



# Minutes of the EWF GENERAL CONGRESS

## 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### Rovaniemi - Finland

## MINUTES OF THE EWF GENERAL CONGRESS

### ***EWF General Congress started at 10:00.***

At the main table sat: President of the Finnish Weightlifting Federation, Mr. Tarmo Kuusisto; EWF General Secretary, Dr Milan Mihajlovic; EWF Treasurer, Dr Astrit Hasani; EWF Vice Presidents: Mr. Davis. Kipshidze, Ms. Tina Beiter, Mr. Patrick Fassott and EWF EB member & CRSC Chairman, Mr. Colin Buckley.

Before the Congress began, Mr. Colin Buckley, EWF Covid-19 officer, and Marko Keskitalo from LOC presented the basic countermeasures for Covid-19 that will be used during the Congress and the 2021 European Junior and U23 Championships.

### **1. WELCOME**

The EWF General Secretary asked the Interim President to chair this Congress. The Interim President said that since he had contact with family members that had Covid-19, he could not travel and will be present by Zoom platform. He also requested and it was confirmed that there was a translation into different languages during the Congress.

The Interim EWF President, Mr. Maxim Agapitov opened the General Congress and welcomed all. Mr. Tarmo Kuusisto, President of the Finnish Weightlifting Federation, welcomed the Congress delegates to Rovaniemi and Finland.

### **2. ROLL CALL AND THE APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

There were 37 participants at the hybrid EWF General Congress of which 29 present at the Lapland Chalet hotel in Rovaniemi and 8 online via Zoom.

Mr. Patrick Fassott, EWF Vice President with the assistance of Ms. Tamara Jović, Assistant of the EWF General Secretary, were in charge of counting all the votes.

#### ***Please see Annex #1 the List of Congress delegates***

It was noted that minutes of the previous Congress were delivered to the MFs by email\*, and then discussion immediately continued about the Congress Agenda, about order of the topics (Ashley Metcalfe (GBR)) and what will be discussed under point 12 and 14 (Antonio Conflitti (MDA), Pavel Kolosovsky (ISR)), and proposal was to discuss about Extraordinary Congress (Karolina Lundahl (FIN)) and vote of no confidence to Interim President (David Kipshidze (GEO)). In the end, the Agenda and order of topics sent before the congress was approved unanimously with a note that under points 12 and 14 could be discussed about the proposals. The self-suspended Executive Board members informed they had cancelled their voluntary self-suspension to serve the sport during the coming events.

\* Since discussion about minutes from the 2021 Congress in Moscow suddenly jumped to the other topic, formal vote was not made. Minutes from the EWF Congress in Moscow will be approved at the next Congress.



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### **3. INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Marko Keskitalo from the Local organizing committee welcomed everyone and said that they have worked hard for the championships since 2019 and thanked everyone for the support. He informed about accommodation, competition venue and provided some updates for the transportation.

### **4. CONFIRMATION OF THE SELECTED TECHNICAL OFFICIALS**

The Chairwoman of the Technical Committee read the names of the selected officials and the Congress approved them.

The delegates unanimously approved the selected TOs

### **5. AWARD TO WELL-DESERVING PERSONALITIES**

The Interim President thanked the European Championship 2021 organizers Russia and Poland for their contribution to the sport in Europe.

Also EWF CRSC Chairman Colin Buckley received a thank you for his dedication as the Covid-official so that our sport has had the possibility to return back to competition.

EWF General Secretary said that during the next European Senior Championships there will be possibilities to award well-deserving personalities.

### **6. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY**

EWF General Secretary, Dr Milan Mihajlovic started his report with reminding everyone that few days ago on 20 September, but 52 years ago the EWF was founded in Warsaw, and we should be grateful to all our predecessors for what they have done for our weightlifting sport. EWF General Secretary, Milan Mihajlovic introduced his work since the April elections 2021 and divided his activities in few parts.

***Please see Annex #2 the Report of the EWF General Secretary***

Because the extraordinary congress activities are also part of GS activities, he invited Dr. Hasan Akkus to provide Congress with the most up-to-date information on the current situation. Dr. Akkus stated that the ITA published a report with allegations against him about hidden cases that occurred about ten years ago, despite the fact that the cases were never hidden. Dr. Akkus denied the allegation and stated that ITA did not respond to his requests. He sticks to his decision from the end of June to stepped aside in order to clarify the situation.



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The EWF General Secretary Report and the topic of Extraordinary Congress were discussed (Antonio Conflitti (MDA), Denise Offerman (CYP), David Kipshidze (GEO), Patrick Fassott (GER), Ashley Metcalfe (GBR), Karolina Lundahl (FIN), and Eric Jan Kwekkeboom (NED)), participants thanked the General Secretary for his activities and repeated the request to hold the Extraordinary Congress for the elections of the EWF President within 90 days, before the IWF election, inviting GS to convene it.

The Report of EWF General Secretary was approved, 31 yes, 2 no, with note to remove part of Extraordinary Congress from the final GS Report.

### **7. REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

EWF Treasurer, Dr Astrit Hasani presented to the EWF Congress the expenses and revenues of EWF for the period 1<sup>st</sup> of January until 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

***Please see Annex #3 the Report of the EWF Treasurer***

David Kipshidze (GEO) thanked for the detailed report and asked regarding the pocket money to have in more details. The Treasurer replied that the EWF Executive Board has approved the pocket money for President, General Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Board, ITOs, etc. and remind that the EWF Congress also always elects three auditors. For the entire year, all the invoices for all the expenses are checked from the 3 auditors elected by the EWF Congress and then they make the report. In addition, after their report there is also external auditor report. Treasurer informed that regarding the balance statement, anyone can anytime ask for each section, and he will give further explanation, and it is possible to do it also now.

After Karolina Lundahl (FIN) asked for that, the treasurer informed that EWF President receives per month EUR 3000 €, EWF General Secretary 2500, the EWF Treasurer 1500, the EWF Executive Board 400 per meeting, and Chairpersons of Technical, Coaching and Medical Committees 2000 per year for 2021 and will be 2500 from April 2022. The covid-19 officer 1000 per championships, the ITOs 250 per championships as well. EWF treasurer agreed with proposal of congress representatives that he will write in an additional paper the pocket money in order the congress to know the salaries of EWF. The EWF General Secretary reminded that salaries were introduced in an earlier period, and informed that the salary for the General Secretary has been reduced compared to before and that for the first time, from this year pocket money was given to the ITOs.

Then Dr. Urso (ITA) took the floor and asked if there is possibility the bank account of EWF not to have his name anymore. Treasurer said that Dr. Urso is right and explained that it was planned to change Dr Urso name with Dr. Akkus name however, the situation that he stepped aside and as soon as we have a confirmed about President, EWF will make the change. All the bank transactions are with online banking and this technicality doesn't affect the EWF bank



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account. The treasurer also added that the reason why still the bank account is in San Marino and not in Kosovo is that they are not part of Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) where all transfers within SEPA countries are just 2.5 euros whereas from outside of SEPA the transfer would cost 18 euro or more depending on the amount transferred. The Treasurer also informed the Congress that he has asked the EWF Executive Board members coming from SEPA countries to provide proposals and EWF can have the EWF bank account in any SEPA country.

Ashley Metcalfe (GBR) asked about the Contribution to the National Federations with EUR 21,050. The treasurer informed that the EWF Executive Board decided EUR 20,000 to support Russia WF for the Senior Championships in Moscow and the other EUR 1050 is support for Bosnia and Herzegovina WF. Karolina Lundahl (FIN) said that since Russia was supported also maybe Finland can be supported for the organization of the Junior championships. General Secretary reminded Congress participants that in April 2021 it was first competition after one-year break. Also, Tina Beiter (DEN) added that EWF didn't allow any audience so that's why we felt obligated to support, and there was a lot of PCR testing too. Maxim Agapitov (RUS) also informed about losing a lot of money from spectators that bought ticket from different parts of Russia and only from tickets they lost USD 70,000. All the shirts and souvenirs they could not sell without the spectators. Also, all ITOs had single rooms. Russia WF had to spend additional EUR 340,000 just because of Covid-19, so the EUR 20,000 was very small reimbursement from the EWF.

The EWF Treasurer report was unanimously approved.

Then the EWF General Secretary gave the floor to the IWF General Secretary, Mr. Mohamed Jalood. He said that Europe federation is very important for the IWF and that Europe should be united for the IWF election. He emphasized that EWF can count on IWF support and wished successful competition and successful future election.

### **8. REPORT OF THE CHAIRWOMAN / CHAIRMAN OF THE TC / CRSC / MC**

The Chairwoman of the Technical Committee, Ms. Tina Beiter gave Report of the TC.

***Please see Annex #4 EWF Technical Committee Report***

The Chairman of the Coaching, Research and Scientific Committee, Mr. Colin Buckley gave Report of the CRSC.

***Please see Annex #5 EWF Coaching and Research Committee Report***

The reports of EWF TC and CRSC were unanimously approved.

The Report of the Medical Committee was postponed to the next Congress, since Chairman of the MC had preparing competition Start Book.



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### **9. MODIFICATION TO THE EWF CONSTITUTION**

EWF General Secretary informed that after the International Weightlifting Federation adopted its new constitution on August 30, 2021, the EWF started activities related to modification to the EWF Constitution and had established the Reform and Governance commission and the members will be appointed soon.

### **10. REPORT OF THE INTERIM PRESIDENT**

Interim President, Mr. Maxim Agapitov presented his work to the Congress. The Interim President has been active in fighting doping and corruption in his country and IWF, and he has received acclamation from the prestigious Prof. Richard McClaren for his anti-doping work. He said he is aware of the criticism he has received following the letter sent in August. He understands the concern and accept it was wrong to send such letter with EWF letterhead, but he said he made it clear that it was personal opinion and he still stand for the content of the letter. He confirmed he will continue to serve as Interim President in accordance with EWF Constitution until the President Dr. Akkus resume his duty, or the new President is elected.

The Congress further requested more information (Carolina Lundhal (FIN), Ashly Metcalfe (GBR)) on the Interim President's work in the European platform, from the period of being interim president if he brought any idea or decision to grow and develop the EWF. Interim President responded he will prepare a full report about this issue and deliver.

The Congress decided not to approve the President's report, with 5 yes to approve report, 3 against and 28 abstentions.

### **11. INFORMATION ON THE PREPARATION OF THE FORTHCOMING EWF CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022**

EWF General Secretary informed that in 2022, Senior Championships will be organized in Sofia (BUL), the Junior & U23 Championships in Tirana (ALB) and that EWF expect the Youth Championships to be held in Kazan (RUS), since such possibility was announced by Russian Weightlifting Federation.

### **12. PROPOSAL BY NATIONAL FEDERATION AND DELEGATES**

EWF Interim President asked if there are any proposals by the National Federations. Eric Jan Kwekkeboom (NED) took the floor and said that article 22.4 of the EWF Constitution says that

in case President position becomes vacant for any reason, for the remaining part, which stills is the case, the first Vice President serves until the next congress, which is today, and the congress may endorse the appointment until the next election which is 2024 or determine to have a special election, and that brings us back to the request of the national federations. In fact, he said, we could have the chance to do it today as the constitution is asking us, but also, we have the opinion that there is too much disturbance in the EWF, and we would like to do this in very organized manner. Karolina Lundahl (FIN) added that we must understand that requested extraordinary congress is not an electoral congress, so there is no 120-days and 90-days requirement, but it is a special election. Her proposal was to have a special election before the IWF elections and then let the Executive Board to determine the timeline to organize the special election as the Congress, as supreme authority, requests. Colin Buckley (IRL) said that we should look for the article 1.5 which says that EWF is governed by Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code and by this Constitution. We must get a legal advice from a Swiss lawyer and any decision the EWF EB makes, it must be with a consultation with the Swiss lawyer. Antonio Conflitti (MDA) said that EWF EB can use the Swiss lawyer, but the constitution is very clear, and the Member federation asked to call for the congress. He also said that according to the result of not approving the report of Interim President, he would like to suggest introducing to this point also the vote of no confidence for the Interim President. Denise Offerman (CYP) supported the legal consultation with the Swiss lawyer. Ana Borygina (RUS) said that these were not in the agenda so it should be included and discussed in the next congress. David Kipshidze (GEO) said that the vote of no-confidence is a statement from the Congress members towards the Interim President, however there is no action involved in the statement. Some events of the Interim President in the summer of 2021 had caused a dent in the trust between the Interim President, the Executive Board Members and Member Federations. No one from EB have asked what he wrote, but how it was presented. Interim President didn't communicate 10 days with EB members, and he thought our concerns and the issue were not important. Tina Beiter (DEN) said that she supports David Kipshidze presentation because this was how exactly they felt in the EB and that's why she stepped aside. Aleksandar Kishkin (RUS) said that this was not in the agenda of the congress. Karolina Lundahl (FIN) said we need to discuss things within our own sports and not to send things like that to IOC emails. Patrick Fassott (GER) said that he agrees with David Kipshidze speech and EWF General Secretary said that he expresses serious concern what has happened, and his opinion is that Interim President should change his way of working. Interim President said that delegates are not following the EWF Constitution because they can't discuss this in this congress, but can do it in the next congress. This can't be legal because it is not sent 30 days before the congress and mentioned he can prepare a report about this and to make sure that all delegates will hear and understand all opinions about this topic. The Congress voted in order to have a voting or not for the no confidence of Interim President. So, 23 voted to vote, 3 not to vote and 2 abstentions.



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The congress voted no confidence of Interim President with 29 yes, and 4 no.

Karolina Lundahl (FIN) asked the Congress to vote that EWF election to be organized before the IWF election and then EB to have the timeline for that upon the opinion of the Swiss lawyer. The EWF General Secretary just added that we have at this moment 15 MFs who specified the article to organize the elections.

As the EWF Constitution leaves questions to the procedure of the matter, the General Secretary explained the discussion the EB has with a Swiss lawyer, Dr. Claude Ramoni of Libra Law, Lausanne (SUI). At the end of the discussion it was approved by 28 yes votes, 3 no votes and no abstentions that this Congress mandates the EWF Executive Board to examine the situation to convene the extraordinary congress and President elections as soon as possible based on advice of the Swiss lawyer, if possible before the IWF elections.

### **13. ANTI-DOPING**

Alex Padure (ROU) said that as the chairman of the Fair Play Commission, together with Denis Oferman, the chairwomen of the Anti-Doping Commission, they are proposing to organize anti-doping seminars for all EWF events we have in Europe, and for all participants to receive certificates.

### **14. ANY OTHER MATTERS**

Karolina Lundahl (FIN) thanked everyone for working together for reform and showing that we are putting sport first and we will stay in the Olympic family.

There were no other matters to discuss.

The Interim EWF President thanked Congress delegates, wished to all championships participants success and closed the Congress.

***EWF General Congress finished at 16:00.***

  
Dr Milan V. Mihajlovic  
EWF General Secretary