



Minutes

WT Extraordinary Council Meeting (Hybrid: Wuxi, China | Conference Call)

15h00-16h30 GMT+9 | April 3, 2023 (local time in Korea)

AGENDA

- 1. Establish Quorum: Call Meeting to Order**
- 2. President Report**
- 3. Secretary General Report**
- 4. Discussions**
- 5. Official Position and Statement**
- 6. Next Council Meeting**
- 7. Closing of Meeting**

1. Establish Quorum: Call Meeting to Order

1. The meeting was called to order by the **CHAIR** of the Meeting, **Dr. Chungwon Choue**, WT President. The **CHAIR** asked **Mr. Jeongkang Seo**, Secretary General, to announce the quorum.
2. **Mr. Jeongkang Seo** announced that 25 Council Members and the Auditor were present, thereby establishing a quorum in accordance with Article 6.10 of the WT Statutes.
3. The **CHAIR** noted that the following members were absent with prior notice.
 - Mr. Pimol Srivikorn (Treasurer)
 - Mr. Jean-Marie Ayer (Council Member)
 - Mr. Stephen Thomas Lambdin (Council Member)
 - Ms. Nikita Glasnovic (Council Member)
4. The **CHAIR** noted that the following members were absent without prior notice.
 - Mr. John Kotsifas (Vice President)
 - Mr. Kook Hyun Jung (Council Member)
 - Ms. Nadin Dawani (Council Member)
 - H.H. Sheikha Jameela Al Qasimi (Council Member)

2. President Report

5. The **CHAIR** started by greeting the Council Members from Wuxi highlighting that is the first time having the Grand Slam Champions Series in three years and that it is good to be back. He thanked the Council for attending the Extraordinary Council Meeting at such urgent notice.
6. He mentioned that the IOC Executive Board released recommendations regarding the re-integration of athletes with passports from Russia or Belarus and that he would like to open the floor for Council Members to speak about the topic before making the final decisions.

3. Secretary General Report

7. The **CHAIR** asked the Secretary General, **Mr. Jeongkang Seo**, to present the IOC's position.
8. **Mr. Seo** started summarizing the background of the situation. He mentioned that on March 3, 2022, the Council decided that Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials would not be permitted to compete at World Taekwondo events, in support of the IOC's sanctions at that time. He said that over the past year, the IOC has held a number of consultation calls with the International Federations (IFs) and other stakeholders. On February 1st, 2023, at the Extraordinary Council Meeting in Bangkok, the Council recommended supporting the stance of the IOC in terms of non-politicization of sport. The Council also supported reconciliation of athletes rather than separation regardless of the passports they are holding.
9. He shared with the Council the decisions and recommendations of the IOC Executive Board regarding athletes holding passports of Russia and Belarus.
10. He informed that first, the IOC communicated all IFs that it is their decision whether to include athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports in their sport events. Second, that the IOC has

not made any decision on whether athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports can participate at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. However, the IOC did mention that even if athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports qualified for the Paris Games through the IF events or via ranking points, the final decision on whether they can actually participate will come from the IOC at the appropriate time.

11. In addition, he pointed out that the IOC issued the following recommendations to IFs and event organizers if an IF decides to allow athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports:
 - Athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports must compete only as Individual Neutral Athletes, and teams with such athletes cannot be considered.
 - Athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports who actively supported the war or are contracted to the military or national security agencies cannot be entered. This also applies to support personnel and international technical officials.
 - Athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports must meet all anti-doping requirements according to the IF rules.
12. He also mentioned that the following has not changed:
 - No IF international sport events can be organized in Russia and Belarus
 - No flag, anthem, colors or identifications of these countries in any IF sport event, including the entire venue.
 - No Russian and Belarusian government or state official can be invited to any IF sport event or meeting.
 - If athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports win medals in IF sport events, they cannot be included in any country-based medal table.
13. After informing about the IOC Executive Board's position and recommendations, he shared with the Council World Taekwondo's drafted proposal.
14. He stated that first, the Council will have to decide on the re-integration of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports as Individual Neutral Athletes. He remarked that if the Council decides to approve their participation, the most crucial step is to determine their eligibility for participation. For that purpose the first proposed step would be to establish an ad-hoc Review Committee composed of:
 - One World Taekwondo Vice President as Chair
 - One member of the Integrity Committee
 - One member of the Athletes Committee, ideally a retired athlete
 - One member of the World Taekwondo Technical Commission, and
 - One member of the European Taekwondo Union
15. He noted that the most important task of the Review Committee is to verify the background of the Individual Neutral Athletes. However, he said that it is not possible for the Review Committee or even for WT to verify without the involvement of the Russian and Belarusian Member National Associations (MNAs). Therefore, he explained the 3-step verification process proposed by WT:

- First, the MNAs of Russia and Belarus have to confirm their pool of athletes who are not contracted to the military or national security agencies, and that they did not and do not support the war. The MNAs will need to sign pledges during this process. If it is found that they have provided inaccurate information, they will face disciplinary actions.
 - Second, the athletes have to register themselves as Individual Neutral Athletes and to sign pledges. World Taekwondo will need to include them in the Registered Testing Pool for doping control purposes.
 - Third, the Review Committee has to verify that the Individual Neutral Athletes have fulfilled all requirements.
16. He remarked that Individual Neutral Athletes will not be able to register through GMS platform because the condition for their participation is only individual; therefore, the whole verification and event registration will be done through a dedicated email account to keep and record relevant documents.
17. Lastly, he said that it is recommended that the first event to re-integrate athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports should be a World Taekwondo-promoted event considering the complexity of the process. Once it is managed successfully, WT management may extend to the next level of event starting with ETU promoted events.

4. Discussions

18. The **CHAIR** stated that it is a very difficult matter to consider. He expressed that the decision will never satisfy everybody, but it should be decided based on the principles and philosophy of Taekwondo and sport in general.
19. Before opening the floor to the Council, he asked for the kind understanding of Mr. Terekhov to first leave the meeting and he invited him to rejoin after discussion.
20. He requested the Council Members to provide their clear position on whether they support reintegrating athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports to WT events. If they support, he also asked them to communicate if they agree to the proposed next step presented by the Secretary General.
21. **Mr. Issaka Ide**, Vice President, addressed the Council on behalf of the African Taekwondo Union mentioning his full support to the reintegration of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports as they do not have anything to do with politics. He further shared his full support to the step-by-step reintegration as the proposal presented by the Secretary General.
22. **Mr. Kyu Seok Lee**, Vice President, said that he supports the conditional acceptance of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports to participate in WT official championships. However, he expressed that WT should make sincere efforts to promote world peace by giving a strong message to Russia to end the war.
23. **Mr. Sakis Pragalos**, Vice President, highlighted that no athlete should stay behind and that he totally supports that athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports return to WT sanctioned competitions.
24. **Mr. Juan Manuel Lopez**, Vice President, stated that the war is indeed terrible and regrettable. He remarked that WT must ensure that the athletes of both countries have the same opportunities of competing worldwide and within the Olympic Cycle as any other country in the world. He emphasized that politics and war should be made by the involved ones, and that WT's role is to bring peace among countries and bring them closer to the Olympic Movement.

25. **Mr. Hassan Iskandar**, Council Member, remarked that sport and politics must be separated and that he fully supports the proposal shared by the Secretary General, remarking that it has been developed in a very wise manner.
26. **Ms. Aicha Garad Ali**, Vice President, mentioned that she fully supports the reintegration of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports and the proposal presented by the Secretary General.
27. **Ms. Maria Rosario Borello**, Vice President, expressed that Taekwondo is for all and that athletes should not be involved or affected by politics. She addressed the Council asking them to make a unanimous decision to show union in favor of the athletes. She added that she completely agrees with the presented proposal and remarked to not forget that Taekwondo is for all.
28. **Mr. Maher Magableh**, Council Member, mentioned that athletes have the right to come back and politics must be separated. He added that referees should be included as well.
29. **Mr. Mohamed Shaaban**, Council Member, expressed his support to the return of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports in the proposed way. He also expressed his concern about the Review Committee duties since they will face limitations and that should be considered.
30. **Ms. Margaret Elizabeth Binga**, Council Member, stated her total support for athletes coming back as Individual Neutral Athletes in the manner proposed at the meeting. She agreed with their gradual integration as suggested.
31. **Mr. Richard Jay Warwick**, Council Member, communicated the position of the USA National Olympic and Paralympic Committees stating that they align with the IOC's position to allow athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports to compete under those strict neutral conditions already mentioned.
32. **Ms. Samira Asghari**, Council Member, said that after reviewing all the conditions for athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports to return as Individual Neutral Athletes she fully supports the proposition. She remarked that athletes are the heart of the movement and with the reviewed conditions it will be possible to support the Individual Neutral Athletes.
33. **Ms. Anna Panka**, Council Member, stated that if WT proceeds as proposed it is possible to allow the return of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports. However, she emphasized that it is a delicate matter, and that it must be handled carefully to make sure the proposed steps are followed.
34. **Ms. Maria Rosario Borello**, Vice President, stressed the urgency to make a decision in a unanimous way since WT Championships at Baku are approaching as well as many other important international events such as qualification tournaments.
35. The **CHAIR** closed the discussion as there were no further comments and he thanked the Council for their honesty and leadership.

5. Official Position and Statement

36. The **CHAIR** asked the Council to approve the reintegration of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports as Individual Neutral Athletes. He asked the Council if there is any objection. There was none. His motion was seconded and unanimously approved by the Council.

37. The **CHAIR** declared that the reintegration of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports as Individual Neutral Athletes is approved by the Council.

- **Decision: The reintegration of athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports as Individual Neutral Athletes was approved by the Council.**

38. The **CHAIR** invited Mr. Terekhov back to the meeting room and informed him about the Council's decision.

39. **Mr. Anatoly Terekhov** addressed the Council expressing his gratitude for the decision.

40. The **CHAIR** gave the floor to the Secretary General to announce the WT statement based on the discussions at the meeting.

41. **Mr. Seo** presented the statement:

Following the statements from the IOC with regard to the status of athletes from Russia and Belarus, the World Taekwondo Council convened today and expressed its full support for the IOC's position to respect the rights of all athletes without any discrimination, which is in line with the mission of World Taekwondo.

World Taekwondo will continue to discuss with the IOC the potential reintegration of athletes to international Taekwondo competitions, including qualification pathways to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, and the conditions under which such return to competition may be conducted.

World Taekwondo believes that sport can and should be used to reconcile and heal, rather than to separate

42. The **CHAIR** thanked the Council for the approval of the statement and for the discussions at the meeting.

6. Next Council Meeting

43. The **CHAIR** declared that, as planned, the next Council Meeting will be held in Baku on the occasion of the World Taekwondo Championships. He stated that the Council meeting will be held in the morning of May 28th followed by the General Assembly in the afternoon.

44. He also mentioned that the WT Gala Dinner will be held to commemorate the WT Golden Jubilee year on May 27th.

7. Closing of Meeting

45. The **CHAIR** thanked the Council once again for their valuable contributions to the discussion.

46. He adjourned the Council Meeting.