



**World Skate Extraordinary Executive Board Meeting**  
**Hybrid meeting**  
**13<sup>th</sup> September 2023**  
**Lausanne, Switzerland**  
**10:30 AM (CET)**

**Members attending LIVE**

- Sabatino Aracu President
- Roberto Marotta Secretary General
- Doris Gentile Vice Secretary General
- Alberto Herrera Ayala Vice President and President of World Skate America
- Gary Ream Chair Skateboarding Technical Commission
- Nicola Genchi Chair Artistic Skating Technical Commission
- Andrea Fonzari Chair Inline Hockey Technical Commission
- Carmelo Paniagua Chair Rink Hockey Technical Commission
- Olivier Pascal Chair Roller Freestyle Technical Commission

**World Skate Manager and Staff (LIVE):**

- Francesco Zangarini WSK Sports Director
- Francesco D'Urbano WSK Head of Legal Dpt.
- Alessandra Lunadei WSK General Affairs Dpt.
- Mara Esposito WSK General Affairs Dpt.

**Guests:**

- Thomas Bach IOC President
- Kit McConnell IOC Sport Director
- Michele Bernasconi Attorney-at-law Partner Bär & Karrer AG

**Members attending REMOTELY**

- Karen Doyle First Vice President and Commissioner Oceania
- Luís Seníca Vice President and President World Skate Europe
- Thomas Cai Vice President and President of World Skate Asia
- Nathanaël Koty Vice President and President of World Skate Africa
- Jorge Roldan Chair Speed Skating Technical Commission
- Sigfried Zistler Chair Alpine Technical Commission
- Weifeng Gu Chair Inline Freestyle Technical Commission
- Ellen French Chair Roller Derby Technical Commission
- Patricia Wallace Chair Medical Commission

## AGENDA

1. Opening by World Skate President
2. Approval of the minutes of the previous Executive Board meeting
3. Updates on Russian and Belarusian athletes
4. Updates on the process leading to the establishment of one single Governing Body per Country
5. Updates on the decision of CAS 2023/A/9230
6. National federations and governance issues
7. Reports and financial reports by Continental Areas, in compliance with Article 15 item 8 of World Skate Statutes
8. New affiliations
9. Miscellaneous

## MINUTES

President Sabatino Aracu greets and thanks all those present and introduces IOC President Thomas Bach.

Bach thanks for the welcome and expresses his appreciation to World Skate recognizing the great contribution the International Federation has made to the success of the Tokyo Olympic Games. He emphasizes the exceptional achievement in terms of social media, visibility thanks mainly to the great and strong appeal of skateboarding to young people and to the athletes who are also global icons.

Before the Olympics, there was no way to be certain that the sport would do well and that the athletes would embrace the Olympic culture, which is so different from their own. Some people were skeptical, but everything turned out to be perfect in Tokyo because the athletes showed that they not only embraced the Olympic spirit but were also an inspiration to athletes from other sports.

Bach recalls having had personal meetings with skateboarders to whom he asked how it felt to be Olympians. Every one of them was deeply emotional when talking about the Olympic myth. Even athletes from other sports did not hesitate to say they were extraordinary athletes.

Bach goes on to emphasize World Skate's commitment to promote e-sports: to reach out to the younger generation, we need to bring sports to urban centers and into the digital world.

There are millions of young people who can get involved in e-sports; the athletes are young digital natives and this is one of the reasons for the success.



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Bach concludes by saying that World Skate should be proud of its Olympic membership, and grateful to President Sabatino Aracu for his perseverance and determination and for his unrelented commitment to having skateboarding join the Olympic sporting family.

Bach then thanks President Aracu for his excellent and effective handling of the anti-doping issue sparing no efforts to enhance sport safety. Further improvement can be made in gender equality within the Executive Board. Gender equality will be addressed during the board and also in Paris.

The IOC President underlines that the consequences of the Russian invasion against Ukraine are another challenge that must be faced together and in this respect World Skate should be proud and satisfied with the decision taken.

Hard work has been carried out in recent weeks, listening to both sides in the conflict. The international community understands the role of the IOC, which can neither accept the Russian request to ignore the war nor the Ukrainian demand to isolate all those with Russian passports, as this would go against the Olympic charter and violate human rights.

The G7 supports the position of the IOC whose resolution has been signed by 122 U.N. Member States, the G20 is also aligned with the approach taken by the Olympic Committee. Considering that France is the host country, it is important that President Macron said that he confides in the IOC's decisions. There have been difficulties and discussions, including internal ones, but now we should be proud and satisfied with the support of the international community.

Bach presents President Aracu with the IOC President's trophy, which symbolizes the Olympic House.

*IOC President Thomas Bach leaves the meeting.*

President Sabatino Aracu thanks those who are attending in person and those who are online, the interpreters and the World Skate staff for their work.

He points out that World Skate has many important events in store for the near future. First on next year's calendar is Montreaux featuring the International Federation's oldest sport - rink hockey. 2024 will also mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary since FIRS (now World Skate) was established. President Aracu reminds everyone that all ideas are welcome! In addition to the celebrations, a *skate day* is scheduled to be held in September or April.

There is still so much to organize: the Park World Championship in Ostia (Rome) in the first week of October; the Street World Championship in Tokyo, the Inline Freestyle World Championship in Shanghai and the Artistic World Championship in Ibaguè followed by the Asian Games and the Panamerican Games.



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Deputy Secretary General Doris Gentile reports that all EB members are invited to Paris for the Olympics: a google form will be sent out for all members to fill out, allowing them to specify whether they prefer to attend the first or second week of competitions.

#### *BREAK*

President Aracu greets and introduces Kit McConnell, IOC Sports Director who will report on the Russian-Ukrainian issue.

McConnell thanks Aracu and welcomes everyone to the Olympic House, pointing out how the signing on the Olympic wall by the Olympian skateboarders meant a lot to all of them.

Tokyo was a first, memorable step; the event in Paris, set under the iconic obelisk on the Place de la Concorde, will be incredible and will attract huge crowds.

As to viewership, the Tokyo Olympics recorded 140 million hours of skateboarding broadcasting, 226 million spectators viewing competitions at prime time, and over 100 million posts and reposts on social media: it is a first! Never before the Games had such high TV viewing figures.

An Olympic platform was developed to interact with users. World Skate, as a partner, recorded 1.3 million engagements on social media, tens of millions of subscribers on the platforms and 22 million posts. These results are almost 4 times bigger than what we had been able to achieve on our social platforms until then. This is to underline how important skateboarding is for the IOC.

The IOC Sports Director continues with an update about the Russian and Belarusian athletes: no decision has been taken yet as to Paris; the IOC would certainly like Ukrainian and Russian and Belarusian athletes to participate as Individual Neutral Athletes (AINs), but the invitation to the athletes is still to be confirmed.

As for International Federations, athletes were involved in many sports including golf, cycling, ice hockey; the IOC believes however that athletes can only participate as Individual Neutral Athletes (AINs) while a team representing the Russian nation cannot be considered. Ukraine initially responded that its athletes would not participate if Russian and Belarusian athletes were attending. Then the Ukrainian government had a change of heart greenlighting the participation of its athletes provided they were not to compete against their Russian peers. Finally, Ukraine realized that this policy would penalize its athletes' Olympic qualification and allowed them to engage in direct competition also with Russian and Belarusian athletes.

No Federation withdrew when Russian and Belarusian athletes competed on an individual basis.

Kit McConnell reaffirms the IOC steadfast commitment to help Ukrainian athletes. To this end a fund of several million euros has been made available. The G20 Leaders' Declaration



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said that they look forward to the Paris Olympic Games with “participation of all”. Macron said that this issue should not be politicized, trusting fully in the IOC and Thomas Bach.

Kit McConnell concludes by saying that he has high hopes that through cooperation the future of athletes with Russian or Belarusian passports will be secured. When asked for clarification by President Aracu about the certainty that such athletes have not been involved in any way in the war, McConnell replies that the IOC is working on several systems to check on the eligibility of each qualified AIN.

This is the general update on the situation.

*Kit McConnell leaves the meeting.*

President Aracu takes the floor pointing out that an item on the Board’s agenda regards the CAS decision on the legal dispute with Brazilian Skate Confederation’s President Eduardo Musa, and thanks lawyer Bernasconi for attending the EB meeting, and asks him to report on the CAS ruling.

Mr. Bernasconi summarizes the status of the legal dispute, caused by the failure of the Brazilian Party to organize the World Championship in Brazil despite the Brazilian Confederation had been granted extensions on the terms of payment of the organization fee. CAS had nothing to say about the procedure adopted by World Skate.

After closing the investigation, the EB adopted Resolution No. 5/22 ruling in favor of the suspension of President Musa and a fine to the CBSK National Federation. The Court of Arbitration for Sport has confirmed that the Brazilian Confederation violated the World Skate code of conduct and ethics, and that World Skate has behaved correctly. The Court has issued a less severe ruling but certainly not because of errors made by World Skate. Two of the judges decided not to proceed as requested because they felt that President Musa violated some but not all the rules. A second likely explanation is that some of the judges have a more favorable attitude toward individuals, and two of the 5 judges did not have much experience in disciplinary matters.

Mr. Bernasconi concludes by stating that the sanction against President Musa was reduced but not annulled and this is a serious issue for any president receiving such a ruling. Bernasconi understands President Aracu’s frustration, but stresses that the Board should be satisfied with the result obtained.

Carmelo Paniagua takes the floor to emphasize that World Skate acted correctly about something detrimental towards the good reputation of the International Federation. The CAS decision must be accepted but it must be stressed that there was a proceeding that will remain forever, so it’s important to study regulations and provisions to be prepared for any future violations.

President Aracu thanks Mr. Bernasconi and points out that he thought it was important for the EB to be given an exhaustive explanation.

It's now time to deal with the other items on the agenda.

Approval of the minutes of the previous Executive Board Meeting.

Secretary General Roberto Marotta takes the floor and puts the minutes of the June 14 meeting to a vote.

The minutes are unanimously approved.

Updates on Russian and Belarusian athletes.

Roberto Marotta summarizes what Kit McConnell previously said and points out that initially the IOC position was different from what it is today; the current situation marked by the absence of Russian and Belarusian athletes is however causing difficulties; the IOC shows therefore its intention to have athletes with Russian and Belarusian passports as Individual Neutral Athletes (AINs) with no flags, anthems, colors or any other identifications of these countries. The athletes will have to make a statement they have not actively supported the war. Naturally this regards only individual sports.

Marotta opens the debate to get to a final decision.

President Aracu expresses concerns about the number and procedures for athlete's selection, and such concern is also shared by all other EB members.

The discussion reveals that many governments do not allow their athletes to compete if Russian or Belarusian athletes are present. Marotta also underlines the issue of visas, which many countries would not be willing to grant to Russian and Belarusian athletes.

To stay in line with the IOC's decision, both President Aracu and Secretary General Marotta agree that it is advisable to wait until January 1, 2024 to allow Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete as AINs. In the meantime, proper safeguard rules should be implemented to ensure that everything goes smoothly.

It is also true, as Karen Doyle duly points out, that starting in January, that is from the Sharjah qualifying event, athletes would not get enough points to qualify.

Gary Ream is in favor of Russian and Belarusian athletes participating right away because politics should stay out of the world of sport and while continuing to help Ukraine, everyone should be given a chance to participate.

Vice Secretary General Doris Gentile reminds all EB members of the documents the IOC circulated and which contain some strict eligibility conditions with respect to the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes, including the non-eligibility clause for athletes who have been generally involved in the war, or engaged in other active supporting measures, verbal and not verbal, in particular public statements and/or participation in pro-war demonstrations, and displaying symbols supporting the war etc..



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All of these eligibility conditions must be complied with to allow Russian and Belarusian athletes to be entered and compete.

President Aracu believes that a document should be drafted presenting a whole set of rules that are in line with the IOC. The document is not ready just as yet because new ideas have come up after the G20 Summit. These rules will have to be written and voted on by the EB so to be effective as of January 1, 2024.

Some discussion is held on what assessment and vetting mechanisms should be in place so to make sure that athletes have not been involved in the war, bearing in mind, as Gary Ream said, that many of them cannot speak up openly against the war for fear of being persecuted in their own country.

Finally, it is agreed that time is needed to handle the situation properly, that IOC regulation should be followed and rules that comply with it should be drafted.

### *LUNCH*

#### Updates on the process leading to the establishment of one single Governing Body per Country

President Aracu takes the floor and reminds that following the decision made during the Barcelona Congress in each country there must be *one single governing body* for all World Skate disciplines. A deadline was first set right after the Tokyo Olympics but later it was extended until December 31, 2023. It was thought it was proper to send a *reminder* asking everyone to send in a proposal by the end of October. However, if the federations fail to come to an agreement, it will be the EB that will have to make a decision and choose the federation that is most committed to the promotion of our disciplines.

Secretary General Roberto Marotta asks Mr. Bernasconi about the legitimacy of such action, and the latter replies that the World Skate Statutes are very clear on this issue, but it cannot be ruled out that some of the federations may decide to engage in a long and costly lawsuit, so it is important to send these federations a clear and irrefutable letter.

Carmelo Paniagua believes in this respect it could be possible to reach out to the sports ministers and NOCs of these federations, but President Aracu reaffirms that, as clearly written in the Olympic charter, we are the ones who have to define the governing body of our sports in a given country and communicate it to the NOC.

#### National federations and governance issues

Marotta reports that Chile is creating a new Federation, while Panama is waiting for new elections. In general, it must be said that disaffiliation of those who do not pay and do not participate is difficult. Some countries do not participate in World Championships because of economic problems, but they do hold national championships.



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## ANTIDOPING

Aracu reminds that WADA does not interact with the Continents but directly with World Skate, which to date has still problems with some continents where anti-doping is not enforced as it should be.

Patricia Wallace takes the floor and says she would like to give an overview of the situation: World Skate is among the first signatories to WADA, which implements international standards that everyone must comply with. Before WADA was established, there were individual agencies that organized tests independently. After the entry into force of the 2015 code, and WADA's full accreditation, World Skate stands to face consequences if the regulations it has agreed to sign are not complied with.

NADOs are responsible for organizing anti-doping testing programs for all federations. National federations have not been able to carry out the tests, and since 2015, doping tests have been done by the international federation. Some agencies have failed to respond to these changes, and at times WSK has borne the costs. In 2022, WADA reiterated that this situation cannot continue. While understanding that costs are quite high, Pat Wallace says that unpleasant incidents such as the ones that have occurred cannot be tolerated any longer. National federations probably do not realize the responsibilities World Skate has. International standards must be met at all international events. Anti-doping agencies of national federations must communicate with World Skate; blood and urine tests must be conducted accurately even before competitions.

All test results are entered in ADAMS and sent to the athletes. There is a lot of work behind anti-doping programs and there needs to be a joint action between World Skate and national federations.

President Aracu makes a comment on the matter of doping stressing that each Continent must have its own organization and the continental presidents must enforce these rules in their continental championships. On the American continent there have been many instances where this has not happened.

According to Luis Senica, president of World Skate Europe, there are some technical committees that have little experience and countries that have difficulties in handling doping tests. Sometimes World Skate does not have the necessary information to help the organizing committees get the tests done.

There are traditional disciplines that are better organized and others that haven't followed the same path and don't have the same experience. It is evident that what they need is to enhance awareness.

Patricia Wallace takes the floor again to say that the biggest problem is with traditional sports. Europe has found a solution. In South America with the PanAmerican speed



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championships a request was submitted by the Colombian NADO to test only their athletes so it was difficult to test all other athletes.

Despite WADA regulations the NADOs are not testing athletes at international events, so only Colombian athletes are being tested in Colombia. Asia is still to respond about the Asian Games to be held in October, a response that will hopefully come soon enough so to have time to run the proper tests for this event. Everyone is called to take his/her own share of responsibilities, WADA has issued guidelines to follow; we must work together and understand each other's responsibilities in order to avoid unpleasant situations.

#### Reports and financial reports by Continental Areas, in compliance with Article 15 item 8 of World Skate Statutes:

Secretary General Roberto Marotta says that all Executive Board members are present except Pirinen. The 2022 budgets and financial reports have been sent, and efforts will be made to compare them so as to have consolidated financial statements.

Marotta reads out the situation of assets and liabilities for the 5 continents and specifies that these documents are kept at World Skate offices; requests for explanations need to be submitted to continental presidents.

Senica states that an auditing firm has validated the accounts of World Skate Europe as required by law, and that this involves costs. Further details are available upon request.

President Aracu underlines that the problems of a single continent are the problems of all the continents. Talks are under way to decide whether continents should be given access to a Swiss account through which to operate.

#### New affiliations

Marotta informs that a new federation is being created for Chile, so it is necessary to disaffiliate the old one and recognize the new one.

Provisional recognition is given to the new Federations of Greece, the Maldives, and Botswana.

#### Miscellaneous

Carmelo Paniagua suggests the following topics:

- Mandatory participation in continental games to participate in world championships.

Paniagua takes the floor and reminds all Members that this decision was suspended during the Covid, which was followed by a period of economic difficulties that made it impossible to compete in the continentals. Subsequently, situations have come about which allowed



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people to compete in world championships without first participating in the continental games etc....

National and continental sports managers must take it very seriously when they decide to participate in continental championships: Paniagua believes that this rule should be maintained to avoid risks of non-participation in continental championships. The Chairs must be involved and World Skate shall do what it can to help potential organizers.

President Aracu takes the floor to support this approach for a team sport, but also adds that there will always be exceptions.

Provisional recognition is given to the new federations in Greece, the Maldives and Botswana.

First Vice President Karen Doyle reports that Australia and New Zealand in the past participated in the Asian Rink Hockey Championships, which were later suspended for the COVID pandemic. However, it should be noted that they are amateur teams, and to them the participation in events entails high costs. For this reason they asked to be allowed not to participate precisely because of a lack of funds.

SENICA does not believe it is necessary to change the rules. First we should reflect about the future, the COVID pandemic has triggered a huge financial crisis.

- Interval of WSK events

Paniagua emphasizes that a decision over the organization of World and Continental Championships and World Skate Games is now of the essence. As to the WSG, the question is whether they should be held every two or four years. Unless events are clearly scheduled ahead of time, Paniagua says, it is very difficult to establish a work calendar. He concludes by reaffirming the need for such a decision to be made as soon as possible.

President Aracu takes the floor to follow up on this very important issue, which does pose some difficulties for there are disciplines, such as skateboarding, that cannot change their calendar, while others would need careful and individual discussions.

Regarding the World Skate Games, President Aracu informs all members that he has been in contact with Saudi Arabia for the 2026 WSG and that a study has been commissioned to assess the total revenues that a given hosting country would have.

Artistic Chair Nicola Genchi joins in the debate to point out that athletes need to compete every year. If there is no World Cup, athletes should be able to enroll in other international events.

Paniagua suggests to draw up a draft report detailing what actions could be taken to move forward and then reminds everyone that 2024 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of World Skate. Montreaux historic trophy will be held during Easter week. The way it is going to be organized is still to be defined.



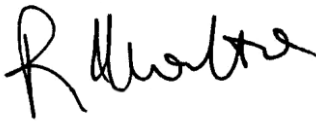
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- Intercontinental Cup.

Paniagua believes this event to be a disaster, and says that there are only two possible options: either cancelling the event altogether or entrusting it to World Skate with changed regulations.

Senica follows in Paniagua's footsteps to stress that such an event needs to be well organized, which means that World Skate will have to see to its organization.

President Aracu expresses his appreciation for the EB members' contributions and declares the Board Meeting closed at 3:30 p.m.



Roberto Marotta  
Secretary General



Sabatino Aracu  
President



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