World Cup.
 - The three stages of the Men's Softball World Cup.
 - The three stages of U-18 Women's Softball World Cup.
 - The final of the Women's Softball World Cup.
 - The final of the Women's Baseball World Cup.
 - A U-23 Baseball World Cup played in China.
 - The Champions League would continue.
 - The Baseball5 Senior World Cup in Hong Kong, and
 - The highlight of the year will be the Premier12.
- 10.2 He then addressed the status of open bids for the following WBSC events:
 - Currently, one of the Men's Softball World Cup Group Stage, which was previously open, was now closed.
 - The location for the U-15 Baseball World Cup next year was still pending, with two potential interests. The plan was to conclude discussions within the next weeks, allowing for the official announcement of the venue for the U-15 Baseball World Cup soon.
 - There was still an open bid for the U-18 Baseball World Cup to be held in 2025.
 - There was still an open bid for the Youth Baseball5 World Cup in 2025.
- 10.3 He provided information on The World Games (TWG) Chengdu 2025:
 - The TWG Chengdu 2025 was scheduled for 7th – 17th August 2025.
 - Women's and Men's softball have been included on the programme for a 8-teams tournaments each (8 Women and 8 Men's teams).
 - The proposed qualification criteria would be one spot for the host, six top teams based on the respective WBSC Softball World

Rankings as at 31st December 2024, and one wild card spot to be awarded by the WBSC no later than 31st January 2025, subject to a vote.

- 10.4 Secretary General Low explained the criteria for qualifying the top teams based on WBSC World Softball Ranking for the World Games was to fulfil the requirement of the TWG for the top teams to participate and to dispense with separate continental qualifiers, taking into consideration the already packed calendar in 2024.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the proposal of the qualification criteria for the 2025 World Games, that is, one spot is for the host, the respective top 6 teams based on the respective WBSC Softball World Ranking as of 31st December 2024, and one wildcard for each respective Men Softball and Women Softball, as proposed by Mr. Seiler and seconded by Mr. Kaltschmitt.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the qualification criteria for the 2025 World Games, being one spot is for the host, the top 6 teams based on the respective WBSC Softball World Ranking as of 31st December 2024, and one wildcard for each respective Men Softball and Women Softball.

- 10.5 In view of issues raised by, and feedback from, a number of WBSC Member-National Federations (NFs) and participating teams in the recent Softball tournaments, President Fraccari proposed that a Softball Review Working Group be formed to review the softball tournaments, including but not limited to the current structure and formats.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the formation of a Softball Review Working Group to be chaired by Mr. Craig Cress to review all the softball tournaments, including but not limited to the current structure and formats, and to make recommendations for the EB consideration and approval, as proposed by Mr. Seiler and seconded by Mr. Kaltschmitt.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board approved the formation a Softball Working Group chaired by Mr. Craig Cress to review all the softball tournaments. including but not limited to the current structure and formats, and to make recommendations for the EB consideration and approval.

11. FINANCIAL REPORT

11.1 Mr. Vicini presented the WBSC financial reports and highlighted the following:

11.1.1 For the 2022 profit and loss statement:

- The income was \$8,204,623, and expenses were \$8,094,148.
- The results were in line with the approved 2022 budget.
- The Swiss government approved a low-interest loan during COVID.
- The auditor found no issues with the financial statements.

11.1.2 For the 2023 budget:

- The estimated income was lower, but expenses were also reduced, aligning with the budget.
- The 2024 budget was under discussion, with some matters yet to be finalised, including decisions on Dentsu's agreement, accounting procedures, and addressing currency exchange losses.
- The main goal for the 2024 budget was to include organising events, increasing income with new details, and accumulating resources to create reserve funds.

11.2 Mr. Schmidt explained that WBSC has made an agreement with the company “Corepay” for a fixed currency exchange rate to reduce exchange losses.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the 2022 WBSC Profit and Loss statement to be presented to the Congress for final ratification, as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Seiler.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved for the 2022 WBSC Profit and Loss Statement to be presented to the Congress for final ratification.

12. WBSC CONTINENTAL ASSOCIATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND REPORT

12.1 Mr. Vicini presented a report on the WBSC Continental Associations' (CAs) development funding allocation, with focus on the respective CA's specific areas for development in 2023 and 2024. He informed that this was based on a new strategy of granting more responsibility to the CAs and that two WBSC Development Commission meetings to discuss criteria and initiatives for the future. He highlighted the following:

- Four major categories were identified for development: athletes, coaches, management, and promotions & schools.
- The parameters for fund allocation include fixed quotas, recognised national federations, senior and youth continental tournaments, the existence of development integrity officers, governance scores.

- A new criterion—percentage of the budget allocated to CAs' for development.

12.2 During discussions, it was noted that some CAs were facing some challenges in utilising their development funds effectively. It was suggested that CAs ought to specify items for fund utilisation and WBSC ought to implement more control. President Fraccari requested that more information on how funds would be spent should be given by the CAs before distributing the balance allocation, with an objective system for fund allocation and evaluation. Mr. Koo said that CAs needed to meet certain criteria before receiving funds. Mr. Vicini highlighted that all development fund requests were received by the WBSC, with decisions made by the WBSC Development Commission.

13. ESPORTS STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT

- 13.1 Mr. Cianfoni provided updates on the 2023 e-sports events, and highlighted the following:
- The launch of the WBSC eBASEBALL™ Power Pros game in February.
 - The commencement of the e-Baseball series in September.
 - Plans for an ePremier12 in 2024, with Discussions underway with the IOC to host the finals at the Lausanne Olympic Museum.

14. BASEBALL CHAMPIONS LEAGUE (BCL) STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

- 14.1 President Fraccari highlighted the initiation of a new event, the Baseball Champions League (BCL), in September 2023, for the Americas, played in Yucatán, Mexico. He said that the tournament resulted in a 20% increase in the league's value and there was growing interest to host the event. He also informed that discussions were underway regarding the potential establishment of a Softball Champions League in 2025.
- 14.2 Mr. Ramirez briefed the EB on the BCL event, highlighting President Fraccari's vision for a Global Baseball Champions League. He stated that the aim was to tap into new markets, expand the players base, and generate revenue for overall baseball development. He said that the proposed league could include 140+ clubs from the Americas, Europe, and the Asia Pacific Region, with the goal of hosting the first global championship in 2026. He informed that the BCL logo (3BCL), already signified three continental movements.
- 14.3 He shared the results from a comprehensive research document on the BCL and highlighted the following:
- The report indicated the BCL media value of USD5.262 million, reaching nearly a hundred million people, and broadcasting almost

- 100 hours on TV.
- Due to increased interest, the number of teams for the 2024 edition would double from the first edition, making it a significant event.
- Discussions are ongoing regarding whether the competitions would span the entire season or shortened to be completed within a week.
- The enthusiasm surrounding the BCL suggests a promising future for the league.

15. **DISCIPLINARY MATTERS**

15.1 Mr. Ienna informed that the WBSC Integrity Unit had reviewed the following for updates and presented the proposed updates and amendments to the following for the EB's consideration and approval, which had been sent to all EB Members:

15.1.1 Amendments to the Disciplinary By-Laws.

15.1.2 Amendments to the WBSC Safeguarding from Harassment and Abuse Rules.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the amendments to the Disciplinary By-Laws, as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Cress.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the amendments to the Disciplinary By-Laws.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the amendments to the WBSC Safeguarding from Harassment and Abuse Rules, as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Cress.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the amendments to the WBSC Safeguarding from Harassment and Abuse Rules.

15.2 Mr. Ienna next presented a report on a case involving the Lithuania Baseball team – athlete and team officials – decided by the WBSC Europe EB. He referred to the written report presented to the EB and briefed as follows:

- At the end of October, the WBSC Europe sent WBSC information

concerning an age manipulation case which they (WBSC Europe) sanctioned and for which they wanted WBSC to intervene at the international level.

- This case occurred during the European Championship Qualifier U-18 Baseball held in Zürich, Switzerland from 10th to 15th July 2023 and involves members of Lithuania Baseball Association (LBA).
- On July 10th the Lithuanian team led by their delegation leader, presented the Final Team Roster and all passports of his team including that of player #9. This player participated in each game of the round robin tournament in the position of catcher/shortstop.
- WBSC Europe obtained subsequent information and documents that revealed that player #9 of the Lithuanian team was not the registered player but someone who played under his name. The actual player was ineligible to play because of his age (19 years old).
- The actual player and team delegation leader both denied the allegations several times.
- The LOC then involved the police to carry out an identity check. There was no admission during the Tournament.
- On August 21st, the President of LBA admitted the facts, stating that he only became aware of the situation on July 10th. He announced to WBSC Europe the withdrawal from his position as member of the WBSC EB and the withdrawal of his Secretary General from LBA.

15.3 He added the following regarding the **WBSC Europe Sanctions**:

- On August 22nd, WBSC Europe EB appointed a Panel to examine the case. On October 16th, WBSC Europe sent a letter to LBA with the following sanctions (effective from October 12, 2023):
 - To issue an 8-year suspension to Mr. Vermidas Neverauskas (Delegation Leader and President of LBA) from representing Lithuanian LBA or any other organisation in any WBSC Europe event or holding any official role or function in any event organised by WBSC Europe and we will recommend to the WBSC to follow this suspension.
 - The Lithuanian LBA is mandated to conduct in-person passport and Final Team Roster (FTR) checks for all players at any WBSC Europe event for a 2-year period and will recommend to the WBSC to do the same.
 - Lithuania U18 shall forfeit all games played in the tournament in question 9-0. All other teams move up accordingly in the final standings.
 - Lithuania LBA shall receive no WBSC ranking points for

their participation in the tournament. All other teams shall receive additional ranking points based on their updated standings as applicable. This will be conveyed to the WBSC.

- To ban the Federation from voting or proposing motions at WBSCE Congress for 2 years
- To ban the coaches who were on the FTR at the tournament for 2 years: Mr. Nick Micelli / Mr. William Gordon / Ms. Audrone Rasciute.

15.4 He informed the EB Members that after receiving the report and documents from WBSC Europe, the WBSC Integrity Unit carried out a further investigation because it considered the evidence provided by the WBSC Europe insufficient. Additionally, the sanctioned individuals did not have the opportunity to be heard. He stated that over two weeks, the following four members of the LBA had the opportunity to be heard, separately, regarding the facts and violations that occurred during the event. The four individuals are:

- Mr. Virmidas Neverauskas (President of the LBA)
- Mrs. Audrone Rasciute (ex-Secretary General of the LBA, mother of the player #9)
- Mr. Audrius Rascius (player #9)
- Mr. Donatas Maciulevicius (Coach during the tournament)

15.5 The EB Members noted with concern that the WBSC Europe appeared not to have conducted a full hearing of the matter, in that:

- The aggrieved parties did not appear to have been given the opportunity to be heard by the panel hearing the matter nor to defend themselves.
- The composition of the panel was not clearly stated.

15.6 There was a lengthy discussion on the matter by the EB Members noting that:

- The action of the LBA, the athlete and team officials concerned violated article 5.2.3 of WBSC Ethics-By-Laws and the provisions of the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions and the WBSC Prevention of the Manipulation of Competition Rules, respectively article 4.2.1 manipulation of competition - intentional arrangement and article 4.4.2 failure to report. The sanctions proposed were in accordance with article 14 of the WBSC PMC Rules. The breaches were by senior officials holding positions of high duties and responsibilities within LBA.
- There were mitigating factors and aggravating factors, which the EB considered.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and decide on the WBSC Europe sanctions in the Lithuania Baseball

Federation case, as proposed by Mr. Finlay and seconded by Mr. Cress.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the recommendations regarding the Lithuania baseball Federation case:

- *To issue a 6-year suspension to Ms. Audrone Rasciute from holding any managerial position within the LBA and from representing LBA or any other organisation in any WBSC event, as well as from holding any official role or function in any event organised by WBSC;*
- *To issue a 6-year suspension to Mr. Vermidas Neverauskas from holding any managerial position within the LBA and from representing LBA or any other organisation in any WBSC event, as well as from holding any official role or function in any event organised by the WBSC;*
- *To issue a 3-year suspension to Mr. Audrius Rascius from taking part in tournaments, competitions and official activities of the WBSC;*
- *To issue a 6-month suspension to Mr. Donatas Maciulevicius, from taking part in tournaments, competitions and official activities of the WBSC as a coach;*
- *To implement measures set to avoid match-fixing, such as but not limited to the attendance and validation of the course on preventing competition manipulation from Athlete365 for all participants of Lithuanian team present during future WBSC Tournament until December 2026 and to the conduction of in-person passport and Final Team Roster [FTR] checks for all players at any WBSC event for a 2-year period;*
- *To delete WBSC ranking points for LBA's participation in the tournament. All other teams shall receive additional ranking points based on their updated standings as applicable; and*
- *To organise educational training on Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions during future WBSC Europe events (at least once per year) until 2026.*

The WBSC Executive Board also unanimously approved the following:

- *That the WBSC EB strongly recommend that WBSC Europe follows this WBSC EB decision at the European level by modifying their previous sanction.*
- *That based on the evidence obtained by the WBSC Integrity Unit, WBSC Europe is directed to nullify the provision to ban Mr. Nick Micelli and Mr. Willian Gordon for 2 years as Mr. Gordan was not present at the tournament and Mr. Micelli was not implicated.*
- *WBSC requires that WBSC Europe notify all the affected parties in writing of the*

amended WBSC and WBSC Europe sanctions.

- *WBSC Europe be reminded that it must conduct future disciplinary proceedings in a way that respects due process and principle of fairness and natural justice. This includes granting the right to be heard to all involved parties, ensuring accurate use of articles and rules when applying sanctions, taking proper actions within a reasonable time, and ensuring that all the rules and regulations are available on the WBSC Europe website.*

16. PROSPECTIVE NEW MEMBERS AND MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

16.1 There were no proposals presented for consideration.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 WBSC Legacy Club Project

President Fraccari updated the EB Members of the status of the WBSC Legacy club project.

17.1.1 Mr. Ienna briefed the EB Members on the on-going discussions with the IOC on the WBSC's project to form a Refugee Team for Baseball5 to participate in the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026. He reported on the support received from the Olympic Refugee Foundation, including an ongoing discussion to receive a scholarship support for eight high-level athletes and the UNHCR backing of the initiative, addressing challenges related to travel restrictions for refugees.

17.2 Athletes Representation

Mr. Oduber raised the following:

17.2.1 He expressed concern about the challenges faced by professional athletes, not only from the Netherlands, but also other countries, in obtaining approval from MLB and finding solutions relating to insurance cover to participate in international tournaments, such as He said that the participation of these athletes was important to raise the WBSC events.

17.2.2 He highlighted the growing popularity of Baseball5, Baseball, and Softball, emphasising the importance of focusing on all three disciplines and the significance of having all these sports in the Olympics as athletes aspire to participate in such prestigious events. He stressed the need to sustain the

growth of our sport, with the expansion through events such as the BCL. He also stated the importance and necessity of maintaining educational efforts for athletes, and of keeping athletes informed and updated.

- 17.2.3 President Fraccari expressing gratitude to Mr. Oduber for his inputs and thanked all the Athletes' Representatives for their contribution and support. He stated that for the WBSC, the Athletes' Voice was very important and the WBSC would like to be proactive in involving athletes in the decision-making process and to seek their input to enhance their contribution within the organisation.

17.3 **Taipei Dome**

Mr. Koo reported on the completion of the new dome in Taipei City which has a capacity of 40,000 people and is intended for use for baseball events as well as other activities.

17.4 **Transfer of Players Nationality**

Mr. Schmidt presented the applications and supporting documents for the request of transfer of the following two players nationality:

17.4.1 Mr. Tahir Nadjin-Guiyón MEULENS;

17.4.2 Mr. Kaeber Ayrton Gemy ROG;

Both from the Netherlands to Curaçao. He reported that the WBSC Office had checked the applications and necessary documents and found them to be in order and that both NFs have consented.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the transfer of player nationality of Mr. Tahir Nadjin-Guiyón MEULENS from the Netherlands to Curaçao, as proposed by Mr. Schmidt and seconded by Mr. Finlay.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the transfer of player nationality of Mr. Tahir Nadjin-Guiyón MEULENS from the Netherlands to Curaçao.

PROPOSAL:

To consider and approve the transfer of player nationality of Mr. Kaeber Ayrton Gemy ROG from the Netherlands to Curaçao, as proposed by Mr. Cress and seconded by Mr. Finlay.

DECISION

The WBSC Executive Board unanimously approved the transfer of player nationality of Mr. Kaeber Ayrton Gemy ROG from the Netherlands to Curaçao.

17.5 Data Protection

Mr. Finlay highlighted concerns and the need for data protection, data management and cyber security and requested the WBSC Management to actively address them, emphasising the significance of tackling the relevant issues, especially the need to protect athletes' data and strengthen cyber security measures.

Mr. Schmidt responded that WBSC has been and will continue to actively take the necessary steps to address the concerns raised about data protection, data management, and cyber security.

18. ADJOURNMENT

18.1 Mr. Fraccari expressed his gratitude to all attendees of the meeting for their cooperation and support. He extended appreciation to the WBSC staff for their dedicated efforts in ensuring the success of the meeting. Mr. Fraccari further informed that the next meeting was scheduled for 10 May 2024, coinciding with the anniversary celebration of WBSC Day.

18.2 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 in Pully, Switzerland on 25th November 2023, are formally confirmed as correct by:

Day _____ Month _____ Year _____

City _____

Signed by _____
Riccardo Fraccari
President

Signed by _____
Beng Choo Low
Secretary General