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*ITTF ANNUAL  
GENERAL MEETING  
WORKING DOCUMENTS*



## INTERNATIONAL TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2024 Annual General Meeting of the International Table Tennis Federation will be held in Busan, Korea Republic, in a hybrid format on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024, starting at 10h00 KST (02h00 CET).

### AGENDA

1. President Welcome and Opening Address
2. Host Welcome and Opening Address
3. Roll Call of Associations Present (Confirmation of registered Associations)
4. Appointment of a Chair
5. Confirmation of the Agenda
6. Appointment of Scrutineers
7. [Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand](#)
8. Membership
9. Recognitions
10. Annual General Report & Strategic Plan
  - 10.1 ITTF Group CEO
  - 10.2 WTT
  - 10.3 ITTF Foundation
  - 10.4 Paris 2024
  - 10.5 Other presentations
11. Finance
  - 11.1 Report of the Audit and Finance Committee
  - 11.2 Financial Report
  - 11.3 [2022 Audited Financial Statements](#)
  - 11.4 2023 Forecast
  - 11.5 2024 Quadrennial Forecast
12. Annual Reports from the Executive Board
  - 12.1 President: Petra SÖRLING
  - 12.2 Deputy President: LIU Guoliang
  - 12.3 Senior Executive Vice President: Khalil AL-MOHANNADI
  - 12.4 Executive Vice-President - Finance: Alaa MESHREF
  - 12.5 Executive Vice-President: Alaor AZEVEDO
  - 12.6 Executive Vice-President: MAEHARA Masahiro
  - 12.7 Executive Vice-President: Roland NATRAN
  - 12.8 Executive Vice-President: Wahid Enitan OSHODI
  - 12.9 Executive Vice-President: Graham SYMONS
  - 12.10 Co-Chairs of the Athletes' Commission: LIU Shiwen & Sharath Kamal ACHANTA
  - 12.11 IOC Member: RYU Seungmin



## INTERNATIONAL TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### ITTF AGM 2024 - AGENDA (continued from the previous page)

13. Annual Reports from the Continental Federations:
  - 13.1 Africa
  - 13.2 Americas
  - 13.3 Asia
  - 13.4 Europe
  - 13.5 Oceania
  
14. Annual Reports from the SG, CC, Integrity Board and Tribunal:
  - 14.1 ITTF Secretary General
  - 14.2 ITTF Continental Council
  - 14.3 ITTF Integrity Board
  - 14.4 ITTF Tribunal
  
15. Annual Reports from Permanent Committees:
  - 15.1 Equipment Committee
  - 15.2 Masters' Committee
  - 15.3 Nominations Committee
  - 15.4 Para Table Tennis Committee
  - 15.5 Rules Committee
  - 15.6 Sports Science and Medical Committee
  - 15.7 Sustainability Committee
  - 15.8 Umpires' and Referees' Committee
  
16. Ratification of the Work Done by the ITTF Council and the Executive Board
  
17. Governance Review Report
  
18. Propositions and Resolutions
  
19. Future World Championships
  - 19.1 Deadline for 2027 World Table Tennis Championships Finals Bids
  
20. Next General Meeting
  
21. Any Other Business
  
22. Adjournment

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Report to the AGM

Document A-00

**THE 2023 ITTF ANNUAL REPORT WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AS  
A SEPARATE DOCUMENT DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 2024**



In 2023, amidst growing geopolitical tensions and division, the world turned to sports as a beacon of unity and hope. As the President of ITTF, I firmly believe in the transformative power of sport, and particularly table tennis, to bring people together and foster positive change. In the face of adversity, if we stand united, I am convinced we can harness the full potential of our sport to create a brighter future for everyone.

## **ITTF Strategic Plan**

Ever since my candidacy for the presidency of ITTF, I pledged to advance our sport with a focus on the ITTF Family, Governance, Growth, and Sustainability, while always serving our Member Associations, and supporting our players and their entourage.

With the adoption of the new ITTF Strategic Plan at last year's Annual General Meeting, we have endeavoured to chart a clear course in a post COVID-19 world, aiming to transform table tennis and ensure a prosperous future.

By incorporating Sustainability, Society, and Health among our strategic priorities, we signal our commitment to all facets of our Table Tennis Family, fostering inclusivity. It is our diversity that fuels our creativity, leading to tangible results.

The development of this plan has been the result of extensive collaboration and dedicated efforts from all of you. In our unity lies our strength, and through transformative change across all key areas, we shall pave the way for an even brighter tomorrow.

August marked a true highlight for me, with the very successful ITTF Summit held in Bangkok, graciously hosted by our friends in the Table Tennis Association of Thailand. It became evident that we are on the right path with the unveiling of our Sustainability Action Plan 2025 and Gender Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2025. This marks a crucial step towards shaping a more inclusive and sustainable future for table tennis. These two plans underline ITTF's commitment to people, planet, and prosperity, and I am eagerly awaiting to see our membership bringing this vision to life all over the world.

## **Business Growth**

In 2023, we witnessed a resurgence of events and activities for all players, commencing with the ITTF World Veterans Championships in Muscat, Oman, my personal kick-off of the year, both as a player and as official.

During my visit to Singapore in March, I not only attended the showcase event Singapore Smash but also engaged with the Hopes Squad – the ITTF's flagship development programme -- where 25 young players from around the world participated in an intensive training camp, alongside the first ITTF Group staff meeting since the pandemic.

In May, the ITTF Africa Cup in Kenya showcased the talent of African players as they prepared for the ITTF World Championships Finals in Durban. This historic event marked the return of the World Championships to African soil after 84 years, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the South African Table Tennis Board (SATTB) for their warmth, tireless work, and commitment to its success.

In September, I had the honour of attending the ITTF European Para Championships 2023 in Sheffield. Witnessing the remarkable display of skill and determination in para table tennis was truly inspiring, and I commend Table Tennis England for the outstanding organization of the event. It was a testament to the inclusivity and excellence of our sport, reaffirming our commitment to providing opportunities for athletes of all abilities to thrive on the global stage.

Later in the year, at the ITTF World Youth Championships in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, I witnessed not only promising young athletes and thrilling matches but also a significant milestone in the pursuit of clean sport and youth education, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the International Testing Agency (ITA), our great host the Slovenian Table Tennis Association, and the ITTF.

During the Annual General Meeting in Houston 2021, the Swedish Table Tennis Association put forward a resolution to explore a mixed team event. Since then, we have often discussed how to bring back the ITTF World Cups. These ideas merged last year, culminating in one of our most innovative events to date: the ITTF Mixed Team World Cup. The inaugural event in Chengdu, delivered in partnership with the Chinese Table Tennis Association under the leadership of ITTF Deputy President Liu Guoliang, exemplified gender equality and teamwork in an exciting new format.

## **Society & Health**

Table Tennis, being a sport for all – for life, not only embodies our motto but also has the power to change lives. This was evident during my emotional visit to Crete, Greece, for the first-ever World Table Tennis for Health Festival, organised by the ITTF Foundation and the dedicated Hellenic Table Tennis Federation.

I also attended the Special Olympics World Games Berlin 2023, where I reaffirmed my belief in the power of inclusion and diversity by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen collaboration between the ITTF Foundation and the Special Olympics, the world's largest sports organisation for children and adults with intellectual disabilities engaging millions.

In Sweden, I witnessed another inspiring event focused on diversity and inclusion: Sweden's First Girl Festival, organised by the Swedish Table Tennis Association. This fully booked festival brought together over a hundred enthusiastic girls aged between 8 and 90, actively engaging in a range of captivating table tennis activities at Halmstad Arena.

## **Expanding Our Presence within the Sport Movement**

Our Federation has never been more prominent in the Olympic and greater sports movements. This follows a period of significant achievements and progress by the ITTF and its membership, and we remain more dedicated than ever to contribute actively.

In October, at the 141st IOC Session in Mumbai, India, I had the honour of becoming the first-ever ITTF President elected as a Member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). This unprecedented opportunity presents a chance to consolidate our beloved sport's place in the Olympic community. Subsequently, I joined three IOC commissions: Olympic Solidarity, Esports, and Sustainability.

As President of the ITTF, I represent us all on the Council of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), the Foundation Board of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), and the Executive Board of SportAccord.

This extends beyond personal recognition; it symbolises a collective reward for the tireless efforts of the entire table tennis community, reflecting our shared commitment to elevating the sport to new heights.

## **Our Way Forward**

Time flies, especially when you enjoy what you are doing. With unity in our diversity and mutual respect for each other, our members, athletes, and officials, we possess the potential to fulfil our dreams.

Looking ahead to 2024 – an Olympic and Paralympic year – we have much to anticipate. Together, we have laid a solid foundation for the future of table tennis, and I am excited to embark on the next phase of our remarkable journey. The digital revolution, artificial intelligence, and esports offer vast opportunities for supporting our athletes better and driving the development of table tennis.

To my dear table tennis family, esteemed colleagues on the executive board, and our dedicated staff – thank you for your hard work and true passion for our sport.

Table Tennis. For All. For Life. Forever!

**Petra SÖRLING**

ITTF President

Meetings attended:

ITTF Executive Board Meeting#1: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

ITTF Executive Board Meetings#2: May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, and May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

ITTF Continental Council Meeting#1: May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023

ITTF Executive Board Meeting#3: July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

ITTF Executive Board Meeting#4: August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

ITTF Continental Council Meeting#2: August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

ITTF Executive Board Meeting#5: October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

ITTF Executive Board Meetings#6: December 6-7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

2023 ITTF Annual General Meeting: August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

2023 ITTF Council Meeting: August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

ITTF Summit: August 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

In 2023, the ITTF, together with the international table tennis family, has made inspiring achievements by forging ahead with reforms and innovations in various aspects. The successful return of the ITTF WTTTC Finals to Africa after 84 years represents the gradual fulfilment of the WTTTC reforms. I would like to extend my most sincere congratulations to the South Africa Table Tennis Board, African Table Tennis Federation, ITTF operations, competition as well as media team working for the WTTTC finals and ITTF Senior Executive Vice President Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi for their tremendous efforts in organising this highly successful tournament.

The table tennis community has also witnessed and celebrated the grand return of the ITTF World Cup as the first-ever ITTF Mixed Team World Cup was hosted in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. The innovative mixed-team format, as well as the focus on promoting gender equality and diversity, has generated wide public attention and discussion on the event itself and the table tennis sport. The outstanding ticket sale results, broadcasting as well as social media figures have proven an excellent combination of tradition and innovation, and that the ITTF World Cup is one of ITTF's most prestigious traditional tournament brands. Encouraged by the success of the 2023 XTWC, we are full of hope and confidence in the reform and the future development of ITTF World Cups.

All tiers of WTT events continued to expand among continents and regions in 2023, with more and more MAs becoming hosts, WTT events making forays into both brand-new and traditional table tennis markets. Some organisers have hosted events for several consecutive years and have established new brands and tournament legacies. Players from all over the world have been granted more flexible and diverse options for participation. The landing of WTT Finals Women received unprecedented popularity and attention. As the value of the tournament products continues to increase, the WTT is favoured by more sponsors. I would like to express appreciation to the world table tennis family for their support, trust and understanding. The WTT platform, in its continuous self-correction and progress, is gradually fulfilling its initial intention to build a more



professional, efficient, and iterative table tennis ecosystem, and to provide a stage for players to compete at the highest level in the world.

While pushing forward with tournament reform and growth, we are also focusing on youth development and education, which is the defining factor of the future of our sport. Benefiting from a number of ITTF development and education programmes, MAs have been able to access resources more productively. Junior and cadet players are enabled to play in better conditions and are given opportunities to train, compete and exchange abroad, whilst promising talents emerge from a wide range of events and activities. In 2023, the CTTA, in cooperation with the ITTF High Performance Department (HPD), successfully organised international youth training camps in Cairo, Egypt (in cooperation with the African Table Tennis Federation) and Chengdu, China, which provided opportunities for talented table tennis players around the world to train and compete together. More than 150 players from more than 30 MAs participated in the camps. In addition to participating in training like Team China, the camp also arranged a variety of cultural and recreational activities such as elite coaching seminars, round-robin competitions, free training, as well as watching XTWC matches and the panda tour, which received warm resounding and feedback. **Table Tennis of China, Share to the World.** The CTTA will be devoted to deepening the cooperation with ITTF, continental federations and MAs in the future, to share China's experience and knowledge in developing table tennis and to contribute more to the dissemination of table tennis worldwide.

In line with the IOC's goal of promoting E-sport, table tennis sports is also actively exploring the E-sport field and will host the first E-tournament in 2024. I am also very optimistic about this area and will actively seek to push forward the relevant programme in the Chinese market in the coming year. Meanwhile, we will continue to explore novel and appealing table tennis formats and scenarios for young people, such as outdoors, on the streets, and in parks, etc., breaking through the conventional form and the limitations of professional table tennis courts and equipment, to truly facilitate the large-scale popularity of table tennis. Moreover, we will keep following up and further intensify the cooperation with the relevant entities in Shanghai, China, and make operations and promotion plans, so as to maximise the cultural and historical value and indispensable position of the ITTF Museum and its abundant collections.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation to ITTF President, Ms. Petra Sörling, whose distinguished leadership and selfless dedication have been a guiding light for the ITTF Executive Board and all ITTF Group entities, as well as an exceptional ambassador for ITTF and table tennis sports among the international scene. Thank you to all my Executive Board colleagues for the mutual support and efficient work. Thank you to ITTF Group CEO, Mr. Steve Dainton, for the considerable amount of coordination, communication, and integration work he personally undertakes due to his many responsibilities, as well as the commercial and marketing works on the WTT side. Thank you to ITTF Secretary General, Mr. Raul Calin, for his communication and coordination in the areas of governance, meetings, and liaison with the IOC.

Thank you to all the Continental Federations and MAs for their support, and especially to ATTU President Mr. Khalil Al-Mohannadi for his auspices for the innovation and reform of the tournaments in Asia. Thank you to ITTF Group staff for their hard work, contribution, and concerted solidarity.

I look forward to concerting with our increasingly professional and diverse team to develop and enhance our beloved table tennis!

Liu Guoliang  
ITTF Deputy President

In my capacity as the Senior Vice President of the International Table Tennis Federation for the year 2023, I am pleased to present the annual report to you. As we reflect on the past year, it has been an exciting time for the sport of table tennis on a global scale. The ITTF is committed to continuing to grow and develop table tennis as a sport.

We had several online and physical meetings as the EB in charge of the WTTTC for 2023 in Durban. In my areas of responsibility, the most important points have been:

1. WTTTC Finals in Durban, South Africa, follow up during the preparation of the event with the Organising Committee as well as inspect Durban to ensure the best experience for all participants. It was an incredible experience to return to Africa after 83 years, and I would like to express my gratitude to the South Africa Table Tennis Association for making this possible.
2. Increase the number of WTT events and encourage countries to host more WTT events. During the last couple of years, we have worked very hard to encourage the stakeholders to host more WTT events, starting in the Arab region and expanding to Asia after I was elected Asian Table Tennis President, as well as encouraging other countries and members associations to host more Table Tennis events.
3. Supervise the WTT Events in Doha 2023.
4. Attending all EB physical and online meetings.
5. Fulfilling all my duties as the Senior Vice President of the ITTF

#### Areas of Responsibility

- World Championships
- ITTF and WTT Board Team Meetings held online & Physically.

#### Attendance at ITTF Executive Board Meetings

- EB Meeting in Singapore in March
- EB Meeting in Durban, South Africa in May
- EB Meeting online in July
- EB Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand in August
- EB Meeting online in October
- EB Meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland in December

It has been an eventful year, and in ITTF, we are confident that we are on the right track. This is especially true with the promotion of the WTT tournaments globally.

It is our great pleasure to collaborate with our member associations in 2024 in order to inspire excellence in life through table tennis.

**Khalil AL-MOHANNADI**

ITTF Senior Executive Vice-President

This report covers the period from January 2023 until the end of December 2023.

**Areas of Responsibility:**

1. Africa (Communications) - Continental Role (together with Mr Wahid Oshodi)
2. Supervise and follow up on Information Technology issues
3. Supervise and follow up on Development-related issues
4. Supervise and follow up on Athletes' related issues in collaboration with the Athletes' Commission
5. Handed over the position of EVP for Finance after the ITTF Summit in Bangkok, as per President appointment with support from Mr. Roland Natran

**Meetings Attended:**

I attended all meetings, whether physically or online, including EB meetings and Continental Council meetings. I believe the new concept, with the active participation of our MA's in the ITTF Summit (in Bangkok), was very successful and had higher member satisfaction than the first edition. I also attended the AGM and ITTF Council during the Summit.

**Role Related to Communications with Africa - Continental Role:**

Together with my colleague, Mr. Wahid Oshodi, the ITTF ATTF relations are at their best. The African Championships in Tunisia was a major leap forward in terms of presentation and streaming. The WTT Contender in Lagos is now an established event in the senior WTT series, with other youth series being held in different African Nations. The Chinese training camp for African players in Cairo was a great success.

The World Singles Championships held in Durban, South Africa, made the whole African TT Family very proud, proving the ability to organise a World Title event within the African Continent after a long period of time since the last held World Championships, in Cairo, Egypt, in 1939.

**Information Technology:**

All data rights of WTT and ITTF, and the income generated by such rights, are due to the huge task carried out by the IT department, which carries out most of the work in-house and some tasks are assigned to external expertise when needed. However, a wealth of information is still unused and may generate further income if properly marketed by a business development staff, who may have a rapid ROI if hired. The much higher income generated justifies the extra costs incurred by such services.

## **Development:**

Despite the need for extra funding for the very important development activities, the current cash-flow and financial situation, could only guarantee maintenance of the same yearly budget in this important department serving our continents and member associations. Clarity of the allocated budgets has been explained to Continental Presidents to avoid any misunderstandings that occurred in the past.

A transition is currently being made in the ideology of development activities, with the change of leadership in the department, and I am quite sure Mikael Andersson will be able to achieve the expected goals soon.

I would like to thank Polona for her leadership of the department in the past, and I wish her good luck in her new role of player relations within WTT, which is a very important role.

## **Role towards Athletes:**

Despite understanding the conflict and clash between the technical requests of the athletes and the business goals of WTT staff, the lack of response from the staff to the repeated requests of the athletes is affecting our main stakeholders (our players). The arguments of the WTT staff are not convincing to the players, especially since the business goals are long-term and not currently felt.

Involvement of the athletes in the WTT Board and the formation of a steering committee (as mentioned in the Master License Agreement) is a recurring request which has never been put into action despite the logic and need. Athletes have two votes in the EB of ITTF but do not have any voice within WTT, which is the governing body of all events! A new strategic review of WTT events with a more flexible mind is needed in order not to reach a point of unacceptable dissatisfaction from the athletes' side.

## **Role as EVP for Finance:**

My first goal in finance was to understand the current financial situation as it is more complex with the multiple entities within the ITTF Group. This was achieved by travelling to our office in Singapore and meeting the CEO and CFO. I appreciate very much the amount of work being done in ITTF's main office in different departments and the excellent management of the day-to-day work carried out by our CFO and financial staff. The positive part was the significant revenue increase; however, current expenses affect the cash flow significantly. The EB had decided on a hiring freeze, which was put into action to control any increase in expenses.

The CEO re-structured the staff hierarchy and started a budgeting process within each department to be able to control the expenses. Together with the CFO, they are trying to achieve a budget with minor profit instead of the financial losses of the previous years. This strategy and more stringent approach may put us back in a safer financial position than that of the past few years.

Continuous online follow-up meetings are held to check the progress of the financial situation, plans and budgeting process. These regular meetings involved the President, CEO, CFO and myself.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the ITTF President, Deputy President, Senior EVP, and all my colleagues in the EB for their help and support. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the staff, led by the CEO, Secretary General and CFO, for the huge efforts being made.

**Alaa MESHREF**

ITTF Executive Vice-President Finance

## INTRODUCTION

After a year of many activities (2022), the year 2023 was also very productive. I continued working in the same areas that were designated by President Petra at the beginning of 2022, which are:

- Para Table Tennis
- Innovation
- Health

In addition to them, I have always sought to participate and collaborate with ITTF Americas and its entire Executive Committee, also, with the South American Table Tennis Confederation and its Executive Committee. To better help, I always sought support from the entire ITTF operational area. In view of the impossibility of mentioning them all, I would like to thank in particular the help of Messrs. Steve Dainton, Raul Calin, Mounir Bessah, Tessa Cho, Anita Ullmann, Mikael Andersson, Gonzalo Barak, Michael Brown, Polona Cehovin, Carlos Esnard Bolaños, Tina Crotta, Kasia Kubas, Tristan Lavier, Charlotte Lourdes, Leandro Olvech, Moncho Ortega-Montes, Pablo Perez, Omar Refaat, Carlos Ribeirinha, Tiago Viegas, Freddy Almendariz, Ivan Chen, Blythe Fitzwiliam and Dimosthenis Messinis. which occurred on numerous occasions.

With these objectives in mind and having the clear notion that Development was not one of the areas designated by President Petra to me, but knowing that it is of fundamental importance for the real growth of all Continents, I participated in several meetings with the director Polona, Kasia and everyone in their area.

I had great dedication to several other areas, but I highlight four others which I tried to study and understand better:

- Financial
- Human Resources
- WTT
- Communication

I participated in more than sixty (60) online meetings, considering an average of one hour per meeting, it was 60 (sixty) hours.

In addition, I participated in EB face-to-face meetings on four occasions (WTT Grand Smash Singapore, World Championships Durban, Summit Thailand, and Lausanne). It is important to mention that on the occasion of the EB meeting in Singapore (WTT Grand Smash), I arrived a few days before and took the opportunity to get to know the entire structure of our office, participating in several meetings with the different areas. I consider this to be one of the most important things I did this year, as I had a global understanding of all WTT actions. With this, I could speak with knowledge of the entire evolution of WTT with various people and entities from all around the world.



Another significant point, and I congratulate President Petra Sörling and Raul Calin for the magnificent idea, is the opportunity for the EB to meet in Lausanne. The EB meeting was held at the Olympic House – IOC, in fact, one of the most spectacular and revolutionary buildings I have ever visited, including a meeting with President Tomas Bach and other IOC authorities. In addition to these fundamental points, we had dinner at “Villa Mon Repos”, the original residence of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, with several elements of extreme significance for the history of sport and in a beautiful historical building.

I represented the ITTF in 7 (seven) events:

1. Strategic Planning Meeting – ITTF Americas – Medellin. There were 3 days of intense discussions and exchange of experiences that certainly resulted and will result in several successful projects. I congratulate President Juan Villa and his work team for the brilliant initiative.
2. Olympic E-sports Week – Singapore. These were days of many relationships and deepening knowledge of the various e-sports. In particular, in table tennis, we organized a tournament on Saturday, with the collaboration of the American company that developed the ELEVEN software. It was very interesting, and this initiative will certainly put us at the forefront of e-sports and growing together with the IOC.
3. Pan American Championship – Under-15 and Under-19 – Charleston – USA. Event very well organised by President Virginia Sung and her team. I could see the growth in the youth categories of our continent.
4. Pan American Championship – Seniors – Havana – Cuba.
5. Pan American Games – Santiago – Chile – event very well organised by Chile and by President Wladimir Araya and his team. The highlight is Cuba’s performance.
6. Visit to the Portuguese Table Tennis Federation – Opportunity to get to know the good structure and team of President Pedro Moura, who also heads the European Table Tennis Association.
7. Parapan American Games – Santiago – Chile – event even better organised than the Pan American Games, which normally occurs in these situations, as errors are corrected beforehand. Highlight for Brazil, which won 38 medals. But we also have to congratulate Chile, which has shown impressive growth in the last 4 years and was Brazil's great opponent. The gym was always full, and several finals were electrifying, most between the two countries.

## CONCLUSION

I would like to highlight some facts, some already mentioned in my 2022 report:

1. The ITTF Constitution needs to be improved. The EB needs to play an increasingly strategic and supervisory role in the operational area. The famous saying: “*Nose in, hands*

*off*". Today, there is a lot of mixing, and some clashes occur. With full knowledge of this and certified by the largest Governance Institute in Brazil (IBGC), even with the intention of understanding and improving, I entered the operational field many times and eventually created friction. I did this with the greatest of good intentions, trying to learn and participate in this magnificent and complex ITTF Group mechanism. Basically, with the intention of voting better at EB meetings, explaining better to our continental entity – ITTF – Americas and regional – CONSUTEME and to everyone who came to me to discuss different topics.

2. Our President Petra created the mantra: "Communication, communication, communication". I suggested the mantra "Evaluation, evaluation, evaluation." Some very timid steps were taken in this direction. A new strategic plan was presented at the Thailand Summit, with some positive points, but it needs to advance a lot to become a reality. We must design more processes, create more procedures and have clear and measurable indicators. In conversations with our CEO, Steve Dainton, he assured me that this will be a priority in 2024/2025.
3. The work of the Development area is fantastic. Still, I believe we should have fewer projects, dedicate more time and resources to them, and interact more with our various stakeholders. For example, The International Volleyball Federation, which has much greater resources, prioritises 3 major projects:
  - Support for national coaches
  - Equipment support
  - Creation of trainer trainers
4. In the area of technical development, it is important to highlight the training camp held in Chengdu in partnership with the Chinese Table Tennis Association; I am very grateful to my colleague Liu Guoliang, and for the coordination by Mikael Andersson. Several countries participated, and I had the opportunity to speak to some. The comments were the best possible. World Table Tennis really needs China to raise its level and competitiveness, I hope many other initiatives like these can occur.
5. Unfortunately, an area under my coordination did not progress as I wanted and dreamed of, despite numerous meetings and requests to senior management. Even with all the effort from Raul Calin, Pablo Perez, Tina Crotta, from the Para Committee – which is led by Brazilian Edimilson Pinheiro and several others. At the end of the year, I became aware that Mr. Mounir Bessah, within the restructuring of ITTF and WTT, will have the responsibility of leading this process. We have already had our first conversation, and I have great hope that the dreams of all para-athletes will come true in 2024/2025.
6. Due to the coincidence of the World Health Festival – Crete dates with the Pan American Games – Santiago, I could not attend Greece. I understand that the event was well carried out and that future steps will be taken to strengthen these important activities that promote health further.

**Alaor AZEVEDO**

ITTF Executive Vice-President

2023 has been a fruitful year with over 70 WTT events held across the globe.

1 Grand Smash, 2 Cup Finals, 3 Champions, 4 Star Contender, 12 Contender, 15 Feeder, 38 Youth Contender, 6 Youth Star Contender. I would like to thank all the WTT staff, Member Associations and Hosting Countries and Cities for hosting these wonderful events.

With the wonderful work of WTT and WTT Japan, the first WTT event (WTT Finals Women Nagoya 2023) was held in Japan.

### **Meetings and Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Meeting / Event</b>
26 <sup>th</sup> ~ 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan, 2023	Tokyo, Japan	Visit from Steve CEO
15 <sup>th</sup> ~ 20 <sup>th</sup> Mar, 2023	Singapore	Singapore Smash 2023
17 <sup>th</sup> Mar, 2023	Singapore	ITTF EB #01 (Singapore)
12 <sup>th</sup> Apr, 2023	Online Meeting	ITTF Entourage Group #1
22 <sup>nd</sup> May, 2023	Durban, South Africa	ITTF EB #02
27 <sup>th</sup> May, 2023	Durban, South Africa	Continental Council Meeting #01
28 <sup>th</sup> May, 2023	Durban, South Africa	ITTF EB #03
19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2023	Online Meeting	ITTF EB #04
21 <sup>st</sup> Aug, 2023	Bangkok, Thailand	ITTF EB #05, Continental Council Meeting #02
22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug, 2023	Bangkok, Thailand	ITTF Summitt
23 <sup>rd</sup> Aug, 2023	Bangkok, Thailand	ITTF Council Meeting (Bangkok, Thailand)
24 <sup>th</sup> Aug, 2023	Bangkok, Thailand	ITTF AGM
2 <sup>nd</sup> ~ 11 <sup>th</sup> Sep, 2023	Pyeongchang, Korea	26 <sup>th</sup> ITTF - Asian Table Tennis Championship
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep, 2023	Pyeongchang, Korea	ATTU EB
4 <sup>th</sup> Sep, 2023	Pyeongchang, Korea	ATTU AGM
24 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 2023	Online Meeting	ITTF Entourage Group #3
25 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 2023	Online Meeting	ITTF EB #06
6 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 2023	Lausanne, Switzerland	ITTF EB #07
15 <sup>th</sup> ~ 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 2023	Nagoya, Japan	WTT Finals Women 2023

### **Report**

#### **2023 Singapore Smash - 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2023**

I had the privilege to make my second visit to WTT Grand Smash, Singapore. My first visit in 2022 was with great surprise and excitement with the new presentation and look of the venue. But this second visit gave me an even further surprise with the great improvement to the event which took place only a year before.

The spacious VIP lounge with great services for our guests and stakeholders to relax and enjoy the game of table tennis. Fans were able to see their star players prepare for matches and even get their autographs, which gave them memories and experiences which they will not forget.

Outside the venue were catering stations, activity, fan community areas, music, and stores where they could purchase uniforms and WTT souvenirs. WTT Grand Smash really has created the Table Tennis festival in Singapore.

### **2023 ITTF World Table Tennis Championships Finals, Durban - 20<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2023**

Having the World Table Tennis Championships in the African Continent is the first time since 1939 (84 years ago). The event was very exciting and memorable and organised successfully under the excellent management of the South African Table Tennis Board.

### **WTT Finals Women, Nagoya 2023 - 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2023**

With the wonderful leadership from WTT and WTT Japan, Japan held its first ever WTT event in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture.

This was the first WTT event held in Japan; although the preparation period had been very short, thanks to the dedicated work of the WTT staff and others, the event ended successfully.

It was also wonderful for Japanese table tennis fans to have this event be the first international table tennis event to be held in Japan since the ITTF Team World Cup in Tokyo in November 2019.

Finally, I sincerely feel that in 2023, COVID-19 has come to an end, and we have been able to host many international competitions, which is a result of the cooperation of many associations and WTT staff, for which I am very grateful.

In 2024, the “World Table Tennis Championships Finals, Busan” and the “Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024” will be the major events taking place, and I sincerely wish the success of these events and all other Table Tennis events taking place around the world.

**MAEHARA Masahiro**

ITTF Executive Vice-President

This report covers the period of the year 2023.

My responsibilities as Executive Vice-President covered the area of Finances till the 4th quarter of the year. Since then, I have been responsible for the development of business strategies, practices and business models of table tennis under the scope of ITTF as Head of the Business Development Unit.

Regarding finances, 2023 might be described as a recovery from the pandemic-affected period and a new era of financial management under the new IFRS methodology (International Financial Reporting Standard). The transition into the IFRS methodology in financial reporting provides more transparency and adequacy. Furthermore, in international business relations, IFRS provides a common platform for establishing and developing financial cooperation with potential partners.

It is important to emphasise that the introduction of IFRS methodology is a very complex and time-consuming project that needs a professional approach from stakeholders and financial staff in general. In recent years – directly affecting the financial reports of the accounting year 2022/2023 – the institutional structure of ITTF and its subsidiaries has become more complex with the establishment and the start of operation of several other ITTF and WTT subsidiaries.

Under the methodology of IFRS all of these business entities must be reported in a consolidated method that also generates more complexity of the financial presentation. I am proud to work strongly together with the CFO of ITTF/WTT and his team to fulfil this transition and create – even with some minor delay – the basis and model for future IFRS reporting processes.

As Chair of the ITTF Audit & Finance Committee, we conducted the annual meeting virtually on 28 July 2023. The primary topics of the meeting were Audit and Financial Statements, Financial Management and Risk Management. The Committee was presented with an overview of the financial performance of the ITTF for 2022; it was noted that the continued increase in activities following the emergence of COVID-19 made direct comparisons to the prior year's financial statements difficult.

It was noted the increased activity in 2022 was positive, which resulted in greater revenues. The most significant transaction noted in 2022 was the external investment into World Table Tennis, which saw a significant increase in the Balance Sheet and provided opportunities in the future for further access to training opportunities.

In the weeks following the Audit & Finance Committee, and before the ITTF AGM, the conclusion towards the treatment of the Asset was finalised with the auditors, with the final approval arriving only the day prior to the ITTF AGM on 23rd August 2023.

Following this approval, the Audit & Finance Committee confirmed the treatment of the Asset through written correspondence before the audited Financial Statements were shared with the ITTF Membership.

The ITTF undertook a Risk Management project in 2022, with follow-up work undertaken throughout 2023, which was reported to the Audit & Finance Committee and the ITTF Executive Board.

In the last months of 2023, I dealt with the creation of working methods and working programmes of the Business Development Unit and had negotiations on new members of the Unit. The goal of the work in the Unit is to create and develop new business models and structures for further developing our sport and allowing it to strengthen the business channels that help us to monetise our sport.

During the year, I actively participated in all Executive Board meetings except for the one held in China because of serious COVID-19-like symptoms. I also closely followed – as part of my responsibilities – the serious work done in the field of Masters' Table Tennis to develop and widen the amateur and post-professional base of our sport.

In Europe, I followed and visited the European Championships in Malmö, Sweden, which resulted in great success and gained lots of media attention for table tennis.

**NATRAN Roland**

ITTF Executive Vice-President

This report covers my work as an ITTF Executive Vice President in the year 2023 with oversight for matters touching upon Governance, Communications and World Ranking. This is in addition to the general duties of all EVPs within the ITTF Executive Board (EB) and other duties assigned by the ITTF President.

## **GOVERNANCE**

Below are the major projects the ITTF has delivered in the ensuing period. Some of these projects necessarily overlap with the portfolio of other Executive Board members, and we have, in certain cases, worked together to advance these projects.

1. Introducing mediation as an alternative dispute resolution option via the ITTF Tribunal Regulations. This proposition has been submitted to the ITTF Council to be deliberated upon at its Busan 2024 meeting.
2. The ITTF achieved full WADA Code Compliance.
3. Creation of a pathway for athletes affiliated with the Table Tennis Federations of Belarus and Russia to compete as neutral athletes in accordance with the relevant IOC guidelines and the ITTF Statutes.
4. Conducted the necessary preliminary work to strengthen our safeguards against match manipulation in our sport.
5. Reviewing governance issues in various Member Associations (Indonesia, Mexico) and taking appropriate actions in accordance with the ITTF Statutes.
6. Completing self-assessment for ASOIF's International Federation Governance Review in tandem with the Secretary General.

Kindly find hereunder work done on other matters related to and touching upon issues of governance:

- i. Reviewing of submitted propositions and resolutions for the ITTF Summit 2023 in Bangkok and the 2024 ITTF AGM and Council meetings to be held in Busan, Korea.
- ii. Working with the Nominations Committee in setting necessary criteria for nomination and selection of persons to the various ITTF Committees and Commissions.
- iii. Part of the team that succeeded in facilitating the amicable Resolution of misconduct issues in the matter between Swiss Table Tennis and Mr. Khalil Al Mohannadi (ITTF Senior Executive Vice President).
- iv. Dealing with issues arising from appeals made by a Member Association to the Eligibility Commission.

We continue to review the Constitution and Rules that affect the ITTF Group and continue to encourage our Continental Federations and Member Associations to do the same and advise us where changes might be needed.

## **COMMUNICATIONS & PROTOCOL**

In 2023, the ITTF Head of Communications implemented his comprehensive plan to guide all communication efforts across the ITTF Group. These entities engaged in various communication initiatives throughout the year, contributing to their growth, outreach, and overall success. I thank Mr. Tristan Lavier for his work during the year and his extensive diligence in assisting me by producing this extensive report.

The year 2023 was a remarkable chapter for the ITTF Group, witnessing triumphant returns of iconic championships, ground-breaking developments, and strategic advancements in digital outreach. This report succinctly captures the key events and achievements, reflecting the organisation's unwavering commitment to promoting and enhancing the global sport of table tennis.

Note: Throughout this report, "COM" refers to the ITTF Communications Department

## EVENTS

- i. 15 – 21 January: World Veterans Championships Muscat 2023  
The highly anticipated World Veterans Championships in Oman marked a successful return after a five-year hiatus. Muscat delivered a memorable experience with 40 events and 1,600 participants from around the world. COM ensured comprehensive coverage.
- ii. 20 – 28 May: ITTF World Championships Finals Durban 2023  
The event achieved a cumulative reach of 1.134 billion people. ITTF.com featured over 30 news articles in May, showcasing stories on and off the stage. Social media played a pivotal role, with Instagram posts receiving 86% more views than the 2021 Finals. YouTube views increased by 36%, and watch hours surged by 136%. COM deployed three staff members, collaborated with the WTT Content & Creative Department, managed 120 accredited media, and provided extensive online content, ensuring global coverage.
- iii. 26 November – 3 December: ITTF World Youth Championships Nova Gorica 2023  
COM deployed one staff member and a freelance photographer to collaborate with the WTT Content & Creative Department in maximising exposure across communication channels.
- iv. 4 – 10 December: ITTF Mixed Team World Cup Chengdu 2023  
Since the announcement in August, COM crafted comprehensive communication plans for the event. More than 50 media were welcomed, with a commitment to growing this number. High-quality content was made available for remote media outlets covering the event.
- v. Para Table Tennis  
Over 20 ITTF Para Table Tennis events received comprehensive coverage on ITTF.com, including preview and results stories. Live streaming on YouTube and active social media promotion contributed to showcasing Para table tennis players worldwide, especially during a Fa40 event, where an additional photographer was hired to capture professional photos for the Paris 2024 Paralympics preparation.

## ITTF SUMMIT 2023

COM was fully engaged in preparing and delivering the ITTF Summit 2023, providing support in program conception, online portal development, communication with delegates, content creation, and event operations. Two staff members, a photographer, and two videographers were on-site.

## DEVELOPMENT

COM maintained a strong partnership with the ITTF Development department, showcasing diverse global initiatives for developmental programs.

## WORLD TABLE TENNIS DAY

World Table Tennis Day (WTTD) was celebrated on 23 April this year for the first time ever. Previously, WTTD was celebrated on April 6th, which is also the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, celebrated by the United Nations and the IOC. This made it very difficult for table tennis to exist on that day, so the date was changed to ensure greater visibility and impact for WTTD. The main activations executed were promoting the sport and contributing to a sustainable future.



## OLYMPICS AND PARALYMPICS

### i. 22 – 25 June: Olympic Esports Week

Singapore hosted the first Olympic Esports Week, featuring VR Table Tennis Presented by ITTF & Eleven VR. COM had one staff member present, providing content on social media and collaborating on videos with WTT's Video Content team.

### ii. 15 – 17 October: 141st IOC Session

ITTF President Petra Sörling was elected as an IOC Member. COM prepared and delivered a comprehensive communications plan to build international profiles, increase table tennis influence, and strengthen ITTF's position within Olympic and Paralympic Movements.

## WORLD TT4HEALTH FESTIVAL

COM supported the ITTF Foundation for the World TT4Health Festival and the World Parkinson's Table Tennis Championships, raising awareness, increasing participation, and effectively showcasing events from November 1-5.

## ARCHIVES

COM is actively collecting historical data for ITTF World Titles and Olympic and Paralympic Games, contributing to the preservation of table tennis history for the centenary celebration in 2026.

## DIGITAL MEDIA

ITTF.com and all platforms received extensive coverage, consequently leading to a significant growth on Instagram since its launch in April 2023.

As of the end of December 2023 (% of growth in 2023), our digital media growth over the last year is as shown below:

- Facebook 63,325 followers (+54.5%)
- Instagram 15,084 followers (+1,488% / launched in April 2023)
- LinkedIn 4,446 followers (+24.82%)
- YouTube 22,539 followers (+40%)

In conclusion, the ITTF Group's journey through 2023 is a testament to its dedication to excellence, inclusivity, and innovation. Beyond this year's triumphs, a pivotal part of the achieved work lies in laying the groundwork for the upcoming 2024 events, ensuring a seamless continuation of the organisation's commitment to propelling table tennis onto the global stage.

The strides made in 2023 promise an exciting trajectory for the sport in the years ahead.

I hereby urge our Member Associations to be creative and find ways to ensure that their events are always covered and seek the assistance of Mr. Lavier and his team in helping to tell their stories. I firmly believe that if we all engage regularly in this manner, we would see greater coverage of our events at all levels.

## WORLD RANKING

The ITTF World Ranking Working Group (WRWG) formally met twice in the early parts of 2023, and thereafter, we have held discussions online on a variety of important issues referred to by the Executive Board and arising from those raised by Continental Federations and Member Associations. Listed below are the most important and include highlights of the recommendations of the WRWG. We continue to exchange ideas via emails and informal discussion groups.

- i. The membership of the WRWG has changed slightly with the replacement of a couple of members for various reasons. We are quite hopeful that these changes will result in a more active group that represents all of our stakeholders.

- ii. We have discussed and made consequent recommendations and decisions on various issues and requests from Member Associations and Continental Federations including but not limited to:
  - a. Ranking protection requests
  - b. Gender transition special measures
  - c. Conflict in dates of continental events and WTT events (PanAm Games and WTT Champions Frankfurt)
  - d. Olympic Games seeding matters (extension of the validity of events, teams seeding)
- iii. We have addressed two requests from the EB:
  - a. Allocating ranking points for individual players at the first edition of the ITTF Mixed Team World Cup. WRWG's recommendations and template were successfully implemented, resulting in a good basic method for allocating individual points in future team events when needed.
  - b. Allocation of points at the World Team Table Tennis Championships, currently in progress.
- iv. In general, the proximity to the Olympic Games became a challenge for the WRWG, with several different urgent topics that required quick reaction from us, which thankfully we successfully addressed.
- v. But most importantly the WRWG will undertake a timely and much needed holistic review of all areas of our World Rankings and its constituent parts. This work is planned to commence immediately after the Olympics, and the WRWG will be focusing on this work of course to ensuring that we evaluate feedback which we have received from all and sundry from the rankings and make any needed changes in the regulations.

We hope to complete this task by the end of 2024. There is extensive work ahead, and once again, I take this opportunity to encourage all MA's to forward their views and opinions in this regard to the WRWG.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I readily acknowledge the support and trust of the ITTF President, Ms Petra Söring and my colleagues in the Executive Board and those of all members of our working groups. I thank them for making time for our formal and informal meetings and discussions, and I hope this commitment to the cause of the ITTF will continue into the future. I also would like to heartily thank all my colleagues and friends across all our member associations and wish them the best for 2024.

I extend my gratitude and appreciation to the ITTF CEO, Steve Dainton and the ITTF Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, Raul Calin and Mounir Bessah, respectively, for their valuable time and patience in guiding and advancing the work of the Executive Board. Lastly, I would like to thank all the staff of the ITTF Group, with special regard to Dylan Mah, Javier Angulo and Tristan Lavier, for providing the necessary support and backup to enable me to progress in my work.

Finally, I hereby reaffirm my dedication to the work of advancing the cause of the ITTF in its continued growth to fulfil its great potential.

**Wahid OSHODI**

ITTF Executive Vice-President

In 2023 my primary portfolio responsibilities continued to be Integrity and Equipment.

## **INTEGRITY**

### Anti-Doping

Anti-doping functions, including event-based education, are largely outsourced to the International Testing Agency (ITA) and this funding agreement consumes over half of the Integrity Unit's budget. In 2023 ITA delivered presentations to athletes and entourage personnel at the WTT Feeder Stockholm event and at the ITTF World Youth Championships in Nova Gorica.

### Safeguarding

The Integrity Unit received a further 6 reports/complaints in 2023, bringing the number of open cases in this area to 10.

### Betting Integrity & Match Manipulation

Reports of suspicious matches in private events (not ITTF-sanctioned) continued to be a concern in 2023. The Head of Integrity and Head of Legal have prepared draft regulations to address key issues in this area.

There were also 2 reports of suspicious betting in ITTF events, one of which appears not to have involved any integrity issue and the remaining report is still under investigation.

The agreement with Sportsradar to provide bet monitoring services was not extended due to a couple of incidents which raised concerns of a conflict of interest between the services provided to ITTF and the firm's other commercial interests. The Integrity unit has a tender process underway to identify a new partner to provide these services. Unfortunately, the costs of such services increase with increasing numbers of events.

### Ethics/Corruption

A further 3 reports/complaints were received by the Integrity Unit in 2023, bring the number of open cases in this area to 8.

### Integrity Board

Following the 2023 ITTF Council approval of appointments to the remaining 3 Integrity Board positions, the Board has a full complement of members. The Board has commenced a review of the Integrity regulations.

## Resourcing

With continuing pressure on the ITTF budget, resourcing has remained a key issue for the Integrity Unit with the Head of Integrity being the only employee. Discussions are continuing with a view to potentially providing at least part-time assistance in 2024.

## **EQUIPMENT**

### Testing

Testing of balls, tables, nets, flooring, and racket coverings is a key responsibility of the Equipment Unit.

In addition, the Unit also worked on several ongoing projects in 2023.

### The Impact of the Table Surface on Ball Bounce

This important project has involved the identification of a reliable new testing regime to measure the coefficient of friction of a table tennis table surface and has identified a wide range of variance across tables produced by different manufacturers.

The Equipment Unit, together with the Equipment Committee, has developed a proposition to classify tables into 3 categories according to the coefficient of friction, thus providing players with advanced notice of the properties of the table tennis table brand used in tournaments.

### Racket Treatments

This project aimed to reliably detect racket modifications by players seeking to obtain an unfair advantage. Further testing in 2023 has resulted in a proposition to introduce a new testing regime and associated rules.

### Propositions to Update the Equipment Regulations

The Equipment Committee, working with the equipment unit, has an ongoing brief to update the equipment regulations as required. The AGM propositions include proposed changes to update and further clarify equipment regulations relating to floor coverings and racket coverings.

## **Graham SYMONS**

ITTF Executive Vice-President

## **1. Introduction**

We are grateful for the opportunity to represent and work for the athletes and with the ITTF to make the sport of table tennis better for all.

The Athletes Commission is currently made up of the following members:

- Co-Chairs – Sharath Kamal Achanta (IND); and Liu Shiwen (CHN)
- Athlete Members – Melissa Tapper (AUS); Stefan Fergel (AUT); Omar Asssar (EGY); Daniely Rios (PUR); Elizabeta Samara (ROU); and Jon Persson (SWE)
- Para-Athlete Members – Ingela Lundback (SWE); and Kelly Van Zon (NED)
- IOC AC member - Ryu Seungmin (KOR)

## **2. Activities of the Athletes Commission in 2023**

The Athletes Commission Vice President, Elizabeta Samara, has joined and started contributing to the ITTF World Ranking Working Group since September 2023.

Athletes Commission Co-Chairs attended the meeting of the EB at the IOC Headquarters in Lausanne in December 2023, during which Mr Thomas Bach, President of the IOC, praised the EB for having athlete representatives at the executive level. Achanta and Miss Feng Tianwei signed the Wall of Olympians and received certificates from President Bach.

The Athletes Commission had two online meetings to discuss various topics: world ranking, prize money, and tournament schedules. Issues discussed included World Ranking points being included in the Mixed Team World Cup in Chengdu and the ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships in Busan; conflicting schedules for equally important tournaments (e.g. Pan Am Games conflicting with WTT Frankfurt Champions; 13th African Games and WTT Singapore Smash); and pathway to Paris Olympic Games 2024.

The Athletes Commission received feedback that athletes have been very satisfied with some of the top events conducted this year, such as the World Championships, WTT Frankfurt Champions, and Mixed Team World Cup.

## **3. Matters brought to the Executive's Board Attention**

### Requests / Concerns from Players:

Concerns have been raised about reduced prize money compared to the 2022 season, coupled with the expense increase to attend these tournaments. It was noted that the WTT Feeder series tournaments' prize money is not even enough to cover the expenses of even

the winner of the tournament, and playing WTT Series tournaments has become expensive as players now spend nearly USD1,200 for 3-day hospitality.

Continued concerns and requests to announce the calendar well in advance so that necessary preparations can be made. It is also requested that the tournaments do not change after the prospectus has been published. World Ranking points were added in the Mixed Team Cup just a few weeks before the tournament start date, which has been the same situation with the World Team Championships in Busan, too.

#### **4. Concluding Remarks**

The Athletes Commission Co-Chairs would like to take the opportunity to express appreciation to its fellow athletes for their trust and support in the Athletes Commission. The Co-Chairs would further like to express gratitude to ITTF President Ms Petra SÖRLING, Vice President of IOC Athletes Commission Mr RYU Seungmin, all ITTF EB members, and the ITTF Group management team for their patience and joint action in fighting for the furtherance of table tennis and player's interests.

**Sharath Kamal ACHANTA and LIU Shiwen**

Co-Chairs of the Athletes' Commission

The year 2023 was a busy year full of sporting events. I had the honour of engaging in countless meetings and events. Many IOC, OCA, and ITTF meetings were conducted online to discuss the development of sports and to provide athletes' better sports environment. The following report covers my ITTF Executive Board and IOC Member activities in 2023.

**January to December – IOC, OCA, ITTF Commission & Committee Meetings, via Online**

Due to the IOC's objective to reduce its carbon emissions by 30% by 2024, many meetings were held online in 2023. IOC AC's weekly & monthly meetings were conducted online to represent athletes within the Olympic Movement and support them by providing a better environment. Some of the topics that were discussed were: Olympic Games, AI, eSports, strategic plans, safeguarding in sports, Athlete365, International Athletes' Forum, etc.

**7th to 9th March – Singapore Smash 2023, Singapore**

The Singapore Smash 2023 was held from 7th to 19th March, and I was able to visit the competition partially. It was great to see athletes come together and enjoy competing in a good environment. Huge congratulations to the team for setting the new broadcasting record.

**16th to 17th March – IOC Advisory Committee on Human Rights Meeting, Lausanne**

The IOC Advisory Committee on Human Rights had its first in-person meeting. During the two-day meeting, we discussed ways to guide the IOC in the implementation of its strategic framework on human rights.

**18th - 19th March – OCA/OS Athletes Forum, Bangkok**

OCA Athletes Forum was held for two days, and 88 athletes from 43 OCA member NOCs took part in it. Diverse topics like Olympic Solidarity Safeguarding, IOC and OCA Athlete Commissions activities to support athletes and entourages were covered.

**17th to 19th April – WTT Champions Macao 2023, Macao**

I had the great honour of participating in the WTT Champions Macao 2023 opening and the first couple of days. The event was held successfully, and I look forward to the next WTT Champions.

**21st to 28th May – 2023 ITTF World Table Tennis Championships Finals & ITTF Executive Board Meeting, Durban**

The 2023 ITTF World Table Tennis Championships were held in Durban from 20th to 28th May. During the WTTC, the ITTF Executive Board meeting was also held. This event was very meaningful as it was the first-ever WTTC event held in the African continent since 1939. Also, the 2023 ITTF World Championships Finals in Durban captured over one billion viewers.

**7th to 8th July – ATTU Asian Veteran Championships, Ulaanbaatar**

The First Asian Veteran Championships were held, and on behalf of the ATTU President, I represented ATTU and inaugurated the tournament by hitting the first ball. It was a great opportunity to gather all the Asian veteran players together.

### **22nd to 25th June – Olympic Esports Week 2023, Singapore**

The inaugural Olympic Esports Week was held in Singapore, with over 100 athletes competing in 10 virtual sports. Virtual table tennis was an exhibition event that caught the interest of many people. Table tennis is due to add a new world championship event to the 2024 calendar.

### **7th to 8th July – 42nd OCA General Assembly & 80th Executive Board Meeting, Bangkok**

The 80th OCA Executive Board meeting was held on the 7th of July, followed by the 42nd OCA General Assembly the next day. Many important agenda items were discussed during the OCA GA and EB meeting. There was OCA President and Vice President elections, but due to internal matters, Mr Randhir Singh continues to be the acting President of OCA.

### **26th July – Paris 2024 D-365 Countdown Ceremony, Paris**

It was a great honour and pleasure to participate in the Paris D-365 Countdown Ceremony. During the ceremony, 200 national delegations received invitations to the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We could feel the energy and excitement of the Paris 2024 through the event.

### **21st to 24th August – ITTF Summit 2023 & Executive Board Meeting, Bangkok**

ITTF EB meeting was held on the 21st of August, followed by the ITTF Summit 2023, which was held from the 22nd to the 24th of August in Bangkok. During the EB meetings, a diverse agenda was covered. With the Busan WTTC 2024 coming up, I had the pleasure of updating our members and got great feedback. Also, during the Summit, on behalf of the Busan LOC, I had the pleasure of updating our ITTF Members and ITTF Summit participants about the preparation of the Busan 2024. Overall, the ITTF Summit provided interactive networking opportunities, and the participants were able to gain and exchange knowledge about table tennis.

### **3rd to 10th September – 26th ITTF-ATTU Asian Table Tennis Championships 2023 & ATTU Annual General Meeting, PyeongChang**

The 26th ITTF-ATTU Asian Table Tennis Championships were held from 3rd to 10th September at the Pyeongchang Dome Stadium in South Korea. It was an opportunity to bring together the best teams and players from across Asia. Also, the ATTU EC meeting and the AGM was held during the event. During the meeting, various reports were presented, including the President's report, CEO reports, and the financial report by the treasurer. The final accounts for the ATTU for the year 2022 were unanimously approved, along with the budget for the year 2023.

### **23rd to 25th September – 19th Asian Games, Hangzhou**

Hangzhou Asian Games were held from 23 September to 8th October. More than 12,000 athletes from all 45 members of the Olympic Council of Asia competed. The Games were well delivered, with full spectators and there were some great achievements from table tennis and other sports.

### **28th September to 4th October – 11<sup>th</sup> International Athletes' Forum (IAF) & IOC Athletes' Commission (AC) Meetings, Lausanne**

On the 1st and 2nd of October, the 11th IAF brought together over 400 athlete representatives in Lausanne to discuss the most important issues for athletes across the Olympic Movement. I participated as the IOC AC 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, engaging in diverse sessions as moderator. During the forum, some topics like ways to build an effective AC, what it means to be an Olympian and many



other topics were discussed. Also, before the event, IOC AC had joint meetings with the Paris 2024 and LA 2028 ACs to discuss ways to provide the best support and experience to athletes.

#### **14th to 17th October – 141st IOC Session, Mumbai**

141st IOC Session started with the opening ceremony and was followed by a three-day session. Many important discussions and updates were mentioned. The IOC President especially emphasized the importance of AI and eSports. IOC is exploring plans to create Olympic Esports Games to engage more youth participation. Also, during the Session, eight new IOC members were elected, and for the first time in ITTF history, President Ms Petra Sörling was elected. Her membership will empower the development of table tennis. Big congratulations to the President.

#### **1st to 3rd December - 2023 ITTF World Youth Championships, Nova Gorica**

ITTF World Youth Championships were held in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, from 26th November to 3rd December, and I was able to visit the competition. The competition gathered talented U15 and U19 age-category athletes for 14 titles. The event was held very successfully, and I could take part in the award presentation by giving out medals.

#### **6th to 7th December – ITTF Executive Board Meeting, Lausanne**

ITTF EB members were welcomed by the IOC President at the IOC headquarters. We had fruitful time with the IOC President and at the EB meeting we held discussions about world ranking system, 2024 World Para Qualification Tournament for the Paralympic Games of Paris 2024, and many other agenda items for the development of table tennis.

In conclusion, the year 2023 was a full year for myself and the table tennis family and friends. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the members of ITTF and the table tennis family. I can assure you that I will do my best to continue the solid relations with the IOC for the benefit of our sport.

I look forward to working with you all in the Olympic Year 2024.

#### **RYU Seung Min OLY**

ITTF Executive Board Member

IOC Member

The year 2023 was full of events and activities in Africa and on the regional level with remarkable success in conducting all our five regional competitions with a very good level of participation and also the African major championships qualifying for the World title events with a very high standard of organisation and media coverage.

It was a historical moment that Africa hosted the 2023 WTTC again after 84 years; it was this time in Durban – South Africa, with an excellent organisation, thanks to SATTB.

ATTF also started the 2024 Paris OG pass-way with the qualification for Teams & Mixed Doubles.

**The African activities for the year 2023 were as follows:**

### **2023 ITTF-Africa Cup & African Clubs Championships**

The tournaments took place successfully in Nairobi – Kenya, during 01-05 May, we started with the Clubs Championships in the first 3 days (with 7 Clubs in Men & 6 Clubs in Women representing 6 MAs of DJI-EGY-ETH-KEN-RWA-UGA), The winning Club of WT was PETROJET from EGY, and the winning Club of MT was Enppi from EGY, then the Cup took place in the last 3 days with all African top stars, the winners were Hana Goda (EGY) in Women & Omar Assar (EGY) in Men.

Thanks to the Kenya Table Tennis Association and Mr. Andrew Mudibo, KTTA President, for the professional organisation, remarkable streaming & media coverage.

ITTF President Ms. Petra Sörling attended with us during the 2023 ITTF-Africa Cup and it has been a good opportunity to meet with the participating teams/players to follow-up the well promotion of the sport in Africa.

There was a special request to push again with ITTF to add a World Clubs Championships to its calendar with representatives from all Continents.

### **2023 ITTF-Africa Junior & Cadet Championships**

The tournament took place successfully in Morocco from 02-08 July with 11 MAs. The most successful teams were EGY with (7 Gold + 7 Silver + 8 Bronze) followed by TUN with (4 Gold + 1 Silver + 6 Bronze) followed by Algeria (2 Gold + 2 Silver + 8 Bronze), and the winners have been qualified to represent Africa in the 2023 WYTTC held in Slovenia.

Thanks to Morocco Table Tennis Federation & Mr Monqid Hajji, FRMTT President, for their organisation and mutual cooperation with ATTF.

## **2023 ITTF-Africa Senior Championships & ATTF AGM**

The 26<sup>th</sup> ITTF-Africa Senior Championships was held in Tunisia from 11-17 September with 24 MAs, which is a record number for such an event. The most successful teams were EGY with (4 Gold + 3 Silver + 4 Bronze) followed by NGR with (2 Gold + 3 Silver + 1 Bronze) followed by MAD with (1 Gold), and the event was qualifying for the 2024 WTTC for Teams in Busan – Korea. Plus, EGY did qualify to represent Africa in 2024 Paris OG in Men's Team, Women's Team & Mixed Doubles by the pair (Omar Assar / Dina Meshref)

There was an AGM with the African members in the ITTF EB; they all had very successful meetings with ATTF officials in Tunisia.

Thanks to the Tunisia Table Tennis Federation & Mr. Lotfi Gerfel, FTTT President, for their professional organisation, streaming and super Show-court / Awarding Ceremony due to their big experience hosting many WTT events in recent years.

## **2023 ITTF-Africa Regional Championships**

We had very successful regional events, qualifying for the 2023 ITTF-Africa Senior Championships with a record number of participations in all five regions (North – West – Centre – East – South).

## **African Presence Worldwide**

- 6 African Associations took part in the 2023 WTTC for Individuals in Durban – South Africa, ALG – CMR – EGY – NGR – SEN – RSA; the best result was for EGY in MS, where Omar Assar reached the Quarter Finals. **Congratulations to the South Africa Table Tennis Board for hosting a wonderful and successful World TTC again in Africa.**
- 29 African Associations took part physically in the 2023 ITTF-Summit, including the ITTF AGM held in Bangkok – THA on 22-24 August 2023, with more than 18 MAs registered to attend hybrid with a total of 47 African MAs.
- Congratulations to Tunis Table Tennis Federation for hosting three WTT events successfully in 2023 (1 WTT Youth Contender + 1 WTT Youth Star Contender + 1 WTT Contender)
- Congratulations to the Egypt Table Tennis Federation for successfully hosting one WTT Youth Contender event & ITTF-Africa Para TT Champ. (qualifying for 2024 Paris PG) in 2023.
- Congratulations to Egypt & Nigeria Table Tennis Federations for successfully hosting one ITTF Fa40 & Fa20 Para Open event consequently in 2023.
- Congratulations to Dr. Kweku Tandooh as the first ATTF COO starting from Sep. 2023

## **Online/Physical Meetings for ATTF & ITTF**

We had to conduct online meetings as follows:

- 6 ATTF Executive Committee Meetings in (February – March – June – July – November – December) 2023, plus 2 Physical Meetings in September 2023

- 1 ATTF Council Board Physical Meeting plus the AGM in September 2023
- ATTF President had 2 ITTF Continental Council Meetings in May 2023 in Durban & in August 2023 in Bangkok

### **Essential Recognition**

On behalf of the ATTF EC and all Table Tennis family in Africa, I thank Mrs Petra Sörling, the ITTF President, for her contribution attending with us in Africa the ITTF-Africa Cup in Kenya (May 2023), all the ITTF EC Members, ITTF Group CEO, ITTF Secretary General, ITTF Member Relations Director and the ITTF High Performance & Development Director for their keenness continuous efforts to follow-up the promotion all over the World and for all Continents especially Africa as usual.

Thanks also to all ITTF Experts who were assigned for the Development projects and activities in Africa for the whole year 2023.

### **Khaled EL-SALHY**

Continental President: Africa

The year 2023 is finally the first year after the pandemic, in which we managed to organise the 100% of the events scheduled in our continent. Counting all regional events, continental events, para events, competitions in multi-sport events and events organised by WTT, in the year 2023 a total of 38 international events were organised in the Americas.

Thanks to the collaboration of the ITTF Americas Executive Committee and staff, the ITTF management staff and the great commitment of the countries organizing events and development activities, the compliance balance is very positive. It was possible to organize 100% of the scheduled continental events and complete the qualification process for the world championships of the different categories, highlighting the level achieved in the organisation and especially the presentation and promotion of the events.

In the area of governance, the general objectives of transparency were met by editing and publishing all minutes of executive committee meetings as well as audited financial reports. For the first time, the strategic planning meeting was held, which laid the foundation for the elaboration of the Strategic Plan and the future revision of the statutes. The Annual General Assembly was held with the presence of more than 80% of the Member Associations.

In the area of Development, the program of activities was almost entirely implemented. The staff of the development department has taken a more proactive approach to the continental structure, and more coordinated and efficient joint work has been achieved.

## **EVENTS:**

### WTTC BUSAN 2024 CONTINENTAL QUALIFICATION PATH:

The qualification process for the World Championship Finals begins with the Regional Championships as the first phase and culminates with the Continental Championship in its final qualifying phase.

- **CARIBBEAN REGION:** Georgetown, Guyana, March 2023. Participation of 9 countries out of a total of 22 in the region (41%). After this event, the qualifying event for teams for the Central American and Caribbean Games was organised.
- **CENTRAL AMERICA REGION:** Cancun, Mexico, April 2023. Participation of 5 countries out of a total of 8 in the region (62.5%).
- **SOUTH AMERICA REGION:** Lima, Peru, June, 2023. Participation of 9 countries out of a total of 10 in the region (90%). After this event, the continental team and individual qualifying event for the Pan American Games was organised.

## CONTINENTAL EVENTS:

- Pan American Championships: Havana, Cuba, September 2023. 17 countries representing the 4 regions. 50 Men, 52 Women.
- U-15/U19 Pan American Championships: Charleston, USA July 2023
  - 19 pre-qualified countries representing the 4 regions in U15
  - 20 pre-qualified countries representing the 4 regions in U19
- U-11/U-13 Pan American Championships: Mosquera, Colombia, October 2023
  - Participation of 14 countries with representation from the 4 regions. A total of 92 men and 86 women.
- Pan American Master: FLORIDA, USA, November 2023, more than 400 players from 20 countries across the continent.

## REGIONAL EVENTS:

- SOUTH AMERICA: U11/U13- U15/U19 Asuncion, Paraguay May 2023; Masters: Santiago, Chile July 2023
- CENTRAL AMERICA: U11/U13: Tegucigalpa, Honduras, August, 2023; U15/U19: Guatemala, May 2023; Masters: Panama, September 2023.
- CARIBBEAN: U11/U13: Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, August, 2023; U15/U19; Georgetown, Guyana, April 2023.

## WORLD TABLE TENNIS

- WTT YOUTH CONTENDER: Asuncion, Paraguay; Rosario, Argentina; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Charleston, USA; Mosquera, Colombia; Cuenca, Ecuador.
- WTT YOUTH STAR CONTENDER: Lima, Peru
- CONTENDER: Lima, Peru, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- PARA TABLE TENNIS EVENTS: Fa20 Brazil, Fa20 Argentina, Fa20 USA, Youth ParaPanamerican Games, Colombia, and Para-Panamerican Games, Chile.

## MULTI-SPORTS EVENTS

- Pan American Games, Santiago, Chile, Chile; Central American and Caribbean Games, San Salvador, El Salvador

## FINANCIAL HEALTH:

A staff is dedicated to managing the accounts and monitoring the expense approval processes. Audited financial statements for the previous period presented to the General Assembly and published on the institution's website. In 2023, the requirement for the financial execution report of all events that have received financial support from ITTF and ITTF Americas was implemented, which is attached to the Competition Manager's report.

Best regards,

**Juan VILA**

Continental President: Americas

As ATTU President, I am pleased to present the ATTU Report.

In 2023, the ATTU accomplished the main objectives we set last year, and we are working very closely with ATTU EB Members, Regional Vice-Presidents and the Asian Member Associations. We are committed to shifting the Asian table tennis game to the next level.

### **1. ITTF / ATTU MCA:**

Under the guidance of ITTF-ATTU/MCA, the ATTU (Asian Table Tennis Union) is achieving impressive strides. Devoted to the advancement and promotion of table tennis in Asia, ATTU remains actively engaged in cultivating the sport across all Asian regions. Collaborating closely with member associations, ATTU provides valuable assistance and expert counsel on a range of matters. Committed to expanding regional activities, ATTU is steadfast in its mission to bolster the table tennis community in Asia.

### **2. ATTU Website:**

As part of the ITTF/MCA initiative, the ATTU (Asian Table Tennis Union) website has undergone notable improvements and is now more dynamic than ever before. For the latest updates on upcoming tournaments, player rankings, and coaching resources, there is no better platform than this website. Modernisation and enhanced functionality of the ATTU website have greatly improved the quality of available information.

### **3. ATTU AGM:**

In Korea, the Asian Table Tennis Union held a General Meeting. The ATTU and its members discussed important topics during the meeting, which was successful for all participants. New ideas have been discussed, new topics have been put on the table, and the AGM agreed to accomplish a new tournament, such as the Asian Club Championships.

### **4. 26th ITTF-Asian Table Tennis Championships 2023**

The 26th ITTF-Asian Table Tennis Championships took place in Pyeongchang, South Korea, from September 3rd to 10th, 2023. This prestigious event brought together top table tennis athletes from across Asia, creating an atmosphere of intense competition and excitement. Hosting the championships in Pyeongchang. With its state-of-the-art facilities and enthusiastic spectators, the championships showcased the agility, skill, and determination of the participating athletes, leaving a lasting impression on fans and players alike.

## **5. 1st Asian Veteran Championships 2023**

The 1st Asian Veteran Championships 2023 was an exhilarating sports event that took place in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Held from 18 to 23 June 2023, the tournament brought together accomplished athletes from various countries across Asia. Participants showcased their skills and competitiveness in a range of sports, such as swimming, athletics, table tennis, and more. The event aimed to celebrate the athletic abilities of seasoned veterans who continue to excel in their respective sports. Ulaanbaatar's picturesque landscapes and warm hospitality provided the perfect backdrop for the championships, creating a memorable experience for participants and spectators alike.

## **6. 27th Asian Youth Championships 2023**

The 27th Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships were held in Doha, Qatar, from July 17 to 22, 2023. This prestigious event brought together talented young players from across Asia to compete in thrilling and high-intensity competition. The championships showcased exceptional skills, agility, and determination on the table tennis courts. The Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships in Doha were not only a great platform for young athletes to showcase their skills but also an opportunity for cultural exchange and camaraderie. Players from different countries came together to compete in the spirit of friendship and sportsmanship.

## **7. ATTU Future Events**

Since the AGM was confirmed in 2023, several events have been scheduled in the Asian Table Tennis scene:

- 02<sup>nd</sup> Asian Veterans Championships will be held in Dead Sea, Jordan
- 28th Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships in Chongqing, China from 30 June – 06 July 2024
- 35<sup>th</sup> ITTF-ATTU Asian Cup in China, September 2024
- 27<sup>th</sup> ITTF – Asian Table Tennis Championships 2024 in Astana, Kazakhstan
- 01<sup>st</sup> Asian Club Championships in Dec 2024

making it one of the most anticipated events of the year.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the ITTF, ATTU Member Associations, as well as my colleagues for their support and contributions to the ATTU in 2023.

**Khalil AL-MOHANNADI**

Continental President: Asia



## **Membership**

The total membership of the ETTU is, at present, 58 Associations.

## **Events and Competitions**

During the year 2023, ETTU was able to organise all scheduled events:

- ETTU Table Tennis Champions League men, semi-finals and finals
- ETTU European Champions League Women, quarterfinals, semi-finals and finals
- ETTU Europe Cup men, R16 quarterfinals, semi-finals and finals
- ETTU Europe Cup women, R16, quarterfinals, semi-finals and finals
- ETTU Europe Trophy men and women Grand Finals
- European Team Championships Stage 1 (home and away matches)
- Europe Top 16 Cup in Montreux (Switzerland) from 25 to 26 February
- European U-21 Championships in Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina) from 5 to 9 April.
- European Team Championships Stage 2 in Osijek (Croatia) from 5 to 7 May.
- ETTU U-13 European Championships in Zagreb (Croatia) from 14 to 18 June.
- European Veterans Championships in Sandfjord (Norway) from 26 June to 1 July
- European Youth Championships in Gliwice (Poland) from 14 to 23 July.
- European Team Championships Finals in Malmoe (Sweden) from 10 to 17 September.
- European Youth Top 10 in Bucharest (Romania) from 30 Sep to 2 October.
- ETTU Table Tennis Champions League men, stage 1 and stage 2, involving 24 clubs.
- ETTU European Champions League Women, stage 1 and stage 2, involving 21 clubs.
- ETTU Europe Cup men, stage 1, involving 16 clubs plus 12 (stage 2) relegated from TTCL
- ETTU Europe Cup women, stage 1 involving 16 clubs plus 8 (stage 2) relegated from ECLW.
- ETTU Europe Trophy men involving 36 clubs.
- ETTU Europe Trophy women involving 23 clubs.
- ETTU Europe Youth Series for U15 and U13 players. 4 events (CRO, SRB, CZE, GRE) with a total of 325 players from 26 countries.
- ETTU Virtual Table Tennis Challenge counted more than 100 players in the first stage, and 16 players qualified for the final stage in Dusseldorf.

Although able to host all planned events, ETTU was presented with many difficulties in implementing its calendar due to late release and constant changes of WTT scheduled events.

## **Development Activities**

The Development Program was fully executed. A total of seven Development Camps were organised (five for U13 and two for U15/U17 players) with a total participation of more than 100 players from 30 different associations. Also, ETTU supported 13 different activities of their Member Associations under the National Association Assistance Program. Beyond these camps, the ETTU successfully carried out its standard development programs: the scholarships program supporting 12 promising U13 and U15 players, the Annual Coaching Conference, held in Malmö, Sweden, and the Women's Coaching Seminar organised in Granada, Spain.

A new addition this year was the Umpires Development Program, highlighted by the Young Match Officials project at the European Youth Championships in Poland, which provided them with hands-on experience and mentorship to improve their officiating skills.

Additionally, the Women GAP project, part of the ETTU's Erasmus+ collaboration with nine European sports organisations, is in full swing with the development of an online learning tool for Member Associations underway. Furthermore, ETTU has organised 2 webinars focused on implementing VR Table Tennis for Member Associations, a webinar on Para Table Tennis, and another on good governance, expanding its educational and developmental reach.

In conclusion, the ETTU Development Program has made a significant impact, reaching 47 different member associations, reflecting its broad approach to developing and promoting table tennis across Europe.

### **Marketing and Commercial Initiatives**

During 2023, ETTU had the opportunity to rebuild partnership relations with some of their traditional partners and has already engaged in negotiations with future partners following modernization pathways, and new sponsors attracted them due to the high level of events delivered.

Meanwhile, ETTU has implemented a new slogan, "Table Tennis First", and launched a new branding concept on all promotional material of ETTU events with direct effect on logos, backdrops, banners, venue dressing, field of play layout, outdoors, tickets, etc. Also, a new approach was taken on TV production for major ETTU events originating that more than 20 countries saw live matches of the European Team Championships. Also, ETTU has hired a social media coordinator to follow the new trends with the main objective of engaging with table tennis fans and generating new ones. The number of Instagram followers increased by 50% during 2023, and the annual reach increased from 191 thousand in 2022 to 8.6 million at the end of 2023.

### **Summary**

ETTU is following all IOC and ITTF recommendations on the Belarusian and Russian decision to allow players and officials to be invited to events hosted by ETTU.

At the beginning of the year, the ETTU organised the first "ETTU Working Week", involving all staff and EB members in setting the standards and goals for the year. The ETTU EB met on 13 occasions from January to December 2023. The EB adopted the budget for 2024 and submitted the approval of the 2022 Financial Statement to the Annual Congress held in Malmö in September 2023.

All ETTU EB members worked together and with a dedication to improving ETTU's performance and implementing changes for the benefit of European Table Tennis.

A special thank you to all ETTU staff for their dedication and loyalty towards ETTU.

### **Pedro MOURA**

Acting Continental President: Europe

2023 was a good year for table tennis in the Oceania region.

## **Governance**

In June 2024, ITTF Oceania hosted its Annual General Meeting online, with attendance by 11 of our 24 Member Associations. With no elections, the AGM was an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of 2023. The Management Committee put forward a number of reforms to ITTF Oceania's Constitution, including measures to ensure gender balance and gender diversity for future candidates for positions.

The ITTF Oceania Management Committee met on the following occasions:

- 8 February
- 29 March – constitutional reform meeting
- 12 April
- 3 June – Annual General Meeting
- 14 June
- 9 August
- 25 October
- 13 December

I thank our volunteer Management Committee members for their tireless efforts throughout the year supporting the work of the ITTF throughout our vast region.

Disappointingly, our 2023 budget was affected by the ongoing lack of clarity regarding the Master Continental Agreement and our finances. As a result, the Management Committee approved a loss-making budget and cut all discretionary funds, as well as reduced all operational costs to the bare minimum.

We attended the 2023 ONOC General Assembly and OSFO AGM in late April in Brisbane. There were many valuable workshops and meetings with a significant focus on the path to the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The key themes included:

- Making it a truly Oceania Olympics
- Talent identification of young athletes
- Athlete and coach development pathways
- Providing training and competitive opportunities

In August 2023, we travelled to Thailand to attend the ITTF Summit and joined the global table tennis community in positive conversations on a range of big-picture issues.

During the year, we worked to resolve two (2) governance issues with our Member Associations in the Solomon Islands and Fiji. Both issues, while having their differences, are similar in that the concerns pertain to these volunteer organisations' management style.

For ITTF Oceania and ITTF, there is an expectation that good governance principles will be adhered to and followed for the benefit of all stakeholders. Unfortunately, both Member Associations have strong personalities involved that have differing views on how to best manage the sport in their countries.

For ITTF Oceania Management Committee, the question as to whether or not to suspend a Member Association for repeated governance failures has taken up a significant part of our year and both remain unresolved.

At the end of the year in December 2023, ITTF Oceania CEO Barry Griffiths announced his resignation from the organisation after 3 years in the role. We thank Barry for his tireless efforts on behalf of table tennis across the Pacific.

## **Events and High Performance**

2023 represented a big year for Oceania sport, with the Pacific Games being held in the Solomon Islands in November 2023.

The competition for table tennis was hotly contested, with Tahiti dominating the tournament, winning 7 Gold, 6 Silver and 3 Bronze Medals.

To coincide with the Pacific Games, we staged the 2023 ITTF Oceania Para Championships in Honiara, Solomon Islands. With 11 Member Associations and 47 competitors in attendance, the on-table results were dominated by Australia with 13 Gold Medals. However, seeing Tuvalu win a Men's Single Gold Medal in Class 5 was wonderful.

The 2023 ITTF-Oceania Olympic Qualification for Teams and Mixed Doubles and the 2023 ITTF-Oceania Senior & Youth Championships were staged in Townsville, Queensland, in September and hosted by Townsville Table Tennis Association in a new host city model for the first time.

The Olympic Qualifier event had 24 competitors from 4 Member Associations, and the Oceania Championships event had 74 competitors from 7 Member Associations, including the Marshall Islands, attending their first-ever Continental Championships.

Australia once again dominated, winning the Olympic Qualification events and 24 of 28 Gold Medals on offer in our Oceania Championships. Pleasingly, New Zealand won 4 Gold medals at the Championships.

The year-ending Oceania Cup was hosted by the Waikato Table Tennis Association in New Zealand at the start of December, again under our new host city model.

## **Participation and Development**

Prior to the 2023 ITTF Oceania Cup, we staged a Level 2 National Umpire and Basic Referee course in Waikato, New Zealand. This provided an opportunity to upskill existing officials and for new officials to become certified with attendees from New Zealand, Australia and Vanuatu. Course participants were able to officiate at the Oceania Cup, which was both a great experience and provided important capacity-building for our officials in the region.

Tongan Table Tennis delivered a Level 1 coach education course and training camp in June in the lead-up to its National Championship.

The Australian Government continues to support our Smash Down Barriers program as an Australian Aid initiative under the Team Up Partnership. In 2023, our programs in Fiji and Tonga continued to deliver great outcomes for athletes with a disability, and we welcomed Solomons Islands to the program.

The Tongan Table Tennis Federation was chosen by TeamUp to be a keynote presenter at the Australian Evaluation Society's 2023 International Evaluation Conference in Brisbane in September. This is a great credit to the work TTTF is doing in developing table tennis throughout its island nation.

There are many positives in Oceania table tennis. On behalf of our Management Committee, I thank our Member Associations for their hard work and dedication to growing our wonderful game.

**Anthony MOORE**

Continental President: Oceania

Looking back on 2023, it stands out as one of the most challenging years in my tenure with the ITTF Group. But despite the hurdles, there were notable highlights that reaffirmed the positive trajectory we have set for the sport of table tennis.

The year marked the world's emergence from the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it also underscored the pandemic's profound impact on our operations. While everything was entirely reopening, we encountered difficulties in fully restoring our events to maximum capacity. The global economy, still recovering, presented additional challenges, with inflation soaring and major markets exhibiting sluggishness, all of which impacted our table tennis business.

In response to these challenges, we embarked on a significant restructuring of our management team. This strategic decision was driven by the imperative to adapt to the new post-pandemic landscape and position ourselves for sustainable success. Despite the constraints, we also explored innovative economic pathways and solutions to address the financial headwinds we encountered. Though we faced constraints in delivering as many high-profile events as desired, the structural changes we implemented lay the groundwork for future success.

## **Events For All**

Despite the prevailing financial challenges, the increase of the number of events remained a notable feature of 2023 as the world gradually opened up.

2023 started with the World Veterans Championships being held in Muscat, Oman. The return of the event after five years was a testimony of the normalisation of life after the pandemic, and the Oman Table Tennis Federation shall be congratulated for the way in which they served our Masters community.

A momentous occasion etched in our memories was the ITTF World Table Tennis Championships Finals held in Durban (Ethekewini), South Africa, in May 2023. This historic event marked only the second time Africa hosted the World Championships, and it stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts of our entire team. The partnership between SATTB and the broader ITTF Group ensured ample resources were dedicated to guaranteeing the event's success. South Africa embraced the occasion, creating an unforgettable experience for all involved, with a truly unique African flavour.

Another highlight of 2023 was the introduction of the ITTF World Mixed Team World Cup, a new addition to our calendar. With minimal lead time, the global community embraced this innovative concept, which featured teams comprising the best male and female athletes competing on equal footing. Following the success of the ITTF World Team Championships Finals 2022 in Chengdu, China, it was fitting that the inaugural edition of this event took place there. The Wuhou district in downtown Chengdu, in collaboration with the Chinese Table Tennis Association team, spared no effort to ensure the event's resounding success. The robust ticket sales, the buzz surrounding the event, and the widespread attention it garnered validated the soundness of this new format.

Finally, the ITTF World Youth Championships 2023, held in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, once again turned out to be a success. The event showcased exceptional talent and set new standards for excellence in youth table tennis. Slovenia's unwavering commitment to hosting such events solidifies its position as one of the key partners of international table tennis.

## **World Table Tennis – A challenging year**

In 2023, the number of WTT events experienced significant growth, with an impressive total of 22 WTT Series events, 15 WTT Feeder events, and 44 WTT Youth Series events spanning across all continents. This extensive line-up underscores our dedication to making table tennis a truly global sport.

The flagship Singapore Smash made a triumphant return, surpassing previous editions in scale and spectacle, earning the prestigious "Event of the Year" Award in Singapore.

Two notable milestones were reached with the successful delivery of WTT Champions Frankfurt 2023 and WTT Finals Women Nagoya 2023, marking the first WTT events hosted in Germany and Japan, two key markets for the sport.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Qatar for their support in hosting the WTT Finals Men 2023 and several other WTT events throughout the year.

Moreover, WTT expanded its footprint in China, further solidifying its global presence. It was gratifying to welcome new hosts in 2023, with Contenders Series events held in Brazil, Croatia, India, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, South Africa, Thailand, and Türkiye, thereby enriching the WTT legacy.

While we achieved approximately 60% of our targeted activity, representing a notable increase from the previous year, there is acknowledgement of the long road ahead to fully realise our ambitions.

Despite the increased event activity, 2023 posed financial challenges for WTT. Targets were not fully met, and some events did not meet desired expectations in terms of business modelling. Consequently, there was a need for WTT to reassess its modus operandi and recalibrate accordingly.

On a positive note, investment into World Table Tennis materialised as one of the world's leading sports investors expressed genuine interest in acquiring a stake in WTT. This process shed light on both the progress made and the areas requiring improvement within our business. Despite the financial hurdles, it underscored the tangible impact of our efforts to transform the sport.

At the close of 2023, Mr. Matt Pound, one of the founding members of WTT and the Managing Director, decided to embark on new challenges in his home country of Australia. We express our sincere appreciation for his invaluable contributions in getting WTT to where it is today.

Finally, I extend profound gratitude to the WTT Board, led by Mr. Liu Guoliang and supported by Mr. Khalil Al-Mohannadi, Mr. Lei Zhenjian, as well as the full support of ITTF President Ms. Petra Söring and the entire ITTF Executive Board. Your steadfast support during challenging times is pivotal as we continue on this bold journey of transformation.

### **The ITTF Summit: Bangkok Delivered**

The ITTF Summit 2023 was by far our best, surpassing all previous iterations. Building upon the invaluable lessons gleaned from the exceptional experience in Jordan, the Summit, held in collaboration with the Table Tennis Association of Thailand, emerged as our most meticulously executed institutional event to date.

Drawing participation from close to a hundred member associations, the Summit served as a dynamic platform for exchange, learning, and deliberation on the future trajectory of the World Championships. Concurrently hosting the ITTF Council meeting and Annual General Meeting, these sessions offered invaluable opportunities for deliberation, collaboration, and strategic planning, thereby shaping the trajectory of our future endeavours.

Amidst rich discussions and insightful exchanges, member representatives provided feedback and cast their votes on pivotal decisions, including the adoption of the new ITTF Strategic Plan. Focused on Governance & Sustainability, Business Growth, and Society & Health. The strategic plan serves as a guiding compass in navigating the post-COVID-19 landscape, propelling table tennis towards sustainable growth and global distinction.

Furthermore, the Summit marked the unveiling of the Sustainability Action Plan 2025 and Gender Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2025. These comprehensive blueprints underscore the ITTF Group's commitment to fostering positive impact across people, planet, and prosperity.

Beyond its strategic significance, the Summit provided a platform for stakeholders to engage in broader dialogues and collaborative efforts pertaining to critical issues in the realm of world sports.

Significantly, the Summit marked the inaugural steps towards the year 2026, a momentous milestone as we celebrate our centenary, with London elected to host the World Championships. This forthcoming event promises to be a celebration of our rich legacy and a testament to our enduring commitment to advancing the sport of table tennis on the global stage.

### **Development's Global Reach and Impact**

The year 2023 marked significant progress and achievement within the Development Programme, with a total of over 200 development initiatives successfully completed. These initiatives targeted both able-bodied and para communities, with projects aimed at nurturing talent and building capacity across different regions and demographics.

A total of 186 Member Associations, representing 81.9% of all membership, actively participated in and benefited from various programs and projects offered through the Development



Programme. This notable increase from the previous year's figure of 76% signifies substantial progress towards our objective threshold of 80%.

Notably, there was a remarkable 32% increase in the number of individual participants, reaching over 9,000 individuals. This surge demonstrates growing engagement and interest in table tennis globally. Female participation continued to exceed 40% for the third consecutive year, highlighting our ongoing efforts to promote gender inclusivity and diversity within the sport.

With the COVID-19 pandemic subsiding, 85 on-site activities were conducted, providing hands-on training and engagement opportunities for participants. Additionally, online services were delivered, with almost 500 hours of programmes covering topics such as Sustainability, Integrity, and Event Management. Remote training camps, coach-the-coach sessions, and competition management emerged as the most popular offerings.

In summary, the achievements of the Development Programme in 2023 underscore our commitment to nurturing talent, fostering inclusivity, and advancing the sport of table tennis on a global scale.

### **ITTF Foundation promoting health, sustainability, and social inclusion**

The inaugural World TT4Health Festival was the standout event of the year, showcasing several ground-breaking initiatives, as well as the global intersection of table tennis and health promotion.

Firstly, the third World Parkinson's Championships exemplified the sport's ability to empower individuals with Parkinson's, welcoming players from all continents. This event, stemming from the legacy of the ITTF World Championships Finals Durban 2023, established a profound connection with local players affected by Parkinson's invited.

Additionally, the Festival hosted the first World Alzheimer Championships and the first World Table Tennis for Health Congress, with representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO) opening the latter.

In tandem with these efforts, the ITTF Foundation reached a peak of 18 field projects at the community level, fostering grassroots participation and promoting the positive impact of table tennis worldwide.

World Table Tennis Day saw 442 registered events across 111 countries, with all five Continental Federations hosting official events for the first time. This global celebration underscored the sport's ability to unite diverse communities under a common passion for table tennis and sustainability.

The release of educational handbooks on Table Tennis for Development and Sustainability provided valuable resources for stakeholders involved in promoting sustainable practices within the sport. These initiatives serve as vital tools in equipping individuals and organisations with the knowledge and skills needed to drive positive change and promote social inclusion through table tennis.

## Looking Ahead to 2024

As we reflect on the challenges and achievements of 2023, it's evident that the year presented us with complexities and financial hurdles that tested our resolve. Yet, amidst these trials, we gained invaluable insights into the realities of our sport's market dynamics. While acknowledging the long road ahead and the need for continued efforts to bolster our competitiveness, we find solace in the affirmation that we are on the right path.

The election of Petra Sörling as an IOC member, marking the first time an ITTF President has achieved this honour, signals our growing influence and recognition within the global sporting community.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are filled with optimism and anticipation. The year holds promise as a potential landmark period for major international table tennis events. With the Olympic and Paralympic Games in France, the first World Championships Finals hosted in the Korea Republic, three grand Smashes, the return of the ITTF Singles World Cups, and the second ITTF Mixed Team World Cup, among other prestigious events. 2024 could be the biggest year ever for our sport! If executed successfully, these events have the potential to bring table tennis to unprecedented heights and set new records.

However, amidst our optimism, we must remain aware of the prevailing uncertainties. Some key markets remain stagnant, inflation keeps posing challenges, and geopolitical tensions are everywhere. Yet, we are confident in our resilience and adaptability, even more after our efforts to restructure.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the ITTF Executive Board, including new members from the newly elected Athletes Commission and co-chairs Sharath Kamal Achanta and Ms Liu Shiwen, for their support and dedication. Special thanks are also due to ITTF President Ms. Petra Sörling and ITTF Deputy President Mr. Liu Guoliang for their leadership and guidance.

Lastly, a profound acknowledgement goes to the entire Management Team at the ITTF Group. Your trust, commitment and tireless work have been instrumental in navigating through these challenging times. As we look forward, let us maintain our optimism and embrace a growth mindset, confident in our ability to overcome obstacles and shape a bright future for our sport.

Table Tennis. For All. For Life.

**Steve DAINTON**

Chief Executive Officer, ITTF Group

The report refers to ITTF activities from January to December 2023, complementing the CEO's report.

### **World Title events in 2023**

You have read about the World Title events completed last year through the reports from the Executive Board (EB), Continental Presidents, and CEO.

From January to December, the ITTF family gathered in Muscat, Oman, for the World Veterans Championships, which the ITTF couldn't host since 2018. In May, it was the time for the historical return of the World Championships to Africa; the moment when we could witness and celebrate the event in Durban, South Africa, full of local Zulu colour.

In October, the World Parkinson's Championships and the World Alzheimer's Championships, which were held concurrently in Crete, Greece, both part of the World Table Tennis For Health Festival, showed that the sport of table tennis is truly *for all* and *for life*. To conclude the year, two more World Title events happened back-to-back: the World Youth Championships in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, and a very innovative, revolutionary, and completely sounding success: the Mixed Team World Cup held in Chengdu, China.

With these lines, I sincerely thank the Member Associations of Oman, South Africa, Greece, Slovenia, and China for their excellent work in delivering these events. A special mention must be made for the Mixed Team World Cup, which showed impressive audience records in Chengdu with a packed stadium, online and through television. My personal thanks to ITTF Deputy President, Mr Liu Guoliang, and to WTMG for their assistance in making this dream possible. The new playing format was very exciting, and this event has definitely come to stay!

### **Governance (internal)**

At the 2021 ITTF AGM in Houston, there was a call from the just-elected president to reunite the table tennis family. Ms Sörling's request wasn't particularly listened to by the Swiss Table Tennis Delegate, who, just before the election for Executive Vice-Presidents, questioned the eligibility of one of them.

Today, I'm pleased to report that following eight months of work with the new leadership of Swiss Table Tennis, at the ITTF Executive Board meeting held in the Olympic Capital, the ITTF, Swiss Table Tennis, and Mr Khalil Al-Mohannadi, entered into a [settlement](#), which did put an end to this unnecessary and harming dispute for our beloved sport.

The ITTF already has mechanisms in place to deal with integrity matters, and every member of our sporting family should use the respective channels appropriately. I thank Mr Freddy Oswald, Vice-President of Swiss Table Tennis, for his understanding and commitment to ending this unfortunate chapter of our history and to Mr Al-Mohannadi for his patience during the process.

In my 2022 report, I spoke about the importance of creating the ITTF Integrity Unit and the necessity to provide them with more resources. Today, I would like to reiterate such a request.

The ITTF shall find resources to ensure the Integrity Unit can operate adequately and independently. I'm confident that a strong Integrity Unit will deter actions such as those we witnessed in 2021.

## **Governance (external)**

We ended 2022 with the positive news of Mr Ryu Seung-Min, Deputy Chair of the IOC Athletes Commission, becoming an IOC Advisory Committee on Human Rights member. This was the seventh appointment within the IOC for our EB Member, proof of the trust the IOC has put in the also Korean Table Tennis Association president, our host here in Busan.

On 1 January 2023, the tenure of our President, Petra Söring, as a member of the WADA Foundation Board started. Her responsibilities within the International Sporting Movement expanded with her election to the ASOIF Council in May, and in October, the ITTF congratulated itself for the news of our President being elected as an IOC Member at the 141<sup>st</sup> IOC Session held in Mumbai, India. Olympic Sport since Seoul 1988, this is the first time an ITTF President has been elected to this prestigious body.

In November, at the IF Forum, our President became a member of the Executive Committee of SportAccord.

The ITTF should continue working to ensure our presence in these international bodies is stronger every day. This is the best way for our voice to be heard and for our sport to be recognised.

Each and every one of us plays a role in that, and certainly, the image of our sport, if good, will continue helping this development.

As we write these lines starting in 2024, we are working with our EVP of Governance, Mr Wahid Oshodi, and the staff of the different entities in completing the 5<sup>th</sup> ASOIF Self Governance assessment, which results should be known before the Olympic Games.

## **Annual General Meeting, ITTF Council Meeting and ITTF Summit**

Bangkok, Thailand, was a gracious host for our second-ever ITTF Summit, which showed progress and maturity compared to the initial one. The engagement of the participants was excellent, and the more interactive and participative model was widely appreciated by the delegates who came from all over the world. My thanks to the Thailand Table Tennis Association and their leadership for their commitment to the successful hosting of this event, to ITTF Deputy Secretary General Mounir Bessah, and the staff colleagues who worked hard to provide such an environment to the ITTF family.

## **Executive Board Meetings**

The ITTF Executive Board met physically and virtually in March, May, July, August, October, and December 2023. Particular mention shall be made to the first meeting held in Lausanne since 2013. I believe it was a very important opportunity for our elected officials to interact with the IOC and ASOIF leaders, namely IOC President, Mr Thomas Bach, ASOIF President, Mr Francesco Ricci Bitti, ANOC Secretary General, Ms Gunilla Lindberg, and IOC Sports Director, Mr Kit McConnell, and to have the opportunity to visit the IOC Headquarters.

## **Conclusions**

I would like to thank the Executive Board, Continental Presidents, Continental Representatives at the ITTF Council, Committee Chairs, Commissioners, and Member Associations for one more year of positive contributions to the day-to-day activities of the ITTF. Our elected and appointed officials bring not only guidance to the staff in the day-to-day operations but also experience and wisdom.

Thanks to ITTF President Petra Sörling and CEO Steve Dainton for maintaining one more year the trust in this Secretary General to continue fostering relations with the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

My thanks also to the staff colleagues of the ITTF, the ITTF Foundation, World Table Tennis and the staff of the Continental and Regional Federations, and Member Associations. Working day by day with motivated persons who have table tennis at their heart is more than work, a pleasure.

As we start 2024, an Olympic and Paralympic year, and engaged in a restructuration already mentioned by our CEO, I ask our Members and readers of this report to commit to the global goal of developing our sport, contributing positively to the progress of the ITTF. With a strong ITTF, everyone will be a winner. Let's work together and not divide. Let's join forces to make 2024 a great year for our sport.

Respectfully submitted,

**Raul CALIN**

Secretary General

The Continental Council (**CC**) met twice in 2023:

- 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023, Durban, South Africa
- 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023, Bangkok, Thailand

Discussions about the Busan 2024 WTTC Finals qualification system were held during its May meeting. It was agreed to propose to the ITTF Council to abandon the intercontinental stage for the 2024 edition and to select the six remaining teams using the same concept as for Chengdu 2022: one additional quota per continental (5) and the best team in the World Team Ranking.

The Meeting also noted the decision taken online about the format of play for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games (OG), confirmed Jury Chairs and Jury Deputy Chairs for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (PG), as well as the second Technical Delegate for the OG.

Discussions on the Master Continental Agreements (MCAs) were held, and it was agreed to allow an experimental carryover of up to three months from 2023 onwards for funding not spent by the end of the year. The CC also discussed upcoming training opportunities in China.

During the August meeting, the CC noted that the ITTF has embarked on a structural reform, hence the delay in the kick-off of the MCAs Working Group. The Continental Presidents referred to the lack of certainty about funding, hoping for an earlier decision for better planning in the future.

The CC noted the two proposals put forward for the playing format at the WTTC Finals Busan 2024, which will be voted on at the ITTF Council, and the proposed format of play for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Mr Ryu Seung-Min, KTTA President and Co-Chair of the LOC of Busan 2024, gave a report on the preparations for the first-ever World Championships in Korea Republic.

The CC also ratified the names of the Continental Representatives on the Jury for both Olympic and Paralympic Games, as proposed by the Continental Federations.

Questions about IOC Olympic Solidarity funding options were raised, and the CEO presented the plans for an experimental Mixed Team World Cup in 2023, with the hope for a full implementation of World (Singles) Cups and the Mixed Team World Cup in 2024.

To conclude, the CC noted the proposition to increase from 40 to 64 the number of teams in the WTTC Finals of 2026 and discussed the possible implications and suggested discussing with the ITTF Council the possibility of making a double allocation of the World Youth Championships 2025 and 2026 to Romania and Bahrain in view of the high quality of both bids.

On behalf of the Continental Council,

**Raul CALIN**  
Secretary General

The previous 12 months were proved again to be a challenging period for the Integrity Unit as the ITTF continues to adjust to having a separate body to not only uphold the ITTF Statutes through investigating and upholding potential integrity-related breaches/violations but also compliance, education, policy development, and acting as the secretariat for the Integrity Board.

### **Cases**

During the course of 2023, 15 new reports/complaints were made to the Unit across the following areas of the Unit's activities: Betting integrity & Match manipulation – 2; Competition manipulation – 3; Ethics – 3; Safe sport – 6; Other – 1.

As of the end of 2023, in total, there were 28 open (active) cases: Betting integrity & Match manipulation – 4; Competition manipulation – 4; Ethics – 8; Safe sport – 10; Other – 1.

Of those 28, 15 are at the Prima Facie Case stage [R9.16, Integrity Regulations], 12 are at the Investigations stage [R9.17, Integrity Regulations], with 1 case pending before the ITTF Tribunal for a hearing.

### **Betting integrity & Match manipulation**

Due to a couple of significant concerns during the course of the year, the ITTF and the Integrity Unit decided not to extend its agreement with Sportradar to provide bet monitoring and associated services. The Integrity Unit is running a tender process with potential service providers to find a new Principal Betting Integrity Partner (**PBIP**) to start work as soon as possible in 2024.

The Head of Integrity and Group Head of Legal have produced an initial proposal paper and drafted regulations for the ITTF Group to address its key concerns regarding incidents of match manipulation in private events (i.e., those not sanctioned by ITTF). The Unit has received multiple new alerts regarding suspicious matches on such events in 2023 directly from bookmakers, from bookmakers via the International Betting Integrity Association (**IBIA**), and national gambling regulators.

In addition to those alerts, of more immediate concerns were notifications of suspicious bets placed on two non-connected WTT matches. For the first of those, after some initial enquiries by the Head of Integrity, it appears the operators had priced the market wrongly, therefore allowing anyone well-informed on the sport to make money on the mispricing. The second, however, appears to be a more "classic" modus operandi for match-fixing. The Head of Integrity has been working with the national regulator where the bets were placed to obtain further evidence.

The Australian criminal case against Adam Green for corrupt activities related to betting on table tennis was finished with him receiving a suspended prison sentence and being ordered to undertake community service.

## **Education**

Pursuant to the ITTF's agreement with the International Testing Agency (ITA), with co-ordination from the Head of Integrity, they delivered Event-Based Education, consisting of a presentation for athletes and athlete support personnel on one day of an event and an education booth set up on the next day, in October at the WTT Feeder Stockholm and then in November at the ITTF World Youth Championships Nova Gorica. In addition to those in-person sessions, a Sport-Specific Webinar was delivered in October for member Associations to help understand their anti-doping responsibilities.

The Head of Integrity was delighted to be invited by the Chair of the Umpire and Referees' Committee to address the two International Referees' Conferences held during Q4 where he delivered an online 'Integrity Essentials' training session.

In 2024, the Unit will be working in co-operation with the IOC's integrity education team to develop and deliver an online session for athletes.

## **Unit development**

The Head of Integrity is working with WTT to address areas of overlapping jurisdiction with the Integrity Unit by aligning disciplinary procedures between the ITTF Statutes and WTT Handbook on violations which occur during WTT events.

In March, the Head of Integrity spoke at the International Sports Convention in London on a panel examining 'integrity functions within international federations'. Then, in October, also in London, the Head of Integrity moderated a panel at the LawInSport Global Summit discussing 'the future of integrated approaches to sports integrity'.

## **Resourcing**

The Integrity Unit's operations, particularly when it comes to the length of time to conduct robust investigations, continue to be significantly hampered by a lack of funding from the ITTF Group. Consequently, due to this situation, the Head of Integrity can no longer inform reporting persons/complainants that the Unit is "operationally independent"; rather they are told the Unit "operates at arms-length" from the ITTF, which obviously has consequences regarding the perceived impartiality and trusts placed in the Unit.

The Head of Integrity is still committed to and passionate about implementing the Unit's strategy and so, with the Integrity Board's approval, agreed to extend his initial 2-year period leading the Unit for a further 3 years until October 2026, during which he will continue to work towards the expected independence and ensure everyone reporting a case to the ITTF receives an immediate response.

An individual of relatively junior experience who has worked on combatting betting-related corruption in sports has been recommended to the Integrity Unit. Having been interviewed, the Integrity Board is supportive of the Head of Integrity's wish to have the individual involved in assisting with the various strands of match manipulation work. Still the lack of funding impeded



the Unit to engage with him, preventing the Unit from acquiring an extra pair of hands to help with the cases.

### **Integrity Board**

During the course of 2023, the Integrity Board held 5 meetings. The latter two were held with a full quota of independent members, with candidates having been put forward for the 3 remaining places for Council approval. They were Ms. Erika Riedl (Strategy & Operations), Mr. Jonny Gray (Strategy & Operations) and Mr. Wayne Snell (Investigations).

For 2024, the Integrity Board will continue to monitor the performance of the Head of Integrity and press the ITTF Group to provide the necessary resources to allow the Unit to operate as originally envisaged and set out in the ITTF Statutes. In addition to those ongoing priorities, the Board will perform an in-depth, comprehensive review of the parts of the Statutes pertaining to integrity and submit significant amendments to the Council.

### **Enric RIPOLL**

ITTF Integrity Board Chair

On behalf of the members of the ITTF Tribunal, this is the report of its activities for 2023.

In 2023, the ITTF has recorded two cases:

### **Appeal Coach**

On 28 October 2022, the ITTF Integrity Unit filed a request for proceedings before the ITTF Tribunal against another coach ("**Coach**") for a possible violation of the 2021 Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedures.

The Chair of the ITTF Tribunal opened proceedings and appointed a panel consisting of Ms Sally CLARK, from the United Kingdom, Mr LAU Kok-Keng, from Singapore and the Chair of the ITTF Tribunal.

The Panel ordered an exchange of written submissions between the Parties, and the case is currently pending. Further exchanges of written submissions took place in 2023.

At the request of the ITTF Integrity Unit, the hearing will not be held until September 2024 at the earliest.

### **Australian request for proceedings**

On 2 May 2023, Table Tennis Australia Limited filed a request for proceedings.

The preliminary review of this case revealed that the Applicant's request for proceedings consisted of an appeal against an eligibility decision issued by the ITTF Executive Board on 22 March 2023 (the "**EB Decision**").

As stated by the Executive Board in its letter of 31 March 2023, the deadline to appeal the **EB Decision** had expired on 12 April 2023 at the latest.

Table Tennis Australia Limited had requested an extension of the deadline to appeal the EB Decision, relying on article 8.21.4 of the ITTF Handbook. However, only a deadline that has not expired can be extended. Once the deadline has expired, it cannot be extended.

Based on the foregoing, the ITTF Tribunal Chair decided not to proceed with the Applicant's request for proceedings.

I remain at your disposal for any further information. Yours sincerely,

**Jorge IBARROLA**  
ITTF Tribunal Chair

The ITTF Audit & Finance Committee conducted their annual meeting virtually on 28 July 2023. The primary topics of the meeting were as follows:

#### Audit of Financial Statements

The Committee was presented with an overview of the financial performance of the ITTF for 2022; it was noted that the continued increase in activities following the emergence of COVID-19 made direct comparisons to the prior year's financial statements difficult. It was noted the increased activity in 2022 was positive, which resulted in greater revenues. The most significant transaction noted in 2022 was the external investment into World Table Tennis, which saw a significant increase in the Balance Sheet and provided opportunities in the future for further access to training opportunities.

In general, there was an overall increase in activity, which resulted in increased revenue, as well as increased expenses. It was noted that the bottom-line result for 2022 was an improvement from 2021 and was also improved upon the approved budgeted loss for the year.

The timing of the Audit & Finance Committee meeting took place prior to the final conclusion of the Audited Financial Statements, while the accounting treatment of the training services was still being finalised. Although this specific item, and the treatment of the asset had not been signed off by the auditors at the time of the meeting, all other elements of the audit had been completed.

In the weeks following the Audit & Finance Committee meeting, and before the ITTF AGM, the conclusion towards the treatment of the Asset was finalised with the auditors, with the final approval arriving only the day prior to the ITTF AGM, on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023. Following this approval, the Audit & Finance Committee confirmed the treatment of the Asset through written correspondence, before the audited Financial Statements were shared with the ITTF Membership.

During the Audit & Finance Committee meeting, the auditors, Mazars, presented their audit opinion, which had no unrecorded adjustments nor reclassification, and therefore were able to issue a clean audit opinion, following the conclusion of the Asset treatment for the training services. The auditors noted that the Financial Statements were not presented to the ITTF AGM within six months of the end of the financial year. However, they also noted that the ITTF AGM did not occur within the first six months following the conclusion of the financial year.

As 2022 was the final year of Mazars being the ITTF auditors, the initial steps planned for the transition to reporting under the International Financial Reporting Standards were delayed, as it was more appropriate for the new auditors to work with the ITTF towards this objective.

## Financial Management

As part of the Financial Management area of focus, budgets were discussed, in which the primary focus was around the efforts being done to reduce the forecasted losses, where possible. It was noted that the losses through the establishment of World Table Tennis have been well documented and approved at various ITTF meetings. Still, efforts are needed to reduce these losses if further external investment is not achieved. It was also noted that further efforts are needed to reduce the recent ITTF-specific losses in prior years and move towards breakeven for future years. It was noted that monitoring of budgets is important in the coming years to support any potential reductions of forecasted losses.

## Risk Management

The ITTF undertook a Risk Management project in 2022, with follow-up work being undertaken throughout 2023, which was reported to the Audit & Finance Committee, as well as the ITTF Executive Board.

### **Mr NATRAN Roland**

ITTF Audit and Finance Committee Chair (1 January 2023 to 2 September 2023)

### **Dr Alaa MESHREF**

ITTF Audit and Finance Committee Chair (3 September 2023 to 31 December 2023)

**Members**

Ms Rita Bsaibes	Chair (Lebanon)
Mr Hua Yuan	Full member (China)
Mr Patrice Nzi	Full Member (Cote d'Ivoire)
Mr Torsten Kueneth	Full Member (Germany)
Ms Kookhee An	Full Member (Korea Republic)
Mr Philip McCallum	Full Member (Scotland)

**GENERAL**

The Equipment Committee and Department are always working to make sure table tennis products maintain high quality. They also define technical terms to make sure playing conditions are safe and reliable.

**APPROVALS**

Equipment	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<b>Balls</b>	84	83	78	86	97	103	97	88	91
<b>Tables</b>	184	168	167	159	153	152	130	116	119
<b>Nets</b>	60	54	54	50	50	51	51	52	54
<b>Floorings</b>	27	24	24	18	18	19	19	18	17
<b>Racket Coverings</b>	1639	1601	1571	1641	1607	1570	1548	1483	1483

**Balls:** Despite the presence of a few expired products, the situation in this section remains stable.

**Tables:** An ongoing rise in approved tables products was observed.

**Nets:** An ongoing rise in approved net assembly products was observed.

**Floorings:** The situation within this section increased a little.

**Racket Coverings:** An ongoing rise in approved rubber products was observed, accompanied by a growing variety of coloured racket coverings on the List of ITTF Approved Racket Covering (LARC).

**SPORT DEVELOPMENT**

Current projects

1. After Treatment of Racket Covering

The second event in Ljubljana involved significant activities and developments. Athletes and federations were informed about the installation of the Racket Control/After Match Control room and received an introduction along with hand-out materials for referees and umpires. The procedure covered standard Racket Control before matches, collecting rackets from athletes who lost their last match, and After Match Control involving visual inspections, dismantling, and detailed measurements. All data were meticulously recorded

in an Excel file, accompanied by photo documentation. Experiences revealed that a majority of the Top 30 Players attended the event. Voluntary dismantling by players showed success, although there were challenges, including refusals. Device-wise, the KÄFER J200 was deemed the most practical, providing stable results even for boosted rubbers. Conclusions emphasized the effectiveness of dismantling inspections in detecting cheating, recommended tolerances for testing devices, and the need for clarifications in relative regulations. The timeline outlined a transition period for implementation by 2025.

## 2. Ball Bounce on Table (BBoT)

The playing tests conducted in Germany, China, and Japan revealed distinct friction categories among the four tables, broadly classified as "Slippery," "Stopping," and "Between." Notably, players easily distinguished differences between tables with high and low friction levels, with BBoT measurements proving effective in identifying these variations. Participants expressed a desire for more clarity regarding the designated tables for upcoming events. The conclusions drawn include the efficacy of BBoT device in categorizing table friction, the grouping of approved tables into three categories, the distribution of relevant information to markets and event teams to enhance transparency for all players, and the recommendation for periodic retesting over a five-year span to maintain consistent friction levels, to be incorporated into the manual approval process.

## 3. Blade Material Liberalization

The material opening phase is underway, with details like the material list and timeline still to be decided. This stage involves setting up the Blade-Approval-System, including technical regulations and a testing/control system. In November, a factory tour in Sweden was conducted. As a result, the decision was made to initiate the approval process, starting with category approval. Additionally, definitions for various blade components will be provided to include a wide range of blades available in the market.

## 4. Ball Retesting

When the ball undergoes testing, a subsequent three-year retest period will be initiated. This new testing period is scheduled to commence from January 1, 2024. The three-year retest cycle ensures a systematic and timely approach to maintaining the ball's compliance with regulations.

## **FUTURE PROJECTS**

The sustainability project is planned for implementation with a comprehensive plan. Various key aspects and initiatives are currently under consideration and will be addressed as part of the project's agenda.

In addition to that, upcoming initiatives in flooring incorporate the development of permanent flooring, research focused on wheelchair accessibility, and the establishment of a collaborative flooring working group that will bring together manufacturers and laboratory experts in the field.

## **Rita BSAIBES**

Chair of the ITTF Equipment Committee

## **1. Composition of the committee (Period August 2023 – December 2023)**

Ms. Ina Jozepsone (Latvia / Europe), Chair; Mr. Ali Sultan Al Muftah (Qatar / Asia), Ms. Eunmi Seok (Korea Republic / Asia), Mr. Leonel Gerardo Godoy Sierra (Honduras / Latin America), Mr. Galal Ezz (Egypt / Africa), Dr. Adesoji Emmanuel Tayo (Nigeria / Africa).

## **2. Committee meetings / Communication**

After the appointment of the Masters Committee members at the ITTF AGM 2023 in Bangkok, the communication was done only via email. A first committee meeting is going to be organised on 24th February 2024, at 18:00, during the ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships Finals 2024 and ITTF AGM 2024 in Busan / Korea Republic. Unfortunately, some of the committee members will not attend the meetings for different reasons.

There was also a regular exchange between the Masters' Committee Coordinator, ITTF Group Sports Director Mikael Andersson, and ITTF Competition Manager responsible for the masters José Bentes, and the committee chair.

## **3. Committee's activities**

### **3.1 Co-operation ITTF VMC and SCI**

A regular exchange between the ITTF Masters Committee and the SCI has been secured in the past.

The Committee Chair also attended the AGM of the SCI 2023 in Bangkok.

The email exchange between the President of the Swaythling Club International Ms. Claude Bergeret and ITTF Group Sports Director Mr. Mikael Andersson occur regularly.

### **3.2 Support in organising World Veteran Championships**

The 2024 World Table Tennis Masters Championships will be the first Championships organised under the umbrella of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) and will take place in Rome from 06 to 14 July at the Nuova Fiera di Roma. The World Veterans Championships becomes the ITTF World Masters Championships, an event for the champions of the present and the past!

For the first time in history, the number of participants in ITTF World Masters Championships Rome 2024 is more than 6000 players.

The Committee Chair will be involved in the ITTF WMC 2026 Bids process.

### **3.3 Encourage continental and national federations to promote masters' table tennis activities**

The appointed Masters' Committee has started a regular exchange with some responsible persons for masters' activities from Continental Federations.

### **3.4 Update Masters' activities on the ITTF website**

Information about the ITTF World Masters Championships Rome 2024 has regularly been published on the ITTF website. Basic information is available on the tournament website and updates are regularly sent to participants by the organizing committee.

Every month, an updated masters' calendar (prepared by Hans Westling) was sent by e-mail to the coordinators all over the World and after revision published on the ITTF website by direct access to the Swaythling Club International website by Ian Marshall.

## **4. Appreciation**

I would like to thank all those who supported me and offered me help. I also want to thank those who exchanged their opinions and ideas with me to find solutions for the future of Masters' table tennis. The collaboration with ITTF staff was most successful and in a timely manner.

**Ina JOZEPSONE**

Chair of the ITTF Masters Committee



The composition of the Nominations Committee (**NC**) includes the Chair, Deputy Chair, and committee members thereafter having served out their terms, the Executive Board of the ITTF duly appointed the following persons into the Committee.

The other statutory members and ex-Officio members include an ITTF EVP (Governance), the ITTF President, the ITTF CEO, and the Presidents of the Continental Federations. The Committee was completed with the ITTF Secretary-General. The appointed committee members were completely involved in opinions and recommendations to keep the members involved in the committee's decision-making process in order to make successful selections.

The main duty of the Committee under its Terms of Reference is to validate and forward recommendations to the Executive Board in respect of nominations by Member Associations to the various permanent committees and commissions, taking into consideration important criteria such as gender representation, competence, experience, skills, commitment, diversity, relevant area-specific knowledge and a fair and equitable distribution among member associations and continents. The Committee is also empowered to review the work of Committee members.

The Committee is also saddled with the important task of recommending worthy candidates to the EB from nominations made by Member Associations for receipt of the ITTF Merit Awards.

The work during the period included the following:

- a) Meetings with the Nomination Committee Members for the discussion of candidates and also met with the legal to ensure fairness in the nomination as well as the selection process.
- b) Review and screening of applicants.
- c) Successful finalisation of the appointments of the committee members meeting the required criteria of selection and being transparent in all communications throughout the process.
- d) Adhoc candidates reviewed and discussed, as well as shared with the committee members for their review.
- e) Recommendations for the host of the Annual General Meeting

During the year, we conducted meetings successfully virtually and physically, we also had a discussion during the Annual General Meeting.

## **CONCLUSION**

The ITTF Nominations Committee, working with the ITTF CEO, Secretary General, ex officio members and Continental Presidents, hope to continue to ensure that all tasks remitted to our committee will be dealt with fairly, transparently and with dispatch.

It is very important that we continue to carry out our tasks without bias. We also hope to continue to make progress by adhering to the criteria which we had earlier formulated in the selection of future committee members in the fervent hope that this would result in more qualified members

being appointed to the various committees while also increasing the diversity and inclusivity of all those serving in our committees.

We ran the scope of the NC in a fair manner, giving all members and those with the right to attend a fair chance.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank ITTF President and the Executive Board for their trust in us. The ITTF CEO and special thanks to my Deputy Chair and all our committee members for taking the time to make their excellent contributions timeously.

Finally, I also offer our great thanks to all the members and the staff of the ITTF, with special regard to Dylan Mah and Raul Calin for providing the needed support to the work of the Nominations Committee.

Thank you.

**Abdulla Y AL MULLA**

Chair of the ITTF Nominations Committee

**Calendar Publication**

The 2024 calendar was officially announced in September 2023. This early announcement allowed Member Associations to plan their budgets and schedule upcoming events proactively.

The positive feedback from numerous members highlighted the effectiveness of this approach.

**Sponsorship Department and Media**

In 2023, we retained 729 as the official ball sponsor.

Additionally, there was an increased promotion of Para Table Tennis, including live streaming in every event, even in non-mandatory ones like Fa 20. This initiative aimed to boost Para Table Tennis's global visibility.

**Continental Qualification Events**

We reached a record of tournaments and the 5 continental qualification events for Paris were delivered successfully.

**World Singles Qualification Tournament Paris 2024**

We have analysed the bids of Chinese Taipei, Slovenia, China, and Thailand to host the World Singles Qualification Tournament Paralympic Games 2024. After the virtual inspections, Thailand was selected to host the competition in May 2024.

**Classification**

Together with a record of tournaments, we reached a record of classified players in 2023.

Year	Physical	Intellectual	Total athletes classified
2017	314	29	343
2018	192	25	217
2019	195	27	222
2020	37	0	37
2021	141	2	143
2022	199	44	243
2023	376	25	401

## **Development**

I would emphasize the fact that the 3 tournaments in Africa (2 in EGY and 1 in NGR) received 121 new players, and the tournament in Oceania (Solomon Islands) received 21 new players.

When it comes to the Para TT development activities, Omar Refaat, from the Development Department, is the key contact person to assist Member Associations. His email is [orefaat@af.ittf.com](mailto:orefaat@af.ittf.com).

## **XX Copa Tango Meeting**

In October, a meeting was held in Buenos Aires during the XX Edition of the Copa Tango, with the participation of Alaor Azevedo, ITTF VP in charge of Para Table Tennis, Edimilson Pinheiro, Chair of the Para Table Tennis Committee, Santiago Mercade, Member of Para Table Tennis Committee, and Constantina Crotta, Para Table Tennis Events Manager, the topics discussed were: classification, structure, and competition system.

Regular Committee Meetings were held virtually in February, May, July, October, and November. The following subjects were discussed: competition system, tournament tiers, conditions required and number of events, doubles combinations, number of doubles events (4) and mixed doubles events (6), rating vs ranking, classification, merging of classes, reduction of MIC and adaptive equipment.

## **Edimilson PINHEIRO**

Chair of the ITTF Para Table Tennis Committee

This year, the ITTF Family had to cope with a very short season between the 2023 and the 2024 Annual General Meetings. As a result, there were fewer tasks to complete.

Nevertheless, we had a virtual Committee meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2023 to prepare and discuss the 2023 AGM and Council propositions and resolutions and another videoconference on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024 to prepare and discuss the 2024 AGM and Council propositions and resolutions. Of course, there were many further contacts within our Committee on ongoing issues.

### **Questions / Interpretations on Rules**

As usual, the Rules Committee had to deal with several inquiries about ITTF Statutes. Some very interesting and complex questions came from our colleagues on the Umpires & Referees Committee, and we tried to provide them with constructive interpretations regarding Laws and Regulations for International Competitions.

### **Composition of the Rules Committee**

It should be emphasised that we were quite surprised by the new composition of our Committee, which was decided by the 2023 AGM. In particular, we have identified two conflicts with our Constitution and principles: Firstly, the Rules Committee was reduced by one member without any justification, and secondly, the nominating body did not comply with the clearly defined minimum number of 25% of female full Committee members.

### **Eligibility Questions**

We were involved in discussing some significant eligibility cases, one of them regarding players from different national Associations but with the same nationality.

We can be confident that the new rule for covering cases of official refugees and of Member Associations having restricted control over their athletes, provided originally by the Rules Committee and amended reasonably by the 2023 AGM, will be effective in the future.

### **Propositions to the 2024 AGM and Council meeting**

Another time, as an outcome of internal discussions and conversations with other Committees, we prepared some propositions regarding playing equipment.

Some further propositions may be considered just as editorial changes of the Statutes.

## **Acknowledgements**

Let me please express my sincere thanks to our full and corresponding Committee members and, in particular, to my Deputy, Prof. Chan Cheong-ki, as well as to the ITTF Legal Counsel, Mr Dylan Mah, for their highly appreciated support.

I am also much obliged to the Executive Vice-President, Mr Wahid Oshodi, to our Secretary General, Mr Raul Calin and to my colleagues, the chairpersons of ITTF Committees and Commissions, as well as the ITTF Commissioners for their thoughtful cooperation and assistance.

**Rudi SPORRER**

Chair of the ITTF Rules Committee

In 2023, the ITTF's Sport Science and Medical Committee (SSMC) was very much focused on activities related to the attempt to organise the postponed ITTF Sports Science Congress and proceeded with the work on different sports science and sports medicine fields. Due to the organisers' restrictions, ITTF SSMC members did not participate in the WTTCF in Durban. Our primary goal in 2023 was to improve the International Journal of Racket Sports Science, of which the ITTF is one of the partners. Further activities have been devoted to the call of the IOC on fairness, inclusion, and non-discrimination based on gender identity and sex variations.

We have been 2023 less active than we usually are, primarily because of the elections that took place in Bangkok. We expect to be more involved in 2024, with the activities at the 17<sup>th</sup> ITTF Sports Science Congress and further to the Olympic Games in Paris 2024. Some ITTF SSMC members have published the results of their research activities in prominent journals worldwide, but they are not listed in this report due to the limited space requirements.

1. In 2023, two online meetings were organised (February 12<sup>th</sup> and December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023). Further activities have been accomplished through e-mail exchange.
2. Five members of ITTF SSMC are actively involved in the journal procedure of the editorial work for the [International Journal of Racket Sports Science](#). In 2023, both regular journal issues were successfully published on time. We are still looking to attract more prominent researchers to post in this journal and, in this way, increase the importance of the journal.
3. ITTF SSMC is continuing its assistance as an active partner of ITTF EC regarding the follow-up of the activities connected to the IOC framework on fairness, inclusion, and non-discrimination based on gender identity and sex variations. Various online meetings have been organised during 2023 among the Racket Games Working Group, managed by IOC representative Madeleine Page. We thank Mikael Andersson for his contribution to this topic and his engagement in cooperation with IOC. ITTF SSMC representative in this working group is Irene Faber, PhD.
4. On April 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, Irene Faber and Mikael Andersson attended the IOC framework on fairness, inclusion, and non-discrimination based on gender identity and sex variations workshop: Lessons learned and next steps.
5. Due to the health restrictions in JAR, the number of active participants has been cut, and no member of SSMC was involved in WTTCF in Durban.
6. During 2023, we have been working on activities connected to the 17<sup>th</sup> ITTF Sports Science Congress, which was announced for 2021 but was later cancelled due to COVID-19. We have tried to settle an agreement with the University of Kwazulu-Natal, the School of Sports Sciences, and the South African Table Tennis Association, but due to the short time of preparation, they cancelled their activities. Our next try to still organise the congress in 2023 was expressed at the ITTF Summit in Bangkok. We proposed to organise the congress in front of WJTTC in Nova Gorica, Slovenia. Still, the timeline was the biggest hurdle to setting the agreement with the Slovenian Table Tennis Association.
7. Our member Irene Faber, PhD is included in the work project Erasmus+ ICOACHGIRLS, which aims to promote and increase physical activity and sport amongst primary school-age girls through the creation of "Girls Play Centres" in their local communities across six different countries (Ireland, Hungary, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Special Olympics – country to be decided). The centres will be aimed at girls who have never participated in organised sport or tried and dropped out.
8. For 2022 and 2023, Irene Faber, PhD, received a European College of Sport Science, Cologne, Germany Fellowship.
9. Prof. Zhang Xiaopeng has, during 2023, provided lectures on table tennis for the Chinese Table Tennis Team and the same also at the Beijing Sports University.

10. During 2023, Irene Faber, Miran Kondrič and Mikael Andersson participated in several webinars and online workshops on the IOC framework on fairness, inclusion, and non-discrimination based on gender identity and sex variations.
11. During 2023, our member Taisa Belli, PhD, organised and delivered the High-Performance Course - Brazilian Table Tennis Confederation (CBTM) - Coach Education Program and provided management of organisation and delivery of CBTM - Competition Manager Course. At the University of Campinas (UNICAMP), she delivers a Racket Sport (table tennis, tennis, and badminton) subjects for students. She also lectures about Effective Communication for Table Tennis Coaches for the Brazilian Olympic Committee event (COB Expo) and about Gender Equality in Table Tennis for the IV International Seminar on Positive Youth Development through Sport - Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC).
12. During November and December 2023, another proposal was prepared, and a request was sent to the Qatar Table Tennis Association to organise the 17<sup>th</sup> ITTF Sports Science Congress in Doha during WTTCF in 2025. We are expecting their response in due time.
13. Between April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, Alain Coupet from the University of Bordeaux, Faculty of Sciences and Sports, was a guest professor at the University of Ljubljana and presented his table tennis app, the ScolPingTab, to the students. The EU Erasmus+ program supported the visit.
14. From April 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, Prof. Miran Kondrič was invited as a guest speaker to the Alpen-Adria University of Klagenfurt, USI, to deliver a practical workshop on the importance of physical preparation in table tennis. A previous member of HPD, Dominique Plattner, assisted him in this event.
15. On May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, Prof. Sheng Wu from the National Taiwan University of Sport, Taiwan, visited the University of Ljubljana. During the para tournament in Laško, he presented an i-racket.
16. From May 29<sup>th</sup> till June 21<sup>st</sup>, Prof. Miran Kondrič was invited as a guest professor to the University of Granada. Further activities in the International Journal of Racket Sports Sciences, which the University of Granada publishes, have been discussed.
17. Prof. Miran Kondrič took part in the ITTF Summit in Bangkok.
18. Following the direction of doctoral and postdoctoral student visits in foreign countries, another study was concluded at the end of July 2023. A doctoral student from Iran, Lale Pooryamanesh, has finished her stay at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Sport. We thank the University of Guilan for showing interest in table tennis research and international cooperation.
19. During the TT4Health congress in Crete, Greece, organised by ITTF Foundation, Prof. Kondrič was invited speaker.
20. On September 1<sup>st</sup> Prof. Miran Kondrič accepted the invitation of the Ningbo University, Faculty of Sports Science and spent two months with the masters and PhD students.
21. SSMC members are also active in the professional field: Prof. Zhang Xiaopeng is the Winner of men's singles at the Beijing Table Tennis Championships for sports for all; Irene Faber, PhD is Head youth coach, table tennis club Trias, Twello, The Netherlands; Prof. Kondrič is head coach of the University of Ljubljana Table Tennis Team.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Mr Masahiro Maehara for his contribution and support to SSMC as an ITTF EC representative. Thanks also to all the members of the ITTF SSMC who have shown great dedication to fulfilling all the tasks that have been put in front of them by successfully conducting the work in sports science, education, Anti-Doping fight and sports medicine.

**Prof. Miran KONDRIČ, PhD**

Chair of the ITTF Sports Science and Medical Committee



## **INTRODUCTION**

At the end of 2022, the ITTF joined the **UN Sport for Climate Action Framework**, committing to:

- Reducing our emissions by 50% by 2030 (based on 2022-2023 baseline measurements)
- Reaching net zero by 2040

In addition, the ITTF was one of the founding organisations to support the **Sport for Nature Framework** in acting to protect and avoid damage to important species and habitats, restore key ecosystems, create sustainable supply chains, and educate and inspire the wider sporting community to take action for nature.

2023 was focused on **establishing the foundation** and understanding of where ITTF is and take the first steps to meet the objectives and targets laid out in the Sport for Climate Action and Sport for Nature Frameworks.

**Planet Action Plan Status:** Overall on track with a few postponed actions.

## **HIGHLIGHTS** (Jan 2023 - Jan 2024):

- Sustainability webpage on the ITTF website
- Sustainability Planet Action Plan published on ITTF website
- Creation and delivery of an Online Training Session for Member Associations on Sustainability (through the participation program online service)
- World Table Tennis Day 2023 on the topic of Think Sustainably, Act Now raising awareness on the topic of sustainability and developing capacities of 35 promoters across the globe
- Development and online accessible publication of the “Think Sustainably, Act Now” manual dedicated to explaining how table tennis can be used to contribute to the UNSDGs in collaboration with WTTD led by the ITTF Foundation
- Inclusion of Sustainability and Legacy in bidding documents for Host cities from 2026 onwards
- First discussions and benchmark with LOCs and manufacturers about sustainability, understand where we are and identify the next steps
- From Durban to Crete: 1st participants from the African continent to participate in the Parkinsons World Table Tennis Championships thanks to the ITTF Foundation and SATTB
- Part of the ASOIF Sustainability Working Group
- Busan 2024 WTTTC is the 1st table tennis event in history to receive ISO:20121 certification
- Measurement of ITTF Group overall carbon footprint - International Table Tennis Federation CO2e Report 2023 for baseline year 2022
- Creation of the first ITTF Sustainability Committee.

## **NEXT:**

- 1st Sustainability Committee Meeting in Busan
- 2024 will focus more on education (athletes, staff, MAs) and encourage concrete actions looking at events, manufacturers in particular. Highlights:
  - Sustainable Event Guide and Certification piloted in Busan, published by the end of 2024
  - Webinar series for Table Tennis Athletes Sustainability Education
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> baseline year Carbon footprint measurement
  - Individual talks and visits to manufacturers to move the industry forward
- 2025 will set reduction targets to meet our commitments and look to do more fan, athletes, and MA engagement.

The ITTF Sustainability Committee looks forward to working further with each one of its members in making our sport more sustainable and, therefore, more resilient in the future.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone for their support and look forward to taking more steps in making table tennis ready for today and tomorrow.

### **Mawuko AFADZINU**

Chair of the ITTF Sustainability Committee

2023 was a year not only full of events, but also a lot of activities from ITTF URC side. The following objectives have been worked on in 2023.

## **1. Communication**

- Two online and one one-site meeting with all members of the Committee
- Online meetings and close cooperation with the WTT Match Officials Coordinator
- Online meetings with the Integrity Unit to discuss specific cases
- Online meetings with ITTF IT staff to discuss the IT requirements for ITTF URC
- Online meetings with Education to work on the LMS platform
- Online meetings with Equipment to discuss racket control
- Meeting in Bangkok and close cooperation with Development during the year
- Two Newsletters have been published
- Use of the ITTF website and Facebook group to communicate with match officials

## **2. Participation in working groups**

Members of ITTF URC participated in the following working groups:

- After treatment rubbers (Equipment Committee)
- LMS platform
- Mobile Application (APP)

## **3. ITTF/WTT Match Officials Coordinator**

Tina Crotta, as the contact person for ITTF URC towards ITTF and WTT for all issues related to match officials, is communicating nearly each day with ITTF URC, and the cooperation with Tina Crotta is exceptional.

## **4. Selection of match officials for the events**

Umpires and Referees have been selected considering their individual performance in the last three years. The selection is done in close cooperation with ITTF/WTT and the LOC.

## **5. Education; Performance Assessment and Evaluations**

In total, 128 (+27% compared to 2022) Performance Assessments have been made by the appointed referee teams.

432 (+18% compared to 2022) evaluations done by certified evaluators in 14 events during the year. For the first time, ITTF URC also offered self-funded evaluations and training during National Championships (Japan and India).

## **6. Education; Advanced Rules Exam**

Starting with January 2023, ITTF URC turned the Advanced Rules Exam into a supervised online exam and only available in English.

ITTF URC offered the Advanced Rules Exams in 17 events for 248 candidates, and 161 umpires passed the exam. Compared to 2022, the participant rate increased with +21% candidates and the pass rate from 47% to 65%.

## **7. Education: ITTF Online International Umpire Examination Preparatory Course**

ITTF URC, in cooperation with Development, offered six online courses for interested African candidates.

## **8. Education: Training courses for Umpires and Referees**

ITTF URC prepared new courses for Level 1 Umpires (Basic Umpire), Level 2 Umpires (National Umpires), Level 1 Referees (Basic Referee) and Level 2 Referees (National Referee). These new courses will be implemented starting from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

## **9. International Referee Conference**

After 6 years without an International Referee conference due to COVID-19 restrictions, the ITTF URC invited all International Referees to attend the Referee conferences this year. 121 participants attended the IR Conferences in Beijing, China or Senec, Slovakia.

## **10. Evaluator Conference 2023**

In November 2023, trainers, evaluators and ITTF URC members met for two days in Beijing to prepare the new Blue Badge process and to work on the guidelines for evaluations. The Conference shall ensure consistency and considers the changes in the last years.

## **11. International Referee Schools 2023**

During 2023, one International Referees' School was held in Hong Kong, China. Five Match Officials qualified as International Referees.

## **12.Match Officials Statistics**

The number of Match Officials with active status 01.01.2024 is:

- 11 Advanced Referees (3 female)
- 98 Active International Referees (27 female)
- 16 Gold Badge Umpires (6 female)
- 234 Blue Badge Umpires (86 female)
- 8.060 White Badge Umpires (but a lot of them are no longer active)

## **13.Referee Toolbox**

A toolbox with 17 documents is available for all referees and is updated regularly with the purpose of providing guidelines and help to standardise procedures in all tournaments.

## **14.ITTF Virtual Mentorship 2023**

Experts from ITTF URC and specifically appointed experienced match officials worked together with High-Performance & Development to mentor umpires and referees.

## **15.Acknowledgement**

I wish to thank all URC members who participated in an active way. I would also like to thank the ITTF and WTT leaders and their staff members, especially Graeme, Tina, Raul, Karl, Dimos, Mohamed, Tiago, Bart, Polona, Omar and Katarzyna, for providing their full support to the work of the URC and for lending a hand in co-ordinating with the Associations, Organisers, and other agencies for the successful hosting of tournaments.

**Werner THURY**

Chair of the ITTF Umpires and Referees Committee

# 2022 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Report to the AGM

Document E-01

**DISTRIBUTED AS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT**



**NOTE 1: THE 2023 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 2024.**

**NOTE 2: AS AGREED AT THE 2022 ITTF AGM, THE 2022 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ARE CIRCULATED ONCE AGAIN AS SUBMITTED ON 23 AUGUST 2023.**

# Propositions to the 2024 ITTF AGM

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## Proposition A-01

(2/3 majority required)

Proposed by the Continental Federation of the Americas (ITTF Americas)

To amend Article 1.60:

To amend Constitution Article 1.60 to ensure that from the nine persons elected by the AGM (1 president and 8 vice-presidents), there are no more than 6 persons from the same gender. For example: 6 men and 3 women, or 5 men and 4 women. A minimum of 3 women should be elected by the AGM.

*Rationale:*

*At the ITTF Summit 2023 in Bangkok we learnt how important is to secure at least 30% female representation in the Executive Board. Having 1 president and 8 Executive Vice-Presidents, ITTF should ensure that at least 3 women are elected among the 9 positions.*

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## Proposition A-02

(2/3 majority required)

Proposed by the Continental Federation of the Americas (ITTF Americas)

To amend Article 1.60:

To amend Constitution Article 1.60 to ensure that from the nine persons elected by the AGM (1 president and 8 vice-presidents), there are no more than 2 elected persons from each continent (Africa, Asia, Europe, Pan America, and Oceania).

*Rationale:*

*It is important to add diversity to the Executive Board, ensuring that all continents are represented in a balanced manner.*

*There should be, among the 9 representatives elected at the AGM, no more than 2 per continent. For example, 2 from Africa, 2 from Americas, 2 from Asia, 2 from Europe, and 1 from Oceania.*

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## Proposition A-03

(2/3 majority required)

Proposed by the Member Association of BRA (Brazil)

To amend 1.96.1:

1.96.1. The correspondence and proceedings of the ITTF shall be conducted in English or in such languages convenient for appropriate tasks and within the resources of the ITTF as may be determined from time to time by the ITTF Council, having particular regard to Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

*Rationale:*

*The Portuguese is an official language of Portugal, Brazil, Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and São Tomé and Príncipe, while having co-official language status in East Timor, Equatorial Guinea, and Macau.*

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## Propositions to the 2024 ITTF AGM

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### Proposition A-04

(3/4 majority required)

Proposed by the Rules Committee

To amend 2.1.4 and 2.1.6:

- 2.1.4 The playing surface shall be uniformly dark coloured and matt, but with a **white** side line, 2 cm wide, along each 2.74 m edge and **a-white** an end line, 2 cm wide, along each 1.525 m edge; **these lines shall be of the same bright colour and clearly different from the colour of the playing surface.**
- 2.1.6 For doubles, each court shall be divided into 2 equal half-courts by a **white** centre line **of the same colour as the side lines**, 3 mm wide, running parallel with the side lines; the centre line shall be regarded as part of each right half-court.

*Rationale:*

*After a largely positive feedback on coloured table lines at WTT events (on experimental basis), such option of a new perhaps more attractive design should be implemented into the Table Tennis Laws.*

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### Proposition A-05

(3/4 majority required)

Proposed by the Equipment Committee and the Rules Committee

To amend 2.4.3:

#### 2.4 THE RACKET

- 2.4.3 A side of the blade used for striking the ball shall be covered with either ordinary pimples rubber, with pimples outwards having a total thickness including adhesive of **not more less than 2.0mm 2.05mm**, or sandwich rubber, with pimples inwards or outwards, having a total thickness including adhesive of **not more less than 4.0mm 4.05mm**, subject to any margin of tolerance specified in the relevant technical equipment document.

*Rationale:*

*The original specifications have only one digital value, which is subject to the technology and means a mathematical rounding from 4.049 to 4.0. With the current devices in the racket control, which measure with 2 digits, two digital values are practical for the control.*

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