

# Board of Administration

Minutes –  
Term  
2020–2024



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball

# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting held  
at the Baltic Beach Hotel in  
Jūrmala (LAT)

15 June 2024



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball

Place:   Baltic Beach Hotel, Jūrmala (LAT)

Date:     Saturday, 15 June 2024

Attendees	Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
Excused	Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

CEV President Aleksandar BORIČIĆ greeted everyone and officially opened the meeting, which was the last Board meeting of the mandate period.

President BORIČIĆ invited the Latvian Volleyball Federation Secretary General, Mr Arnis TUNTE, and Mr Arturs VITKOVSKIS, Latvian Federation Board member to take the floor.

The Latvian Volleyball Federation Secretary General greeted everyone. He hoped everyone was enjoying the time in Latvia.

Mr Arturs VITKOVSKIS, Latvian Federation Board member, also greeted everyone and welcomed members to Latvia. As the generation was changing within the Latvian Federation, they had a young and very active team working together with the previous leadership and learning from them, expressing their appreciation for the work they had done to date.

Mr VITKOVSKIS continued stating that the Latvian Federation would like to continue to be supported by the CEV and planned to submit further applications for events. They thanked the CEV for giving them the chance to organise the CEV U18 European Championship 2026 Women tournament, as they had started putting more focus on indoor Volleyball, along with Beach Volleyball. They also aspired to organise the CEV EuroVolley 2028 for the first time in Latvia. He went on to thank once more the CEV President for his support, recounting the challenges they had to face in order to organise the event in Latvia. Lastly, he announced that all CEV members were invited to an informal social dinner that evening.

President BORIČIĆ thanked the Latvian Federation for their hospitality, which was well received. He praised them for providing very good conditions to the athletes participating in the event, stating that they did have a long legacy in Beach Volleyball. He envisioned a good future for Latvian Volleyball because they had unified to make one Volleyball family. He highlighted that representatives from the local state authorities had attended the event in Jūrmala, whose support was always very important. He wished them good luck, good health and good results.

Apologies were noted from the following members:

René HECHT

Emma LABRADOR

Metod ROPRET

Helgi THORSTEINSSON

Members wished good health and positive energy to Helgi, who was in hospital.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the agenda.**

## 3. Approval of Minutes

**Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 09 February 2024 in Luxembourg**

**Minutes of the European Legal Commission and Legal Chamber meetings**

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 09 February 2024 in Luxembourg.**

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration acknowledged the Minutes of the European Legal Commission and Legal Chamber meetings.**

# 4. FIVB – CEV

## Paris 2024

President BORIČIĆ confirmed that the partnership between FIVB and the CEV continued to be successful and provided an update from the recent Board meeting in Lausanne.

Referring to Paris 2024 Olympic Games, the CEV President noted that the European teams for Indoor Volleyball were very strong with a lot of potential. While he strongly supported the changes in the International Calendar introduced by the FIVB, he pointed out that the CEV had suffered a loss of €3.7 million with the cancellation of the two Volleyball Continental Olympic Qualification Tournaments.

Five women's and five men's teams had qualified from Europe, for the moment, hoping to see the number rise to six for both genders. President BORIČIĆ pointed out that these numbers constituted a big progress for European Volleyball and for the CEV. Therefore, despite the financial loss, the investment to European National teams had been successful. He also argued that an Olympic qualification of a National Team always raised the interest of investment in Volleyball in the respective countries. In addition, he detailed that Europe had the longest record of participations in the Olympics and the World Championship and that the investment on European National teams had been the greatest ever.

## Joint FIVB-CEV projects as a means of compensation after calendar changes financial loss

An update of discussions with FIVB leadership on the CEV's pending financial compensation due to the calendar changes was provided by the CEV President. The compensation would not have the form of a payment, but would rather be in the context of joint projects between the CEV and the FIVB. The two institutions formed a partnership in making a mutual investment in various National Federations of category 1 and 2. They also agreed to further coordinate scheduling age-group championships in the frame of the new international calendar on operational level.

## European Representatives to the FIVB Board

In view of the FIVB Electoral Congress from 15 to 17 November 2024 in Porto (POR), President BORIČIĆ stated that all European candidatures for the FIVB Board of Administration were going to be checked by the FIVB Candidatures Secretariat, in order to ensure that everything was according to the Regulatory Framework.

## FIVB Foundation

President BORIČIĆ suggested a donation of €100,000 to support the newly created FIVB Foundation as a sign of good will between the two institutions.

CEV Board of Administration member Michel EVERAERT stated that he was in favour of the donation proposal; however he wondered if it should be taken forward more strategically, thinking about CEV's role and goals to help others less fortunate and strengthening European Volleyball at the same time.

While President BORIČIĆ agreed with the points made by Mr EVERAERT, he advised that they could not set any conditions on the donation of €100,000, especially at that starting stage.

CEV Senior Vice-President Renato ARENA agreed with President BORIČIĆ, noting that the intended message from CEV was to continue to work closely with FIVB.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the suggestion to donate €100,000 to the FIVB Foundation.**

### Meeting with the FIVB Portfolio Manager

Turning to other matters, President BORIČIĆ commented on the recent visit of the CEV Vice-President and Treasurer Eric ADLER and the CEV Managing Director Thorsten ENDRES to meet with the FIVB Portfolio Manager, inviting Mr ADLER to take the floor.

Mr ADLER advised the meeting had taken place several weeks ago in Lausanne, and had been a good meeting, with the major take away that CEV was working well. The FIVB Portfolio Manager had confirmed CEV's conservative strategy was in line with FIVB's, with 2-3% ROI expected. The way in which FIVB viewed risk was slightly different to CEV's approach, which had been confirmed as acceptable.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial partnerships

#### **Infront**

President BORIČIĆ introduced the discussion and update on the relationship between Infront and CEV, which was progressing on a partnership approach based on mutual understanding and respect. He went on to describe how the production costs had increased for Infront because of having many host cities for the CEV EuroVolley 2023. Furthermore, he referred to other issues that had raised concerns in Infront, initially resulting to a claim of financial compensation. He commended the members of the CEV Steering Committee, who had conducted the negotiations. Following the decision of the Board during the previous meeting, the President announced a bonus payment of 1,2 Mio € to be expected from Infront for cycle 2 of the partnership.

A recent operational workshop had been held on how to improve cooperation in the future and increase the overall media coverage, with involvement of national federations, leagues and clubs in respective territories. The guarantee payment would have to be revised starting from 2025, due to the postponed EuroVolley for 2026. The overall amount across the entire contractual terms remained the same, but cash flow would have to be adapted. A payment schedule had been requested by Infront to be aligned according to the new revenue streams. Details would be further discussed once a written proposal was received from Infront.

The floor was opened to CEV Board members to question or comment and Steering Committee members were invited to share their views.

CEV Board of Administration member Gernot LEITNER inquired regarding the nature of the profit which resulted in the bonus. He believed it would be useful to know market or media rights had led to income which exceeded expectations, in order to draw some useful conclusions.

Mr ENDRES explained that a report was received annually from Infront on the expectation of the media income. Currently, in the frame of the re-organisation and following the CEV Board decision of February

2024 to reduce the income from Infront by €880,000, the CEV after negotiations received from Infront a business plan for a cooperation until 2032. While it was not possible to estimate the growth of income in comparison to the initial plan per country, with this new business plan it would be possible to make a projection until 2032 and know what amounts to expect from which country and which competition and thus have a clear understanding in case the numbers go beyond expectations.

Mr ENDRES continued stating that he believed it was important to highlight how favourable the conditions of the agreement were for the CEV, as the reduction decided in February had resulted in a higher bonus contribution to the CEV. As for the future, there was a clear understanding and an intention to make some investment in order to enhance the content in social media in order to increase awareness in some markets and to further explore markets overseas.

Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI stated that it would be useful to know the trajectory of the income from Infront from the start of the agreement until present. He also asked if there could be an estimate of the value of Volleyball in the market of each country.

Mr ENDRES advised that it was difficult to know the numbers market by market, as each market was very volatile and heavily influenced by many factors, like the political situation in the country, the work of each national federation, as well as the performance of the country's national team at the moment of the negotiation. He noted that the status of Volleyball had not yet been established in the various countries, so it was not yet possible to estimate what value Volleyball had in those markets. However, the aim was to stabilise the status of the sport and certain measures towards this were taken. What was very helpful, which was also noted by the team of Infront, was hosting the CEV EuroVolley in four different countries, something which drew attention and built interest around the sport and also built a stable and reliable partnership with the broadcasters in the host countries.

CEV Senior Vice-President Renato ARENA noted that the contract with Infront commenced from 2020, while the concept of CEV EuroVolley as well as the concept CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals had only been established the previous year. So it was difficult to have a good overview of the market, since the products were so new. He spoke about the need to have a stable format of an event for a minimum of three to four years, in order to be able to create a business plan on how to market it. Regarding the question of the income trajectory from Infront since 2020, Mr ARENA shared his view that the revenue had increased by about 16–17%. Based on that trend, he believed that by 2032 the revenue would reach at least 70% compared to the initial revenue.

CEV Board of Administration member Geert De DOBBELEER wished to highlight the successful trajectory of media rights in the last 10 years and to underline the important contribution of the current CEV Board and the current CEV President to such a positive outcome.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI agreed with the positive contribution and recalled the efforts of the CEV Board to change the attitude within Infront towards Volleyball. Therefore, he wondered if this shift in the attitude had been achieved.

Mr ADLER noted that was learning taking place from both parties. Infront had taken over the CEV Champions League for the first time, so they learned a lot about that competition. While initially doubtful about their decision, but receiving a bonus already in the first cycle was a good sign. A big focus of the discussions in the Steering Committee was ensuring the coverage was sufficiently on Volleyball and CEV regularly challenged Infront in meetings on this focus. He believed that currently the focus was on Volleyball as it needed to be.

President BORIČIĆ recalled about the very different attitude towards Volleyball and its various disciplines from Infront in the past and how much this has shifted to the status of trustful partnership between the two organisations.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal for CEV Champions League Volley clubs to contribute with 50% to the TV production costs and confirmed the bonus in cycle 2.**

## Eventim

Mr ENDRES advised the Board members that following on from the discussion at the last CEV Board meeting, negotiations had been processed with Eventim. Feedback and experiences from EuroVolley 23 had been considered during negotiations, along with the strong position of Eventim as one of the leading ticketing companies in the world, appointed as ticketing partner for the Los Angeles Olympics. Some of the National Federation might have preferred to continue working with their local ticketing provider, but the benefit from having a centralised ticketing system was to be able to promote the competitions across all Europe and collect customer data from each purchased ticket and, after consent, use these data to promote future Volleyball events. In those countries where Eventim had no agency or partner the CEV would work with the hosting federation ticketing partner and oblige them to provide the same conditions as Eventim, as well as perform the data collection in the same way.

The overall ticketing level of CEV had room for improvement and an ongoing partnership would help in collecting data and promoting events across Europe. A proposal for the extension of partnership was summarised on page 3 of the working file.

Mr ARENA suggested that since the CEV EuroVolley 2026 would be held in Türkiye, there was enough time to establish an agreement between the Turkish Federation and Eventim.

Mr ENDRES advised that the issue was not only in relation to the willingness of the Turkish Federation, it was also in relation to the Turkish government; nonetheless, CEV was working with them to take learnings to 2026.

Mr Michel EVERAERT commented on the issue of data sharing. As data would be collected and used to sell tickets to other events, there needed to be a way to share the data which was no longer simple. Mr EVERAERT felt that there was a missed opportunity to promote Volleyball all over Europe, as an instrument to make this work was required. He felt this was a good first step but there was still a lot of work to do.

Mr ENDRES advised that CEV was currently bypassing the data sharing issues by sending the communication to promote events themselves. Regarding the issue of the promotion of the CEV Champions League Super Finals, the most important part was to appoint the host country well in advance, so as to leave enough time to promote and allow the fans to buy tickets and plan their trip in advance.

Mr EVERAERT replied that while those data could be useful and important for CEV, the local organisers, the national federations, also needed those data in order to promote the next Volleyball event that would take place in their country.

CEV Board of Administration member Lubomir GANEV commented that the Bulgarian Federation, as one of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 organisers, had worked with Eventim and had received a daily report on how many tickets had been sold, and from which country, which was very useful. This had been received from the first day of sales, including email addresses.

CEV President also added that during the CEV EuroVolley 2023 he had been receiving daily reports from Eventim having an overview of the ticket sales in all organiser countries, something which gave the opportunity to advise the hosting countries to increase their promotion of the event.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal for the extension of the partnership with Eventim for the next four years.**



## OTT Platform

Before inviting Mr ENDRES to provide an update, President BORIČIĆ shared that personally, he was not satisfied with the current website due to the difficulty in finding the information needed. In his view, a very simple website was required, providing the essential information that the fans were looking for.

Mr ENDRES reported that the change to the EuroVolley.TV platform, approved at the last Board of Administration meeting, would be released on 01 July in cooperation with the Infront Lab in Israel, and was progressing according to plan. Board members had received emails to change passwords as Board members and subscribers to EuroVolley.TV. It was noted that since the inception of the platform in 2018, 140k lifetime users had been gained, with 62k contactable users who had given consent and currently the platform had over 6k active subscribers, bringing in a decent amount of income.

Mr LEITNER agreed that a reform on the website had been required for a long period of time. He found EuroVolley.TV easy and simple to use; however, he felt there needed to be a quick button on the landing page when an event was happening. He also mentioned that he had been receiving feedback from people in the Volleyball community, regarding the website, which did not seem to have a clear target audience.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI agreed with the points mentioned by Mr LEITNER, sharing how difficult it is to retrieve important information from the website.

Mr EVERAERT shared that a common challenge for sports institutions was that they wished to promote the sport to the fans but at the same time share information pertinent to the institution. The way they dealt with this challenge in his home federation in The Netherlands was to split those two aspects into two separate websites ([www.volleyball.nl](http://www.volleyball.nl) for the fans and [www.nevobo.nl](http://www.nevobo.nl) for the institutional information).

President BORIČIĆ agreed that what was important at the moment was to be able to provide information to users of the site in a fast and simple way. It was important to promote any Volleyball activities and therefore promote the sport worldwide.

## 6. XLV CEV Congress 2024

President BORIČIĆ advised that approval of the draft agenda for the XLV CEV Congress was required by the CEV Board, according to the CEV Regulatory Framework. The draft agenda included the mandatory points and reflected the electoral procedures as proposed by the CEV European Legal Commission (ELC) and approved by the Board of Administration at the February 2024 meeting and had been sent to all the National Federations.

Following the CEV Board decision of 09 February 2024, the CEV Office, in close cooperation with the ELC conducted the candidature process. The CEV Board was required to approve the candidature lists as well.

Mr BORIČIĆ further informed the CEV Board that the FIVB legal team had consulted the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and together with the ELC and the CEV Legal Chamber (LC) they all once more reviewed the Regulatory Framework regarding the participation of the Russian and Belarusian Federations during the XLV CEV Congress and their right to speak and vote during the CEV General Assembly. They all clearly confirmed that both federations were entitled to participate, speak and vote.

CEV Vice-President Margaret Ann FLEMING understood and accepted the legal position relating to the Russian and Belarusian Federations; however, she noted that for voting purposes, a federation needed to be active and competing in CEV competitions and noted that the Russian Federation had not been competing.

President BORIČIĆ replied that the CEV, following the decision communicated by the IOC and the FIVB, decided to suspend Russian teams, it was not that the Russian teams had stopped organising activities, it was taken out of their control. For that reason, the Russian and Belarusian Federations were still able to vote.

Mr ENDRES added that in anticipation of relevant questions the ELC and the LC had also held discussions and had confirmed a precedent had been set during Covid-19 times, based on which federations who had not been allowed to compete due to decisions of their local authorities were permitted to speak and vote during the CEV General Assembly. Based on this legal foundation, the Russian and Belarusian Federations will be permitted to speak and vote, since it was not their decision to cease competitions. They had been blocked from competing in the same way that other federations had during Covid-19 and therefore the same principle needed to be applied.

In relation to the elections, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI asked whether the ELC had discussed the electoral procedure, given it was the first time there were multiple candidates for the position of CEV President. President BORIČIĆ advised that whether there were two candidates or 10 candidates, the same procedure would be applied.

Mr ENDRES added that the basic principle followed by the ELC was to not proceed in changes of the electoral process. That principle was valid for voting rights, managing debts of National Federations, presentation of candidates. The current CEV Regulatory Framework did not include provisions for candidate presentations during the electoral CEV General Assembly. He further explained that the procedure applied in the past was that the candidates would discuss among them and if there was no mutual agreement on the process, then there would be no presentation during the General Assembly.

Mr EVERAERT noted that, following the Congress in Brussels, it had been suggested not to propose any changes. President BORIČIĆ confirmed that no changes to the process had been made.

Mr ADLER queried why some of the candidates on the list were highlighted in red, asking if there were questions from the Legal Committee.

Mr ENDRES advised that the candidates highlighted in red were those who were not eligible, as identified by the Legal Commission checks. ELC and LC had checked all candidates for European mandates and with the exception of the candidate from the Azerbaijani Federation for the ELC and the candidate from the Finnish Federation for the European Refereeing Commission (ERC), all candidates were proposed to be confirmed by the Board.

In respect of the Athletes commission, in the absence of a sufficient number of candidates, the ELC and LC had proposed that the newly elected Board should re-open the process after the Congress. The candidates for the FIVB Board had been checked by the FIVB. The candidate from the Turkish Federation to the FIVB Board had been rejected due to age and the candidate from the Croatian Federation for the gender balance position in the FIVB Board was depending on the CEV President's election. Since there can be only one member per country in the FIVB Board, if the presidential candidate from the Croatian Federation would be elected as CEV President, then the candidate from the Croatian Federation for the gender balance position would be out.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the XLV CEV Congress 2024 draft agenda and lists of candidates to the European bodies for the mandate period 2024-2028, based on the ELC and CL recommendations.**

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration agreed on the publication of all candidature lists in accordance with the CEV Regulatory Framework and following the FIVB integrity check beginning of July 2024.**

## 7. Competition Matters

Before moving on to 2025 competition matters, President BORIČIĆ referred to the CEV Champions League Volley (CL) Super Finals 2024 organised in Antalya (TUR) which many spectators had attended. The hospitality, accommodation and provision had all been excellent and President BORIČIĆ thanked the Turkish Federation and its President for their excellent organisation.

### **Champions League Volley Finals 2025**

President BORIČIĆ advised that the format of the CL Super Finals no longer worked in the frame of the new calendar, as there were different end dates for women and men clubs season; women 04 May 2025, and men 18 May 2025. The request for exceptional approval for one transition year had been denied by the FIVB. The Cup Commission had discussed potential alternatives and scenarios and meetings had also been held with CEV's commercial partners to consider the potential impact and their feedback. Based on all the input and discussions, it was proposed to re-introduce a Final Four event, separate for women and men, with no host team, two semi-final matches and a final match only. It was expected that this would give rise to significant fan potential with four teams and would be more attractive for fans to travel, as they could watch two days of Volleyball. The option had a higher potential to become a European Volleyball event as fans would likely plan their trip earlier in advance without waiting to see who the home team was or which team had qualified. Two days in the calendar would be saved for national leagues, with no home and away matches for the CL semi-finals in the middle of their play-offs. Similarly to the 2019 CL Super Finals in Berlin, the CEV would select the host city and remain the organiser and owner of all rights.

He further informed that there were ongoing discussions with FIVB and Volleyball World on a potential cooperation. The aim was to join forces for one Final Four event in 2025 and to organise it outside of Europe, something which would add value to the event, giving CEV the opportunity to commercially explore attractive markets outside of Europe and increase its income. This cooperation could also serve as one of the FIVB compensation projects, through which CEV could eventually regenerate the income it had lost due to the calendar changes. The proposal from Volleyball World had only arrived at CEV the previous day and it was under review. President BORIČIĆ noted that it was too early to form an opinion, but he commented that Volleyball World wished to be the owner of all media rights, but that would not be compatible with the current agreement with Infront.

Lastly, he pointed out that it was important to inform the National Federations and Leagues about the dates of the Final Four as soon as possible, so as to allow sufficient time for their preparation and internal organisation.

President BORIČIĆ invited Renato ARENA to speak to the item. Mr ARENA advised that the target was to increase the value of CEV's event, along with potential revenue, and it was anticipated that the discussions and planning would take place early. CEV was now in open discussions with two countries in respect of hosting potential: Finland and Germany. The first important point was that no host team would qualify, the qualification would be done on the court, and that would increase the sportive value of the event. The second step was to make the organisation in-house in CEV, in cooperation with the hosting National Federation and conducting discussions with the local authorities. The important note was that the rights would belong to CEV.

Mr ADLER referred to the men's Final Four, for which he liked the idea of Berlin for the venue city as it was more central than the other option. In terms of doing outside of Europe with the women's final, he was concerned with the risk to loss of control of brand. To build awareness of the brand he felt it should be trialled for the first year.

Mr ARENA advised that the rights of the Final Four belonged to CEV; however, he agreed that there was a need to test the market, which was limited in Europe and would be a way to increase the awareness of the CEV brand as no other Confederation had a similar product.



As CEV Treasurer, Mr ADLER commented that it was important to determine the level of compensation to evaluate the decision to go outside of Europe.

President BORIČIĆ reiterated that the product was 100% CEV's and the full costs needed to be considered in any decision. All conditions and proposals needed to be checked before CEV accepted going outside of Europe and if not, a host in Europe for the final 4 would be sought.

Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI stated that, unfortunately FIVB and Volleyball World had not calculated the value of each team and the cost to prepare the team was not being calculated.

President BORIČIĆ advised that negotiations would begin at a minimum €5 million for CEV to cover all costs of four teams. The market was open and opportunities would continue to be progressed.

He also informed about the on-going discussion with the Lanxess Arena in Cologne for a Final Four event in 2026, with the prospect of continuing for a few years in the same venue.

Coming from a strategic business context where projections for 20-30 years in the future were being made, Gernot LEITNER felt that the Champions League was CEV's most important event and the quality of the product had been increased significantly from working with Infront. In his view, the main challenge for the Champions League was that, in the absence of Russia, it was only Italy, Poland and Türkiye that were driving the Final Four, which was due to the very small number of traditional Volleyball clubs that had existed for decades and was the reason CEV was struggling with awareness of the product outside of Volleyball. In addition, the fact that in the last couple of years the venues for the CL Super Finals had only been decided close to the time of the event had not been helpful in driving the attendance of spectators. Mr LEITNER suggested that a strategic analysis of the positives and negatives was required before going outside of Europe could be considered. He would be very much in favour of the idea of CEV being the host of the event in a European country for a few years, building a successful event that could be sold later to a high bidder in China or somewhere else. CEV was the deciding body of European Volleyball and it was crucial to have a thorough analysis, with the input of Infront, with the CEV Board's experience, with the input of the top clubs participating in the finals in the last couple of years and are usually dominating the semi-finals and final matches. In his opinion, before automatically returning to the concept of the Final Four, they should make a strategic decision around that. Volleyball was becoming strong enough. Therefore, he saw great potential in building a traditional location, which would be accessible, based on CEV's organising abilities, along with CEV's partner Infront, with fan engagement. Concluding, he reiterated that it was important to have a good analysis before making any decisions.

Mr EVERAERT shared Mr LEITNER's view, outlining that strategic choices were required about which countries to go to, and with planning well in advance and connecting to other aspects to make the event bigger in certain places. He suggested considering hiring a company that specialised in looking at the right format for the events, taking on board information about demographics and the reasons for travel to countries. Mr EVERAERT believed that starting from a good baseline could make it the best event ever.

Mr ARENA thanked colleagues for the important discussion, agreeing that it was something to give thought to in the future, stating that CEV were the owners of the competition but according to the feedback he had gotten the national federations and the top national leagues appeared to have no support on international level. The national federation had no interest in an international club competition and focused only on national level. He reminded that a few years ago the value of the competition was very low. Thanks to the investment of CEV currently the product of CL was much more valuable. Lastly, he wished to thank the CEV Office for the great job they had done in preparing and delivering this event. Even though it was a small team, they had managed something great.

Mr ADLER reflected on the discussions, highlighting that there were two issues at play. The first was the short-term issue, the solution for the Champions League final in 2025, for which the process had already commenced by the CEV Office and a decision needed to be taken soon. The second was the longer-term issue, in that, a good product existed but national clubs did not appear to have much interest in. Mr ADLER shared that he saw this as an opportunity to investigate what the reason for the lack of interest was, given that this product worked with other sports. The analysis would help CEV to decide how to take it forward and some outside help to progress would be welcomed.

Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI shared his view that the main issue for clubs was money and therefore the key task for CEV was to increase the budget to improve product and make it profitable for clubs.

President BORIČIĆ reflected that the situation could be considered theoretically and practically. CEV was always striving to improve and would do what was possible. President BORIČIĆ agreed that external assistance should be sought to inform CEV further on the situation and to give a broader picture; however, there were many factors outside CEV's control, in respect of the individual federations and how they were organised. He spoke about the specific realities and challenges of Volleyball, which should not be compared to other sports, since among the federations many of them operated on voluntary basis and not on a professional one.

Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI reflected on the evolution of the sport in the recent years, which had been huge but was still not good enough. Therefore, despite this meeting being his last at the CEV Board, he wished to share his views and firmly believed that there needed to be a continuous effort in the improvement of the sport, finding what was missing and providing it. Volleyball needed a different approach.

Geert De Dobbeleer put forward a further proposal for investigation, to create a club European ranking where every match counted, and depending on the result, clubs would receive or lose points.

Michel EVERAERT commented that the best clubs in the world were not clubs, they were companies. A different mindset was needed to professionalise clubs and make them limited companies in most countries.

President BORIČIĆ thanked Board members for the full discussion and debate, suggesting that ideas could be sent as a proposal to CEV.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the re-introduction of the Final Four format for the final phase of the CEV Champions League Volley season 2024-2025.**

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved to further continue the discussion with FIVB and Volleyball World on a potential cooperation for one gender event of the CL Final Four in 2025 to be hosted outside of Europe.**

## Euro Volley 2026

Renato ARENA informed that all co-hosts had been confirmed for EuroVolley 2026 and discussions had commenced in respect of EuroVolley 2028. Thanks were given to all eight national federations:

- Women: TUR, CZE, AZE, SWE
- Men: ITA, BUL, ROU, FIN

The CEV Office was currently drafting the organiser agreements.

### **CEV Tentative Volleyball Calendar 2025 to 2028 (appendices pages 12-15)**

President BORIČIĆ advised that the calendar between 2025 and 2028 had been discussed with FIVB and was close to finalising. Following the decision of the new FIVB Calendar, the CEV adopted its competition accordingly. The outcome from the European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC) working group and exchange between the CEV and FIVB Volleyball departments was noted.

President BORIČIĆ advised that the tentative calendar was to be confirmed by the CEV Board in order to allow all stakeholders to plan accordingly.

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Tentative Volleyball Calendar 2025 to 2028.**

### **Beach Volley Nations Cup (appendices pages 16 to 17)**

Mr ENDRES outlined the European Beach Volleyball Commission (EBVC) proposal for 2025 and 2026 contained within the working file. With the Beach Volley Nations Cups the Olympic term was now being finalised. It was not yet known what the Olympic pathway was for Los Angeles 2028. The proposal to continue in the same format, with a Preliminary phase and a Final round on annual level and to revise the costs and the prize money, in order to bring it in line with the various other CEV Beach Volleyball products. Mr ENDRES highlighted the key points of the proposal:

- One continental spot to World Championship.
- Restructuring prize money 50,000€ per gender (50% of EuroBeachVolley).
- License fee: €50,000 (50% from EuroBeachVolley): a total of €150,000 fee.
- Allocation of appropriate World Ranking points to be discussed with FIVB.
- Final: with 8 teams and host plays preliminary phase or with 12 teams and host plus top 4 NFs directly qualified.

No questions were raised and Board of Administration members agreed with the proposal.

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration approved the EBVC proposal regarding the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup for 2025 and 2026.**

## **8. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework**

### **Commission Proposals (appendices page 18)**

CEV Managing Director, Thorsten ENDRES, introduced the proposals included within the working file and summarised them for the CEV Board members.

He noted the two proposals from the ERC; to extend the mandatory use of the Challenge System to early rounds of CL, League Round in European Silver and Golden League and EuroVolley qualifiers; and to appoint a Challenge Referee whenever a Challenge System was used. He advised that while the extension of the use of the Challenge System was desirable, it was unrealistic considering the cost implication, in particular for the smaller federations. It was determined that the future Volleyball Commission should study the ERC request and come back to the Board with a unified and mutual proposal.

In terms of the second request, it was noted that this was already in place and a Challenge Referee was appointed whenever a Challenge System was used. The proposal would formalise the process.

President BORIČIĆ thanked Mr ENDRES for the update.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed to further evaluate the ERC request and involve all relevant stakeholders and eventually producing a unified and mutual proposal to consider.**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint a Challenge referee whenever a Challenge system was used, as was already in place.**

### CEV Volleyball/Beach Volleyball/Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations

Mr ENDRES proposed the updates to the wording of the CEV Volleyball/Beach Volleyball/Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations, as outlined in the document circulated to Board of Administration members in order to reflect some changes with the software in the partnership with Genius Sports.

### Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the proposed changes in the wording of the CEV Volleyball Competitions Regulations, the CEV Beach Volleyball Competitions Regulations and the CEV Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations as outlined in the document circulated.**

## 9. Financial matters

Mr ADLER reported to CEV Board of Administration members that the Annual Accounts for CEV for 2023 were presented for approval, along with the Updated Budget 2024 and Proposed Budget 2025. Mr ADLER wished to highlight the following key points:

### 2023 Accounts

There was a result of roughly -€1.8 million, slightly more than the budget approved by the General Assembly. By considering the two EuroVolley years together, both 2022 and 2023, there was a plus of €760,000. A record budget of €22 million and more than €14.5 million invested in sports events, which was about 65% of the budget. There was over €8 million in prize money, €2.6 million of support towards National Federations and clubs, which constituted 49% of investment. Almost 50% of expenditure went to the clubs and the federations.

Looking at expenditure, there was €22.3 million, which was half a million more than what had been budgeted. The reasons for this were demonstrated in the working file distributed to the Board members. For the prize money of CEV Cup and Challenge Cup, there was an amount of about €820,000, a correction that the auditors had asked to make, which constituted a new method of budgeting.

On the income side there was €400,000 more than budgeted. Some of it came from international transfer fees. There were less organiser fees, due to the calendar change of EuroVolley. There was also more income on interest from the investments.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the 2023 Annual Accounts to be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final decision.**

### Updated Budget 2024

Since 2024 was a non EuroVolley year, the budget was about €18 million, considering already the missing €3.2 million income from Continental Olympic Qualification. A result of about minus €1,5-1.6 million was

expected, which was better than the approved budget brought to the CEV General Assembly in 2023. Eventually the donation of €100,000 to the FIVB Foundation would be added. There was a 53% of investment into the sport.

Looking into expenditures, there was €880,000 less than budgeted, whereas on the income side, there was €250,000 less than budgeted. While saving some money since there was no EuroVolley, some income had been lost. There was also the hosting of the CL Super Finals in Antalya (TUR), which had not been budgeted originally, since the budgeting followed a more conservative approach. The additional bonus from Infront had been brought in, which had helped on the income side. Some €100,000 was expected from various investments.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Updated Budget 2024 to be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final decision.**

## Proposed Budget 2025

The proposed budget for 2025 was comparable to the budget of 2022, as this was the last year there was a preparation for EuroVolley. A result of close to half a million euros was expected on the plus side. About 51% of all expenditures would go to national federations and clubs.

The expenditure was roughly based on 2024, while some costs for the President's Office were not budgeted anymore. An expenditure of €600,000 had been budgeted for TV production of CL, expecting that the clubs would contribute more. There were savings of about €50,000 in competition technology, thanks to the Genius Sports partnership. There was an increase of €317,000 for Beach Volleyball due to the increased prize money.

Looking on the income side, within the conservative approach in prognosis, there would be about €450,000 less compared to the numbers in 2022. Infront was requesting to adjust the cash flow, their payments, since there would be no EuroVolley in 2025. Therefore, there would probably be some adjustments on the income from their side due to the move of EuroVolley to 2026. There was an expectation of €250,000 in OTT subscriptions and a €3.8 million of EuroVolley hosting fees.

In brief, the financial position could be summarised in the following points:

- Despite imposed changes of FIVB in the calendar and the ongoing crisis, the CEV was in a strong financial position, with a positive overall result for 2022 and 2023 combined of €760,325.
- The anticipated result for 2024 was minus €1,567,097, which was €525,000 better than approved by GA 2023.
- A positive result for 2025 was expected of €476,987.
- It appeared that the established income structure was providing a robust and sustainable framework.
- The discussion was ongoing with FIVB on potential compensation.
- A discussion was due to be held with Infront on the re-scheduling of the guarantee payment due to the postponement of EuroVolley events.
- Investments in future and support to National Federations and clubs remained at a high level, with more than 50% of the budget going to federations, clubs and players.
- A total of almost €42 million was paid to CEV stakeholders across 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Proposed Budget for 2025 to be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final decision.**



President BORIČIĆ thanked Mr ADLER for the information and advised the Board of a proposal of change of CEV's external auditors. An increase in the fees had been applied by Grant Thornton and there had been many changes to the personnel involved over the years. Mr EVERAERT added that it was also good practice to change auditors every few years.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to end cooperation with the Grant Thornton as external auditor and to search for a new company starting with the 2024 accounts.**

## 10. Proposals from Board members

### No comments of proposals were received.

CEV Treasurer and Vice-President, Mr ADLER, suggested CEV considered hosting an online presentation or candidate debate outside of the Congress. Mr ADLER expressed his gratitude to the President BORIČIĆ and the CEV Board of Administration for the four years he had been Treasurer which had been an honour, and thanked everyone for their support. From a financial perspective, the Board could be proud of the current position.

President BORIČIĆ stated that everyone was free to handle their presentation as candidates in a democratic way, but cautioned that everyone should primarily respect the institution and avoid using false information and manipulation for the sake of politics.

## 11. Any other business

### Volleyball Referee Uniform

The CEV President referred to the decision during the last Board meeting to provide all 300 international Volleyball referees with a CEV uniform. He proposed to collaborate with Mizuno at an overall cost of €54,000 plus shipment. Material would be delivered to the national federations prior to the upcoming European Cup season.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to cooperate with company Mizuno for the provision of a CEV uniform to all CEV International Volleyball Referees.**

## 12. Next meeting

End of mandate, the next meeting to be determined by the new composition of the CEV Board.

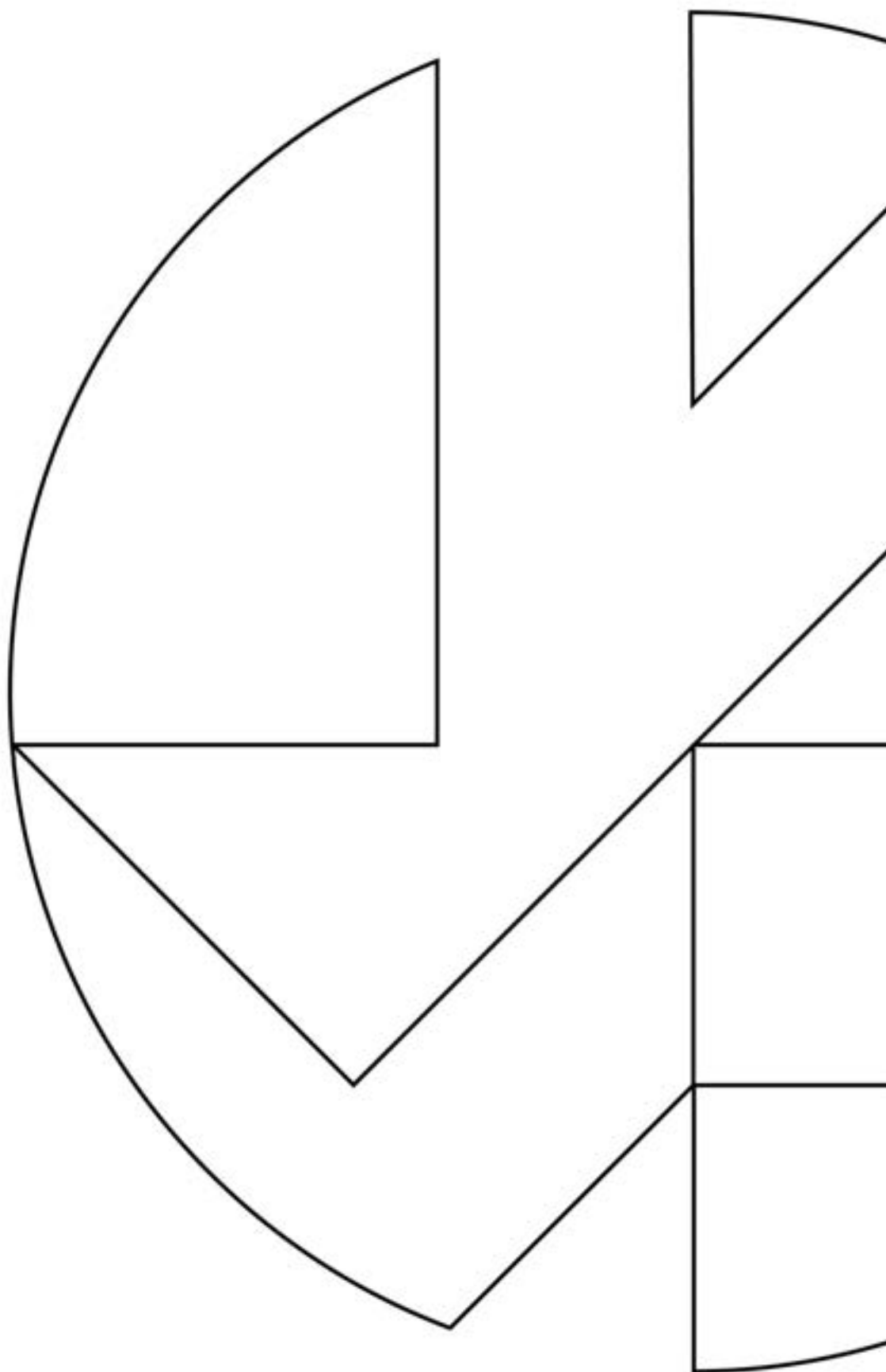
## 13. Closing of the meeting

Closing the last regular meeting of his mandate, the CEV President thanked all colleagues for the collaboration, support and discussion during his two terms as President, wishing everyone good health and happiness for the future. The CEV President also gave best regards and wished good luck to all European teams going to the Olympic games.



Board of Administration Meeting held at the Baltic Beach Hotel in Jūrmala (LAT)  
15 June 2024

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting held  
at the CEV Office in  
Luxembourg (LUX)

09 February 2024



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



Place: CEV Office, Luxembourg (LUX)

Date: Friday, 09 February 2024

Attendees	Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
ELC	Alain FISCHBACHER	CEV European Legal Commission President
Genius Sports	Matthew COWLING	Vice President, Genius Sports



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

CEV President Aleksandar BORIČIĆ greeted everyone and officially opened the meeting. He hoped Board of Administration members would be pleased that the meeting was taking place in the CEV Office headquarters in Luxembourg.

President BORIČIĆ advised that Mr Alain FISCHBACHER, CEV European Legal Commission President, would attend the meeting, to explain the procedures for the elections. Additionally, Mr Matthew COWLING, Executive Vice-President of Genius Sports would attend for the relevant item, to explain the proposal for future co-operation between the two organisations.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the agenda.**

## 3. Approval of Minutes

### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 16 September 2023 in Rome, Italy

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 16 September 2023 in Rome, Italy.**

### Minutes of the CEV Commissions meetings

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration acknowledged the minutes of the CEV Commissions meetings.**

## 4. FIVB – CEV

President BORIČIĆ confirmed that the partnership between the FIVB and the CEV continued to be successful. A working group for the new international calendar strategy 2025-2028 had been established and President BORIČIĆ was a member. A proposal to the working group had been made and agreed, to hold an in-person discussion, rather than via videoconference along with six top performing federations in the world and their National League representatives. The countries representing Europe were Poland, Italy, Türkiye. Brazil, China and Japan were from the rest of the world. The meeting had been successful and the only remark was to move the National Championships one week earlier, which had been accepted. There had been some overlapping of the Men and Women Competitions, but that had also been resolved.

That meant that the FIVB had confirmed the international calendar until 2028 and there would be no more changes. President BORIČIĆ indicated that the discussion focused around the senior level competitions. As for the age group competitions, he noted that it was important to avoid having some players participate in too many competitions in one year. It would be preferable that federations would make an effort to bring more players to more competitions and making Volleyball stronger. Overall, he

was very pleased about the support received regarding the Volleyball activities on European soil. Furthermore, after his insistence, the FIVB website included information on continental events. With time, he realised that the continents gained a better understanding of each other's activities and systems.

President BORIČIĆ reported that a future project with the FIVB had also been discussed, which the CEV Vice-President and Treasurer Eric ADLER would inform the meeting of at the relevant point in the agenda.

President BORIČIĆ reminded that he had asked FIVB Board of Administration members and FIVB Commission members that were not part of the CEV Board or CEV Commissions to share any information that they might have on discussions or proposals that would have an impact to the CEV. To date, no feedback had been received. He urged again all members to share anything that they might deem important for the CEV.

Lastly, President BORIČIĆ remarked that there had never been such a close relationship between CEV and FIVB as now. He thanked all the CEV Board members for their contribution to the growth of the CEV and for the great results.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial partnerships

#### **Infront**

President BORIČIĆ introduced the discussion and update, thanking members of the Steering Committee for their input and handing over to CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, Mr Eric ADLER.

Mr ADLER provided a short update on the relationship between Infront and the CEV, advising that the working relationship and day to day business continued to work well, with no issues in that respect. The matter for discussion was in relation to outstanding financial issues, as had been discussed with Board of Administration Members previously. The first issue was the Olympic qualification which was no longer in place but was part of the contract, along with disagreement around production costs and whether they were fair and included in the contract, and finally, the recent calendar changes. Compensation had been sought by Infront, which through ongoing negotiation had reduced to €1m. Several meetings had been held with CEV Managing Director Thorsten ENDRES and CEV Head of Digital Aurèle WEYENETH and Infront representatives, including recently in Cologne, where time had been taken to discuss each issue in detail and with agreement reached on all points except for the production costs relating to an increased number of cities. Subsequently, a final offer had been sent to Infront in writing and a response was awaited. The final cost to the CEV was expected to be in the region of €900,000 to €1,000,000. In addition, it has been agreed with Infront to extend the agreement by three months until 30 September 2032 in order to include the EuroVolley 32 events according to the new schedule and to ensure the initial agreed number of EuroVolley events during the contractual term.

A clarification question was asked in respect of the expected timing of the payment, with Mr ADLER advising that the payment would be made in 2024, as a non-recurring one-off payment.

In response to a further question, Mr ADLER advised that it had been initially felt by the CEV that some unnecessary costs had been included in the claim.

CEV Vice-President Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI asked Mr ADLER to summarise the general outlook for the CEV's income now that the agreement with Infront had been changed. Mr ADLER confirmed that the current value of the contract to CEV was €8m per year.

CEV Senior Vice-President Renato ARENA clarified that this situation started as soon as the FIVB calendar changes were introduced. Due to those changes the Olympic Qualification tournament was eliminated and the Continental Championship was moved to even years. Based on this move, within the contractual period there would be one less European Championship and Infront asked to be compensated for that loss. He went on to describe that many changes had occurred since the first contract with Infront was signed many years ago and the relationship had been generally positive during that time, with costs shared when changes occurred. The change in the format of EuroVolley, including more host cities per organiser country also had an impact on the production cost and stirred discussions on compensation. Having a lot of experience with the partnership with Infront, Mr ARENA remarked that there had always been such negotiations when changes occurred, but they would always manage to reach a solution.

CEV Managing Director Thorsten ENDRES added that the financial stability provided to CEV from Infront was important to note. It was remarked every year by the CEV Auditors during the CEV General Assembly and provided a good foundation to develop the sport and invest in products. The production level had significantly increased, along with CEV's visibility all over the world, with the number of markets and countries covered much more than for other sports.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI agreed with the great value of the production level offered by Infront and requested further detail, along with an analysis of the markets, specifying that their work should aim at the markets where Volleyball was not as strong and not only at the markets, like Poland and Italy, where Volleyball was already popular. He recounted how in the past the main concern was that Infront did not give Volleyball the right value and inquired if that had changed over the years.

In response, President BORIČIĆ indicated that both parties wished to increase their income. And while there were heated negotiations between the two sides, the last word was coming from Infront CEO Mr Philippe BLATTER, with whom the CEV President had a good understanding and they always managed to reach mutually accepted solutions. Furthermore, he stated that it must be recognised that the changes that happened in the calendar and the additional host cities in EuroVolley would have an impact in the partnership. He pointed out how important this partnership was, which was signed just a few days before the pandemic, at a very critical moment for sports in general. Thanks to that partnership the CEV managed to provide a major support to federations and clubs during that time and secure the institution's survival. He affirmed how good the partnership and the cooperation had been all those years and recognised that when it came to money there would always be some confrontation from both parties. He firmly believed that the value of the sport had greatly increased through that partnership, suggesting that a list of non-European countries where Volleyball was visible could be presented to the next meeting.

CEV Board of Administration member Gernot LEITNER inquired on the approach to monetising growth of visibility, more precisely on sponsorship activities, to which Mr ENDRES advised that further to a CEV Board decision there had been efforts to appoint a centralised marketing agency to market the CEV products exclusively, collect the money and then share with the co-organisers and the national federations. Unfortunately, that venture had not been successful to date, due to the value of products; the agencies offer €500,000 for EuroVolley title sponsor, which was by far not enough, in order to share among the co-organisers and make a serious contribution. However, several agencies were being worked with from several countries to develop partnerships on a non-exclusive basis. Several negotiations were ongoing, but admittedly it was not easy to reach an agreement. He emphasised the importance to satisfy the need to deliver on numbers for sponsors.

Furthermore, Mr ENDRES added that the CEV as the European governing body could only be as strong as Volleyball is in the respective countries that were its members. Therefore, the CEV needed to collaborate with the national federations, the leagues the clubs, etc. They all required to contribute on creating value in their country. Based on that, the CEV would be able to use the synergies and achieve something better on European level.

President BORIČIĆ stated that sponsorships focused mainly on national and not as much on European level. He believed that going forward meant to invest in digital. He added that despite the great work done in this end by Volleyball World, the big international companies did not show any interest.

CEV Vice-President Michel EVERAERT commented that the issues experienced with Infront were expected in longstanding business relationships and it was accepted that circumstances would change over significant periods of time. Mr EVERAERT was confident that the finances would be balanced out and the details were not of much importance.

Mr ADLER reiterated that there were no issues in terms of the working relationship between Infront and CEV daily. Additionally, he recalled a profit-sharing arrangement with CEV after the first cycle, whereby the CEV benefitted financially in addition to the contract value. Mr ADLER agreed with Mr EVERAERT that the financial issues would be balanced out over the life of the contract.

## Decision

**Following the discussion, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the anticipated reduction in 2024 to be summarised in a site letter to the agreement with Infront.**

## AMI

Mr ENDRES advised that AMI was the London based agency CEV had contracted betting data and sponsorship rights to. Discussions had taken place with AMI in relation to the changing legislation and regulations relating to betting sponsorship. Mr ENDRES confirmed that \$2m was currently received from AMI on an annual basis, with \$500k for betting sponsorship rights. It had been concluded that 2024 would be a transition year, with AMI providing \$250k for betting sponsorship rights, which would come in house to CEV in 2025, providing an opportunity for CEV to explore over the coming years and market those rights together with the national federations and the clubs. He indicated that for many stakeholders, when discussing about an event the main issue that came up first was the betting sponsorship rights. Therefore, getting back those rights was a promising possibility. It was noted that AMI had sub-licensed betting data rights to IMG Arena, who had now emerged from OpenBet resulting in a dynamic market with challenges on a day-to-day basis. CEV had established a good working relationship with IMG Arena. However, due to the overall market situation, IMG Arena is constantly challenging the number and quality of the delivered match data.

President BORIČIĆ was pleased to note the opportunity for CEV to work with other partners in the area of betting data and sponsorship rights.

## Decision

**In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the amendment in the AMI agreement, regarding the return of betting sponsorship rights to the CEV as of 2025, with a transition year in 2024. AMI was appointed as non-exclusive sponsorship agency.**

## Genius Sport

President BORIČIĆ informed Board of Administration members that a representative from Genius Sports would join the meeting next to discuss a proposal for partnership with CEV. Genius Sports had been CEV's software provider for some time and discussions had reached the point where a partnership was proposed, with the opportunity for CEV to bring in income in return for the use of data and expertise. The general proposal offered a cost saving of €1.7m, and a total €2.85m benefit.

Mr ENDRES felt that it was important to underline that the software Genius Sports was providing was cutting-edge technology, not tailor made for Volleyball as in the past, but used for NFL Basketball and Football Premier League. Thus, they have transferred the general software and adjusted it to Volleyball. This way the CEV could benefit from the significant investment in the software that had already been made. Mr ENDRES went on to explain that since Genius Sports were so strong in the US market, in College League, where Volleyball, and especially women's Volleyball is huge, they needed to have a foot in the European Volleyball market. Therefore, they were interested in turning the service provider agreement into a partnership, and use the CEV for developing software for conducting Volleyball. That would be



beneficial both for the CEV and Genius Sports, as they would be able to approach leagues and federations to sell them that software.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI shared his view that the direction of the proposal was good in that it would be CEV's own system as much as possible; however, he felt that it was important to check the financial savings, because he was convinced that the CEV possessed the necessary funds in order to develop a software of its own without any partners and cautioned against giving external companies the tools to make money from CEV's data.

President BORIČIĆ commented that the provider was already working with Basketball and Handball networks who were stronger than Volleyball. Even those strong sports were using a partner and did not resort to developing a system of their own. While that proposal could be a long term goal, currently the opportunity would enable CEV to progress without having to invest the capacity to develop its own system.

CEV Board of Administration member Lubomir GANEV inquired whether the agreement would cover only the video challenge system or whether it would also include the software for the electronic protocol and commented that all federations were already using the existing software and feared that if the CEV was going to change its software it would be very confusing for the federations to align with it. Therefore, he believed that it was better to continue to work with Genius if CEV needed to develop more software, but advised that the federations would need time to adjust.

President BORIČIĆ clarified that the discussion concerned an improvement of the quality of the software and not a change. Mr ENDRES also clarified that the current agreement with Genius Sports covered all types of software (competition management system, e-scoresheet, refereeing tool, appointment tool, accreditation tool). He highlighted that in the future the approved challenge system would not change. If the national federations wished to use that system in the future, they were more than welcome to do so and the same applied for the video challenge system that was currently in the market.

President BORIČIĆ introduced Matthew COWLING, Executive Vice-President of Genius Sports, in relation to the commercial partnerships item on the agenda.

Mr COWLING thanked President BORIČIĆ for the welcome and introduced himself, sharing with CEV Board of Administration members that his background was in sport technology and explaining that Genius Sports was currently a service provider to CEV. With over 400 partnerships with sports leagues and federations globally, Mr COWLING shared that Genius Sports considered CEV to be a top-tier organisation. Genius Sports had built a successful model with basketball, was starting to get that way with football and was aspirational about establishing a partnership with CEV similar to the one they had with FIBA.

They had three main goals. Firstly, they wished to showcase their technology through CEV. They aspired at innovating with new products. Lastly, their aim was to help CEV engage more with fans. Mr COWLING emphasised that the deal was not based on data rights, which would be progressed as a separate opportunity should it become available.

Mr COWLING went on to explain that Genius had launched a new camera-based technology system in the last 12 months, Dragon. The system was installed in venues and tracked everything that occurred on a court or field and relayed the data within seconds. He shared his enthusiasm that they aimed to revolutionise Volleyball with that system. They also had a new competition management software in trial phase by CEV with good results that far. CEV had already started with some fan engagement products recently and they wished to continue in the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2024. He went on to describe a few other tools that they introduced for referee management and accreditations.

A video was shown to illustrate the live data collection provided by Dragon, used in Premier League football to assist with offside determination. Mr COWLING commented that all the content shown in the video was produced directly through their system and that no visual artist had been involved. Moreover,



he saw many opportunities outside of what would be happening in the game that they could exploit that technology with. He also mentioned that their system had won the Sports Emmy award.

While showing another video illustrating basketball and live data collection, Mr COWLING described that with their system they were able to capture data in real time and recreate the play using a technology called “mesh tracking”. The key point he wanted to make was that their system enabled them to record events that occurred during the game very quickly, simply by using 22 cameras set up around the court.

Mr EVERAERT asked how the recognition of the players worked and Mr COWLING replied that the system was reading the number on their jerseys.

In the second video Mr COWLING showed how an offside was captured and explained that several cameras were installed around the field, connected to each other, and capturing data in real time. The rules around offside were built into the algorithm to enable decision-making and the system was precise within 2cm for the decision shown on the video.

CEV Board of Administration member Lennart NEOVIUS asked whether the system analysed on an ongoing basis or simply as needed when there was a dispute. Mr COWLING confirmed that the system continuously analysed as it recorded. He specified that those 2cm of precision meant nothing in the context of the football court, but when it came to Volleyball some decisions were more binary and there were touch calls, net calls, and line calls which the system would assist with.

Mr NEOVIUS asked whether historical data, such as previous games could be used with the system. Mr COWLING explained that this was unlikely to be possible given that the live recording from previous years did not exist, but could be possible going forward.

Mr ADLER asked whether operators were used at venues, alongside the software. Mr COWLING explained that there were no operators at the venue. Currently for Premier League football, there were operators based centrally in Manchester, rather than at each venue. Depending on the broadcast and the data they would wish to show, they might decide to put an operator in the venue as well.

Mr COWLING shared with Board of Administration members the financial highlights of the proposal, with the outcome that the CEV would receive cash and value in kind services amounting to almost €3m, instead of paying €1,650,000 to Genius Sports and the for Hawkeye services across the next five years. Mr COWLING stated that only the payment of €617K for integrity services would remain on the CEV. If the proposal was accepted, Genius Sports intended to pay partnership fees of €700k for the use of CEV’s technical expertise as an organisation, and knowledge from games. Additionally, Genius would provide €600k in software maintenance and €450k for fan engagement products. CEV would also save the cost of the video replay technology in venues, estimated to be a saving of €1.2m over the next five years.

Mr ADLER asked what the basis of the €1.2m saving was. Mr COWLING confirmed that €1.2m was the current cost of CEV’s decision to go with the Hawkeye system for the EuroVolley and CL Super Finals across the 22 venues to be installed in.

Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING asked in relation to accessing CEV’s knowledge and expertise, what other markets in Volleyball were being explored. Mr COWLING explained that Genius Sports were already working in the US with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and significant markets in Asia and South America; however, the focus was the European market due to the quality and the technical expertise. He added that they aimed to develop in Europe first and subsequently roll the market out to the other major zones.

President BORIČIĆ thanked Mr COWLING for his attendance at the meeting and the information provided, stating that he hoped Board members had gained enough information to make a decision. Similar to Genius Sports, the CEV also aimed at continuous growth by creating new competitions, improving the format of the existing ones and expanding to new markets and he saw great opportunities in the future.

Summarising, President BORIČIĆ highlighted the financial savings, the opportunity for a more modern system and for CEV to get closer to fans and proposed that the CEV Board of Administration support the partnership with Genius Sports. CEV Board of Administration members approved.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the partnership proposal with Genius Sports.**

Mr EVERAERT asked whether FIVB and Volleyball World would also be working with Genius Sports. President BORIČIĆ advised that CEV was not involved in all FIVB activities but it was understood that they were interested in co-operating.

## Eventim

Mr ENDRES advised the Board members that Eventim had been working as CEV's centralised ticketing partner for the past two years. The CEV EuroVolley 2023 had been the first full event with spectators after the pandemic. The contract period had ended in late 2023 and CEV were now in negotiations with Eventim to prolong the contract for another four years on similar conditions. The key element for the CEV centralised data platform was to collect data from the visitors that bought tickets for the matches, in order to use this data for future events and targeted promotion. One critical element in the negotiations was the coverage of all the markets. Mr ENDRES hoped to present a developed proposal at the next Board of Administration meeting.

## OTT Platform

Mr ENDRES highlighted the document circulated to members 'OTT Solution for European Volleyball Recommendation for CEV BoA', explaining that it had been compiled by CEV's Digital department as the current agreement with Sportradar was coming to an end in June 2024, prompting a tender process to evaluate options going forward. Of the eight OTT providers contacted, four companies had officially submitted proposals, including Sportradar, Infront, Deltatre and Brightcove.

Mr ENDRES explained that the recommendation was to go with Infront as CEV's new OTT partner for the next two years, on the basis that a new platform offering improved experience had been developed by Infront and the proposal offered the best financial conditions. He added that in the latest negotiations they managed to reduce the digital streaming cost, something that has to be provided by Infront anyway. He also noted that despite the challenging ongoing negotiations on the primary agreement with Infront, they had proven as a reliable partner, supporting the CEV at any time. Lastly, he added that in the agreement with Infront there was a provision that the CEV would hold the rights of the OTT platform and in case the CEV would decide to change the provider, the Infront would also have the right to make a last offer matching the best offer presented. Starting from July 2024, the agreement would last for two plus two years.

Questions were invited and none were raised. Agreement from all Board members to proceed with Infront.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint Infront as the CEV's new OTT partner.**

# 6. XLV CEV Congress 2024

President BORIČIĆ gave the floor to CEV European Legal Commission President, Alain FISCHBACHER to provide an update to Board of Administration members on the XLV CEV Congress 2024.

Mr FISCHBACHER outlined the timeline for the upcoming CEV Congress, advising that the European Legal Commission (ELC) had prepared the necessary legal remedies significantly in advance and confirming that the date of 24 August 2024 would be within the approved timeframe set by the FIVB. All checklists for all candidatures had been prepared and the steps for the running of the Congress were outlined in the document. He pointed out that everything had been prepared way in advance so as to avoid any doubts or changes at the last minute, so as to have a fully transparent procedure for the upcoming elections.

Mr FISCHBACHER highlighted that the candidature documents included within the documents prepared for the meeting had been prepared according to the CEV Regulations. He noted that the ELC had added a few new short questions, which were also reflected in the questionnaire of the FIVB Integrity check and were questions with which they needed to verify if a candidature was fulfilling the CEV Regulations. He proposed that the CEV Board should set the deadline for receiving candidatures for 29 April 2024, which was a date complying with the provisions of the CEV Regulations. He explained that the reason for proposing this date was that the deadline set by the FIVB to receive candidatures for the FIVB positions was six months prior to the FIVB Congress, namely 15 May 2024 at the latest. Therefore the ELC had agreed to give the CEV Office a few more days to prepare and send those candidatures and this was why they proposed to set the deadline for 29 April. Mr FISCHBACHER stated that the procedure followed was the same as in the last elections, based on which it was proposed to set only one deadline for both CEV and FIVB candidatures to be sent to the CEV Office, to avoid any confusion, have a clear communication, and without inventing anything new.

Questions were invited and none were received.

President BORIČIĆ thanked Mr FISCHBACHER and wished him good work in the future.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the XLV CEV Congress 2024 timeline, candidature form and electoral process.**

# 7. Competition Matters

## CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2024

President BORIČIĆ confirmed that the Super Finals would be held in Türkiye, with a fee of €1m. It was anticipated that the event would take place in Istanbul, in the 15,000-capacity Ülker Sports Arena on Sunday 05 May 2024; however, it would be confirmed in the next 10 days whether this had been agreed. Antalya and Ankara were the other two alternative host cities. CEV would like to start to promote the venue as soon as possible.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the appointment of the Turkish Volleyball as co-host of the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2024.**

## European Cups Calendar 2024/2025

President BORIČIĆ reported that CEV was working with FIVB on the European Cups Calendar 2024/2025, because there was an intention to introduce a two weeks difference between the men's and the women's national championship while the CEV wished to organise both a men's and women's Champions League Super Finals on the same day. He commented how grateful he was for the initiative of the Italian Men's League to accommodate and move their dates for one week, thus facilitating the process of the discussions with the FIVB.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed CEV European Cups Calendar 2024/2025.**

### Euro Volley 2026

President BORIČIĆ indicated that the German Federation had written to CEV outlining that they were not ready to organise the event for 2026 and would like to work towards 2028. The President noted that a new Board was in place in the German Federation and it appeared they were not ready to take any risk.

President BORIČIĆ went on to say that the Italian Federation had also written to CEV to confirm for the men's event for 2026 from the early phases until the Final, along with Bulgaria (till the Quarter Finals), Finland (one Preliminary pool), and Romania (one Preliminary pool). President BORIČIĆ congratulated all four organisers for 2026 for men; with the decision confirmed, that left a period of almost three years to promote the event in the organising countries.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the appointment of the Italian Volleyball Federation as co-host of one Preliminary pool, four Eighth Finals, two Quarter Finals, two Semi Finals, the bronze medal match and the Final of the CEV EuroVolley 2026 Men.**

For women, Türkiye was already approved until the Final and Czechia had recently confirmed until the Quarter Final.

A short video was played.

President BORIČIĆ was pleased to note the Swedish Volleyball Federation progressing well in a short period of time. He thanked the Swedish Volleyball Federation President Annika SJÖBERG and their federation's Board for making courageous decisions. He saw a good opportunity to promote Volleyball in Sweden. Therefore, he invited everyone to approve the application of the Swedish Federation to co-organise one Preliminary pool of the CEV EuroVolley 2026 Women event.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the appointment of the Swedish Volleyball Federation as co-host of one Preliminary pool of the CEV EuroVolley 2026 Women.**

President BORIČIĆ invited CEV Board of Administration member Gernot LEITNER to provide an update in relation to Austria's hosting, which had not yet been confirmed.

Mr LEITNER advised that the Austrian Volleyball Federation had been active in organising two European championships in Beach Volleyball in recent years and had been aiming to provide an official letter in relation to EuroVolley 2026, in time for the CEV Board of Administration meeting; however, one of the hosting cities had unexpectedly withdrawn, leaving one remaining venue, which was a concert hall in Vienna. The Austrian Federation was not in a position to confirm anything before receiving the written guarantee from the organising municipality and the federal government. They were very keen on organising the EuroVolley event, because they felt that their federation was ready to take on such a responsibility. However, since a lot of the state funding had already been allocated for the organisation of Beach Volleyball events, it was bit of sensitive balance with the Austrian Government, who were not yet ready to confirm. A further two weeks extension was therefore requested, with updates to be provided to CEV daily.

President BORIČIĆ reported that the alternative contender, Azerbaijani Government, had offered to guarantee funding and were able to confirm the organisation of EuroVolley in 2026.

Mr LEITNER outlined the two options for the CEV Board of Administration: to either extend the decision making and award for a further two weeks or decide to award to Azerbaijan presently, to which Mr LEITNER would feed back to the Austrian Sports Minister. President BORIČIĆ stated that it was important for the image of the event and the institution to be able to confirm all the organisers for both genders as soon as possible and added that while they did want to respect the negotiations made that far with the Austrian Federation, they also had to respect the other contender who was ready to invest a great amount of money and was willing to travel to any city in order to close the deal. Mr LEITNER felt certain the political deal would be closed with Vienna but could not confirm immediately.

CEV Board of Administration member Geert de DOBBELEER suggested that CEV make the decision today to grant Austria the organisation, whilst awaiting the confirmation within 15 days as he felt it was important in respect of the qualifications that the CEV Office could start to finalise preparations.

Respectfully, Mr ADLER stated that a decision could not be taken about Austria without formal approval from the Austrian Volleyball Federation. The decision could not be announced by CEV if it was not properly signed off and for that reason, he did not recommend that CEV voted for Austria now.

Mr LEITNER suggested in that case, there were two options for CEV: set a final deadline in two weeks' time for the final application from both Austria and Azerbaijan, or alternatively, award to Azerbaijan today.

President BORIČIĆ agreed that CEV could wait a further 10 days for Austria, but after that point, should there be no confirmation from Austria, another organiser would be proceeded with, the frontrunner being Azerbaijan.

### **Snow Volleyball**

President BORIČIĆ highlighted the ongoing issue of less snow in European countries which impacted upon the sport. A meeting had been held with FIVB to discuss the way forward and some good movement had been made, with Canada and Asia targeted. The 2030 Winter Olympics host was France, which would provide a good opportunity to promote Snow Volleyball.

Currently, 17 national tours had been held, along with a first-time exhibition in Spain. Official Snow Volleyball European Tours were being held in Prato Nevoso (ITA), Bakuriani (GEO), and Erzurum (TUR). Furthermore, the CEV U20 Snow Volleyball European Championship was going to take place in Bakuriani (GEO).

Mr NEOVIUS shared that he felt a strong momentum was gaining now, following an unsettled period of the pandemic and then the earthquakes in Türkiye. There were several multisport events where Snow Volleyball was included and it felt like things were moving in the right direction. Two cities in Sweden were now holding Snow Volleyball festivals and wanted to become the Snow Volleyball centre of Sweden.

### **Beach Volley Nations Cup 2025**

President BORIČIĆ shared that CEV had recently met with CEO and Founder of ACTS Group, Mr Hannes JAGERHOFER, who had expressed interest in cooperating with the CEV for the CEV Beach Volley Nations Cup Final in 2025. Mr JAGERHOFER also talked about the potential of developing a wider event concept to be organised in three years to come, but the CEV wished to first check if there would be any clashes with the other multisport event, European Championships, of which Beach Volleyball was now an integral part.



### **Age Group Volleyball European Championships**

President BORIČIĆ advised that letters had been received relating to the organisation of age group championships. In relation to the CEV U16 Volleyball European Championship 2025 Men, a decision had already been taken to award the event to Armenia and a subsequent proposal had come from Italy for them to organise jointly with Armenia the event in 2025 as well as the CEV U20 Volleyball European Championship 2027 Women, for which both federations had applied. President BORIČIĆ requested to arrange a meeting between Italy, Armenia and CEV to determine whether Armenia would accept Italy's proposal and to clarify the cooperation. As for the CEV U18 Volleyball European Championship 2026 Men, Italy had applied and President BORIČIĆ suggested to confirm the appointment.

### **Decision**

- **In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the appointment of the Italian Federation as co-organiser for the CEV U18 Volleyball European Championship 2026 Men.**
- **In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed that the Italian and Armenian Volleyball Federations should mutually discuss a potential co-organisation of the CEV U16 Volleyball European Championship 2025 Men and the CEV U20 Volleyball European Championship 2027 Women, for which both federations had applied.**

### **Age Group Beach Volleyball European Championships**

President BORIČIĆ presented the proposal from the EBVC regarding the introduction of Zonal Qualifiers for U18 and U20 Beach Volleyball European Championships 2025, in a similar format as in Indoor Volleyball, highlighting the importance of supporting young players in Beach Volleyball to take part in a European championship.

Mr EVERAERT sought clarification that the proposal was to have zonal qualification for the European championship. President BORIČIĆ confirmed that was the case and would mirror the arrangements for Indoor Volleyball. Mr EVERAERT was concerned to note the scale of the requirements for Beach Volleyball, in terms of the timing of rounds. It appeared an onerous task in Mr EVERAERT's view, though he was keen to understand what the Beach Volleyball department's collective thoughts were. Mr ENDRES advised that the joint proposal from the EBVC and the Beach Volleyball department due to the increased number of participating and registered teams in the Age Group Beach Volleyball Championships in the past years. It had also been a strategic decision of the Board with the aim of increasing cooperation with the Zonal Associations. Flexibility would be built in by giving time to the Zones one year in advance to organise the qualifications. Therefore, the main concept was to encourage the Zones to be more active, in case they were not already and provide opportunities for young players to play more.

Mr EVERAERT shared that he was not against the proposal but felt it was important to note that there would be some complications and that Beach Volleyball could not be compared to Indoor. As a member of the EBVC for eight years, he was aware that proposals did not always take the organisational aspect into consideration. In addition, speaking as a member of the Western European Volleyball Association (WEVZA) he saw the organisation of those qualification tournaments as something very difficult.

CEV Board of Administration member Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON shared his view that the proposal reflected a good way to endorse more countries to participate in Beach Volleyball; giving more countries the opportunity to be represented at the highest level in Volleyball would impact on participation over the longer term. He went on to illustrate a few examples demonstrating that this was the correct way to go.

President BORIČIĆ remarked that such a decision would enhance the value and importance of Zonal Associations in the eyes of the participating teams, especially those in junior level.

Mr LEITNER stated that in MEVZA several tournaments were scheduled for July which could serve as a qualifier for European Championships which were usually held in September, therefore he saw no

concern from the organisation point of view. Mr EVERAERT noted that in 2024 the European Championships would take place in June, so it would be difficult to proceed to a qualification tournament. He highlighted that while understanding the added value to the Zonal Associations with such a decision, he felt it was important to realise that it would potentially create friction and disappointment, in case the schedule did not work.

President BORIČIĆ proposed to move forward with the proposal on the basis that the opportunity would enable more young players to qualify for a Beach Volleyball European Championship through their Zonal Association, albeit recognising that the organisation would be difficult.

### Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to introduce a Zonal Qualification for the CEV U18 & U20 Beach Volleyball European Championships as of 2025.**

## 8. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

### Commission Proposals (16-18)

CEV Managing Director Thorsten ENDRES introduced the proposals included within the working file and summarised them for the Board members.

President BORIČIĆ thanked Mr ENDRES and noted that the Referee Commission had come back with the same proposal that had not been accepted in the last meeting. The proposal would not be accepted.

### Decision

#### EBVC:

- **The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to organise a Beach Volleyball Supervisor Candidate Course in 2024, with a theoretical and practical session.**
- **The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the additional €400 per diem for the appointed CEV officials and International referees (who are staying for the entire period of the championship) of the CEV EuroBeachVolley, to be paid by the CEV in addition to the €100 per diem covered by the host.**
- **The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed concept for the CEV Beach Volley European Cup Final 2024:**
  - **National events up to August, the Beach Volley European Cup Final in October/November**
  - **Organising conditions to be applied as in 2023, with 8 Clubs per gender as double gender event**
  - **For the qualification to the Final a preliminary Phase with seeding and geographical criteria to be introduced (depending on the number of registrations)**
  - **Eligibility criteria for players same as in 2023**
  - **A new NFs Clubs' ranking to be introduced following the principles applied in Volleyball European Cups and the Beach Volleyball practice (60%, 30% and 10% for 3 years)**
  - **To increase the sponsors positions on the athletes uniforms to 4 in total, 2 at each side of the uniform**
  - **To apply the same provision for the team denomination as in indoor club competition (article 32 of the CEV Volleyball Competitions Regulations)**

**ECC:**

- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to nominate neutral supervisors starting from the 1/32 Finals of the CEV Volleyball Challenge Cup and to encourage the European cups responsible to be more in charge.

**ECOC**

- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the proposal to create or set up a dissemination platform where the CEV could share educational material and be able to collect as many contact details of teachers and coaches as possible.
- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to set up a licensing process for coaches working with kids at grassroots level but also in official age group categories (from U18 to U22).
- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved and granted authorisation to form a working group composed with only women, under the responsibility of the ECOC to discuss specific topics, issues and challenges faced by women coaches in Volleyball.

**ELC**

- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed to align with the proposal to further study the decision of the European Court of Justice on the 'European Super League' project and the potential impact on the CEV; and to coordinate with FIVB potential steps on the matter.
- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to finalise and ratify the CEV Good Governance Code after the elections of 2024.
- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to ask the opinion of a Luxembourgish lawyer on the exact meaning and potential impact on the CEV of the new law on non-profit organisations in Luxembourg.

**ERC**

- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously reconfirmed and rejected the proposed appointment of a Referee Coach for the Beach Volleyball VW Pro Tour Futures events.
- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously rejected all proposals regarding the increase of per diem (see above decision on increasing the per diem for the officials and referees appointed to the CEV EuroBeachVolley).
- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously reconfirmed the Board decision of September 2023 and rejected the proposed appointment of Referee Coaches for the Semi Finals and Finals of the CEV Volleyball Cup and CEV Challenge Cup.

**ESOC**

- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to skip the "Daily bulletin" after each competition day and to transform it into an "Info bulletin" number 1-2-3, etc. after Preliminary inquiry, Pool phase, Quarter Finals, and Semi Finals or when required for all competitions.
- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to amend regulations for CEV Age Group Volleyball European Championship Final Rounds in order to award ranking points for each team ranked 1 to 16 accordingly.

**Joint ECC & ESOC**

- The CEV Board of Administration unanimously acknowledged the efforts to strengthen the development of supervisors and confirmed the decision to continue the implementation of the proposed concept.

The CEV President spoke about the tendency of several teams withdrawing from competitions, which had a great impact on the existing partnerships and also financial impact. While the minimum financial sanctions had been increased, the maximum threshold could not be defined because it would depend on the extent of the damage. If any partner of the CEV resorted to legal action, he argued that it should be the withdrawing team the one covering the damage.



## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided to add a provision in the CEV Regulatory Framework that, in case of a withdrawal, next to the financial sanctions, the potential damage has to be covered by the respective Participant in default.**

### Changes in CEV Competitions Regulations

The CEV President proposed the updates to the wording of the CEV Volleyball Competition Regulations, the CEV Beach Volleyball Competition Regulations, the CEV Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulation as outlined in the document circulated to Board of Administration members.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes of the CEV Volleyball Competition Regulations, CEV Beach Volleyball Competitions Regulations and Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations.**

# 9. Financial matters

President BORIČIĆ invited CEV Vice-President and Treasurer Eric ADLER to take the floor.

Mr ADLER reported to CEV Board of Administration members that the Annual Accounts for CEV for 2023 were in development and it was too early in the workings to advise on any numbers. As Board of Administration members would recall, during the Congress Mr ADLER had advised of some financial issues that had arisen due to the calendar change and the issues with Infront as had been discussed, and the CEV Office had been asked to investigate the implications after the last board meeting. From that work, Mr ADLER wished to highlight the following changes to the budget and key points:

- An organiser fee of €1.5m would be received in 2025 instead of 2024 as originally planned, with payback of €800k to the co-organising National Federations in 2025 and not in 2024.
- EuroVolley 2026 would negatively impact on the 2024 budget to the scale of €665k.
- Due to the cancellation of the Volleyball Continental Olympic Qualification Tournaments the CEV's income would reduce by €3.5m, in comparison to 2020.
- The overall calendar change had a concrete impact of -€3.7m in 2024; however, an element of the financial impact had already been considered when the 2024 budget was drafted; -€2.1m was planned for and with the calendar changes in addition, the estimated impact was -€3.4m in total. Several negotiations were ongoing and were expected to improve the overall position before the end of the year.

Mr ADLER stated that the financial result was not satisfactory; however, CEV Board of Administration members needed to consider that over €11m had been invested via the 'Marshall plan' during the pandemic and CEV had been able to hold a good investment level supporting the federations and clubs at different levels. Going forward, there was a need to focus on exploring additional revenue opportunities and to determine whether compensation could be received in respect of some of the costs incurred. Mr ADLER reiterated that CEV Board of Administration members were welcome to come forward with ideas for revenue generation.

President BORIČIĆ summarised the financial outlook, emphasising the importance of working with the FIVB to find compensation in relation to the €3.5m damage due to calendar changes. In addition, while the fees from EuroVolley would take one more year to reach the CEV since it had been moved from 2025 to 2026, President BORIČIĆ saw a lot of potential in the partnership agreement with Genius as well as many income opportunities in the upcoming top events and the media rights from sponsors.

Mr EVERAERT asked President BORIČIĆ what his feeling was about receiving a compensation from the FIVB. President BORIČIĆ replied that the CEV needed to work together with the FIVB to find a co-ordinated approach, describing that the compensation could result through joint projects where the CEV would have a smaller financial participation.

Mr De DOBELLEER stated that it would be useful for Board members to receive an updated version of the 2024 budget. Mr ADLER explained that the next iteration of the 2024 budget would be prepared for May 2024. The Finance Team was currently busy working on the 2023 Annual Accounts, and these, along with the budget for both 2024 and 2025 would be received at the next Board meeting, like it has been done in every year so far.

Mr THORSTEINSSON commented on the investment made by CEV several years previously and asked what the current position was in that respect. Mr ADLER explained that the investment portfolio of €6m with Indosuez was initially very restrictive in terms of ESG; however, some changes had been made recently to build in some more flexibility. Mr ENDRES confirmed that, as at January 2024, the value of the investment was €6.25m, a gain of €250k since the initial investment.

### Decision

**In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the financial report.**

## 10. Proposals from Board members

No points discussed.

## 11. Any other business

The CEV President referred to the various events taking place throughout the year. Due to the recent calendar changes it was proposed not to hold a CEV European Volleyball Gala in 2024.

As for the CEV Coaches Convention, after the successful organisation of 2023, it was proposed to re-appoint the Bulgarian Federation as co-organiser.

President BORIČIĆ informed the Board members that the FIVB changed its policy and did not provide anymore the uniform to International Volleyball Referees. He suggested to provide the International Volleyball referees from Europe with a uniform, so as to ensure a unified and professional look in all the CEV Competitions.

### Decision

- **In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed that the CEV would not organise a CEV European Volleyball Gala in 2024.**
- **In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the appointment of the Bulgarian Volleyball Federation a co-host of the CEV Coaches Convention 2024 in Sofia.**
- **In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the decision to provide a unified referee uniform to all International Volleyball Referees appointed to CEV Competitions.**



## 12.Next meeting

The CEV President informed all the CEV Board members that the next meeting would take place on Saturday 15 June 2024 in Jūrmala (LAT), in the context of the CEV Beach Volley Nations Cup Final 2024.

## 13.Closing of the meeting

Closing the meeting, the CEV President thanked everyone for their cooperation and the fruitful discussions.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the CEV Office in Luxembourg (LUX)  
09 February 2024

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting held  
at the Hilton Eur La Lama  
Hotel in Rome (ITA)

16 September 2023



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



Place: Hilton Eur La Lama Hotel, Rome (ITA)

Date: Saturday, 16 September 2023

Attendees	Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director

Excused	Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
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Absent	Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

CEV President Aleksandar BORIČIĆ greeted everyone and officially opened the meeting. He thanked the Italian Federation and their President, Giuseppe MANFREDI, for their valuable contribution in the organisation of the CEV 50th Anniversary Gala. He mentioned that he had received a lot of positive feedback from everyone for having the opportunity to get together and celebrate like one big team that gets stronger and stronger over the years.

In anticipation of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men's Finals later that day, the CEV President recounted how the CEV EuroVolley journey had started in mid-August with the opening match in Verona, in a historic match hosted in the spectacular Verona Arena. After the successful delivery of the semifinals, the tickets of the finals had been sold out already a few days ago. Overall, taking also into account the Women's competition events with the fully packed finals in Brussels, he believed that the result had been very successful and positive. President BORIČIĆ had visited all CEV EuroVolley organising countries and had been very impressed with the results, mentioning especially Estonia's great event, the full venue in North Macedonia with everyone singing the national anthem, the full venue in Düsseldorf in Germany, and lastly Israel that managed to make quantum leaps in order to deliver such a high level event.

He thanked all the CEV Board members for accepting to provide support to the Israeli Volleyball Federation, which has managed to safeguard the sport's future in the country. The FIVB President had also been invited in Israel for a meeting together with the Israeli Sport Minister. They had a constructive meeting together with the leadership of the federation, on how to develop the sport in the future. The Israeli Sport Minister himself promised that from the following year there could be good income in Volleyball through the introduction of the sport in the betting companies.

With that opportunity, the CEV President emphasised the importance of keeping close relations with the state authorities. He also mentioned the upcoming meeting with the Bulgarian Sports Minister to talk about future projects, and he highlighted that they would continue to search for opportunities and strive for results.

CEV Board member Lennart NEOVIUS was excused from the meeting.

CEV Board member Metod ROPRET did not attend the meeting but his absence was not excused, as there was no prior notice.

The CEV President explained that Metod ROPRET had been absent five times as a Board member from CEV activities during his mandate. President BORIČIĆ shared several instances where Mr ROPRET had not acted in a proper way according to his role and his duties as a CEV Board member.

The CEV President argued that bearing the title of the CEV Board member while spreading negative comments about the institution was not beneficial for the CEV or for the sport and they had to act accordingly, in order to protect the sport and the Volleyball community.

CEV Vice-President Michel EVERAERT commented that it was important to make a clear distinction between the roles of National Federation President and CEV Board member, and suggested that the CEV Board should also make that distinction when deciding about Mr ROPRET, stating that they should focus on reviewing solely his role as a CEV Board member and leave aside any friction he might have caused while acting on behalf of his federation. Therefore, he cautioned that they should communicate the right and relevant arguments.

The CEV President added that when it came to Mr ROPRET's role as CEV Board member, he failed to attend many meetings of the CEV Board and seemed unaware of some principles stated in the CEV Regulations, without respecting the line of hierarchy in the resolution of certain issues.

CEV Board member Gernot LEITNER expressed his agreement and maintained that as paid members of the CEV Board it was important for all of them to attend the meetings and fulfil their obligations. Therefore, a potential suspension of a member should focus on the fact that he actually had several



unexcused non-attendances. He indicated how important it was to communicate to all stakeholders that decisions were made based on facts and not on personal conflicts.

Recognising the sensitive situation, given the upcoming elections in August 2024, the CEV President did not wish to resort to such measures. However, he noted he had the right as the President to exercise that power when a board member did not attend meetings and engaged in negative comments on the media, damaging the image of the institution. Based on regulations, a board member with two consecutive unexcused absences is automatically suspended. Such a matter would not be subjected to voting or discussion. He continued by pointing out that they had always shown understanding when a member could not attend, respecting everyone's private and business obligations.

CEV Board member Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON believed that six unexcused absences would constitute a valid reason to suspend a board member. He noted that all the CEV Board members took up their role by assuming the responsibility to fulfil their obligations towards the organisation.

Concluding this point, the CEV President stated that if Mr ROPRET would publish negative comments against the CEV on the Slovenian media, President BORIČIĆ suggested that they should prepare and consult the legal team of the CEV, in order to answer accordingly to the media.

### Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to not make any official announcement, but in case of negative statements and/or comments by Mr ROPRET against the CEV to start a legal procedure.**

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the agenda.**

## 3. Approval of Minutes

### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 20 May 2023 in Turin, Italy

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 20 May 2023 in Turin, Italy.**

## 4. FIVB – CEV

President BORIČIĆ confirmed that the FIVB and the CEV had developed a very successful partnership. The FIVB had supported several European federations through several projects (development, coaches, national teams, flooring).

Furthermore, the CEV President made a positive evaluation of the FIVB decision on the new international calendar strategy 2025–2028. He believed it would be beneficial for the clubs, the athletes, as well as for the National Championships. The next thing to do was to set a period for the Qualification tournaments of the European Championship. Moreover, he added that the FIVB Calendar Working Group was expected to finalise the fine-tuning and the definition of the exact periods for the respective

competitions in the future calendar during the FIVB Club World Championship, which would take place in India from 06 to 10 December 2023.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial partnerships

#### **Infront**

The CEV President informed everyone that Infront had started finding new investors. He further informed that he would have a lunch with Mr BLATTER after the Board meeting. Despite the challenging times and changes of the International Calendar, he saw that long standing partnership continuing successfully in the future.

#### **Mikasa**

The CEV President introduced the cornerstones of the proposed prolongation of the partnership with Mikasa from 2024 to 2028. While the value in kind services will be maintained on the same level, there is a small increase in the financial fee to be paid from Mikasa.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the prolongation of the partnership with Mikasa from from 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2028.**

After the approval of the new contractual conditions, the CEV President and MIKASA CEO and President SAEKI signed the extension of the MIKASA contract. President BORIČIĆ commented that it had been a tough negotiation and the CEV Managing Director Thorsten ENDRES had been the leading person in the negotiation discussions. President BORIČIĆ indicated that the signing of that agreement was very important, in order to secure the sufficient amount of balls for the competitions of all disciplines.

## 6. Competition Matters

### CEV EuroVolley 2023

#### **Initial brief evaluation of CEV EuroVolley 2023 events**

Before opening the discussion about the CEV EuroVolley 2023, the CEV President wished to encourage the CEV Board members that were also Jury members at CEV EuroVolley matches to respect the procedures when it came to communicating any issues that emerged during the competitions. They were invited to submit their report and first communicate with the rest of the Jury members. During the CEV Board meetings, when everybody was present, they could discuss everything openly.

CEV Senior Vice-President Renato ARENA addressed the meeting and started by thanking all of the organisers. He believed that everyone did a very good job, and the level of the competition had been increased in comparison to the previous years. He also indicated that that the goals were higher during the CEV EuroVolley 2023, since they aimed at increasing the number of spectators and the ticketing price, so as to eventually increase the value of the competition and the sport.

Mr ARENA acknowledged that they came across various challenges since some countries had faced difficulties in the organisation and the CEV Events department had newly hired employees, who had to pick up the project from the very first moment they started working at the CEV Office. He took the opportunity to thank the CEV Volleyball and Events department for their very hard work and admitted that with such a small team it was impossible to have someone present in every venue in case something

happened. He regretted not being able to cover every competition location, but he affirmed that the level of the whole organisation had been very high.

He also added that it was a very big achievement that they managed to deliver an event with a uniform look at all seven countries that it was held. He considered the CEV EuroVolley 2023 as an important milestone to look up to for the future projects.

He also wished to thank all the people that had been involved in that huge project, because everyone worked together like in one big team.

CEV Vice-President Margaret Ann FLEMING stated that it had been a great pleasure to be a Jury President in Belgium and to work with the Belgian Volleyball Federation. She considered the EuroVolley 2023 a huge achievement for the CEV.

She went on to present a few recommendations from her side. First of all, she wished to ask the CEV Board and the European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC) to consider the functionality of the bulletin, arguing that they could switch into an automated procedure. Considering the high number of pools, coordinating the bulletin at the end of the evening during the finals proved to be a challenging request towards the organisers.

In addition, Ms FLEMING commented how for the first time the standard of the court quality was consistent across all of the pools. Therefore, it was an experience of one brand, one sport and the result was quite spectacular. She congratulated all of the people involved in the project. She agreed with Mr ARENA that for the staff of the CEV Events department it had been a very challenging project. She indicated that apart from the EuroVolley pool each of them had to coordinate, they also had to handle a huge amount of requests through emails and phone calls. She suggested that a potential solution would be to increase the staff in the CEV Events department, in order to have more support and move forward. However, in principle and in general, she considered it as an excellent competition. Finally, she congratulated both countries participating in the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Women's Finals.

The CEV President confirmed the importance of having a centralised system for the distribution of information for the bulletin and agreed that they could investigate the possibility for an easier handling.

CEV Vice-President Michel EVERAERT commented that the bulletin was no longer used in Beach Volleyball, since all the relevant information could be found online. He added that it was something that took a lot of work and it was not really useful to anyone. President BORIČIĆ indicated that the coaches really needed all the information contained in the bulletin and it was useful for them to receive that in the evening after the match. He concluded that they should find the best solution to resolve that technical matter.

CEV Vice-President Emma LABRADOR reported on the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Pool organised in Germany. She mentioned that while there were some issues due to the fact that the federation had no leadership, there was an agency that was organising all aspects of the competition and in the end it all worked out very well. The competition hall was good and it was almost sold out every night. She also agreed that the branding was very good as well and the feedback was very positive overall.

The CEV President congratulated René HECHT for his work, as he was the former President of the German Volleyball Federation and he had prepared the team and the agency in order to have a smooth cooperation. He shared that there was a challenging moment when Mr HECHT was no longer at the helm of the German Federation, since it was not clear who would be in charge of the competition.

President BORIČIĆ also commented that the German Federation had been the fastest one to start selling tickets, as the local audience really enjoyed international sport events. He hoped that many more events would be organised in Germany, which was a very favourable market.

CEV Vice-President & Treasurer Eric ADLER reported on the men edition organised in Italy. With the last two matches pending for that evening, Mr ADLER wished to already commend the Italian Volleyball Federation and the local organisations. He had been in the matches organised in Bologna, Perugia,

Ancona, Bari and finally in Rome. He shared that they had done excellent work. Everyone was willing to contribute actively to the project. The local organisations that had not been involved before in such a top event were willing to learn and to listen. He noted that he witnessed a fantastic amount of fans in the venues; even for matches where Italy was not playing, at least 2000 were present in the halls.

He also noted that they had to move to new locations every three to four days and coordinate new venues and new organisations. Overall, he thought everyone did an excellent job.

He only recommended to ask the ESOC to reconsider the necessity of the numerous papers and reports produced out of the system, since no one really knew why they were produced and how to use them. He suggested that it was important to define which papers were really needed to be signed and circulated. Since the rest of the information was already stored in the system, anyone wishing to access it could just log in and thus avoid useless printing.

The CEV President expressed his agreement with the proposal and went further to reaffirm that the European Cups Commission (ECC) and the ESOC could be merged into one Volleyball Commission dealing with the Competitions.

CEV Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs Lubor HALANDA reported on the CEV EuroVolley Pool organised in Varna, Bulgaria. He commented that the organisation under the leadership of the Bulgarian Volleyball Federation President Lubomir GANEV, the Organising Director Valentin POMAKOV and Competitions Sport Director Boris HALACHEV had been excellent. Many volunteers had been involved in the organisation and everyone had a clear grasp of their tasks and duties. He commented that the facilities and conditions provided to the athletes were exceptional, he had never seen such high standards before in terms of food and lodging. The same applied also to the competition hall, which was always full during the matches of the Bulgarian team. Therefore he warmly congratulated everyone involved.

CEV Board of Administration member Zdeslav BARAČ reported on the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Pool organised in Skopje, North Macedonia. While they were faced with a few challenges at the beginning, given the fact that the Volleyball Federation of North Macedonia was a small scale federation with less experience on such a top event, he observed that as soon as they had arrived there many things were already prepared, even though many details needed to be corrected. Therefore, the preparation days were fully occupied with the fine tuning of those details. Nevertheless, everything worked out smoothly. The accommodation was very good for the players, but not as good for the CEV Officials. The hall was full of spectators when the North Macedonian team was playing, while the other days there were very few spectators. He commented that was a relatively usual phenomenon. He believed that the CEV mission to promote Volleyball in that country had been partly fulfilled, because there was a good impact on the media and the result of their National Team. However, the national authorities were not as open to listen and satisfy the requests. He believed that they had to find ways to convince them and draw their attention. He added that despite the very few volunteers they had during the competition, they managed to deliver a very good event and his experience had been very positive.

CEV Board of Administration member Helgi THORSTEINSSON reported on the CEV EuroVolley Pool in Israel. He said it had been an interesting experience. Apart from the local organising committee, there was an event company taking care of the business, and he felt that their main goal was to maximise their own profits and not necessarily Volleyball. However, he indicated that the local organising committee was engaged, they tried to execute the event to meet the needs of the CEV. There were a few issues with the transportation and a few errors during the match, but they managed to settle everything and to progress during the competition. Due to a few problems, they started very slow, but they gradually managed to resolve them. He was positively surprised with the services in terms of accommodation and food. The hotel was even waiting until late in the evening for the arrival of the players. He also commended the level of the branding in the hall, even though it was not a Volleyball facility. The attendance was good during the home matches, but lower for the rest of the games.

Mr THORSTEINSSON shared that his concern for the future was when countries with little experience took the initiative to organise a EuroVolley Pool and he suggested that they should make some risk assessment in advance to have a clear view of the status within the federation. In the case of Israel, it

felt like the federation was a small family of friends and on the other end there was the event company, and some clashes between them emerged. The staff from the CEV Office maintained very good relations with everyone and everything was done according to the best of their abilities.

He believed that the event went well, the people involved were engaged and they showed interest in improving. He remarked that there were some less favourable aspects, like phone calls during the night and some bad press after some referee decisions during the matches. Overall, it was a positive experience, with an enjoyable atmosphere and people committed to work.

After listening to all of the reports, the CEV President wished to thank all of the organisers for their work, saying that they contributed in the promotion of Volleyball. It was a proof that the CEV was right to appoint those countries as EuroVolley Organisers. He also expressed how satisfied he was with the decision to shift to the new CEV brand image, which had started to gain in popularity, since it became the telling sign of Volleyball across Europe. He agreed that the branding throughout all of the locations and venues had been very successful and maintained a unified and consistent image. For the future, he believed it would be important to keep close contact with the media and the fans to promote the CEV brand image, forge the institution's identity and thus inspire more people towards the sport.

President BORIČIĆ recounted how the EuroVolley course had started in the historic location in the Verona Arena, incorporating sport, culture and history in one spectacular event, which initiated many new ideas. From Verona until Rome, the course of EuroVolley had ignited interesting discussions and gathered important persons from the host countries, like the President of the Italian Republic, who was due to attend the EuroVolley Finals later that evening. He also shared that in the Press Conference in Rome, many important politicians from different political parties, including four ministers had attended, marking Volleyball as a unifying power.

At the same time, he pointed out that they should collect all relevant input on the areas they could improve for the future. They could gather interesting insights that could be implemented in any future competition and event. He also noted that the CEV Office should always strive to get the latest cutting edge technology regarding communication and fans, and keep up to date.

CEV Vice-President Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI noted that in countries where Volleyball was already developed the competition had gone really well with no major problems. As for the smaller scale federations, while he believed that appointing them as EuroVolley co-organisers was the right direction for the promotion of Volleyball in that country, he believed the CEV should also provide more assistance to those federations in terms of organisational guidance. There could be some early preparation towards that. He shared that in the Polish media they made reference to the low attendance numbers in matches organised by smaller scale federations and he wished to find an appropriate way to respond to those comments.

The CEV President mentioned that despite the size of the organising federation, some matches that did not involve the home country or some big team did not attract large numbers of spectators. However, in the course of developing Volleyball all over Europe, he was convinced that these events should be held in those countries too. He agreed that the CEV could provide more technical guidance, but he admitted that it was difficult for non-experienced federations to achieve high numbers right from the start. He recognised that those events were new to them and that despite the lack of experience they did a good job.

Mr ARENA indicated that when they had decided to increase the number of participating teams from 16 to 24, it was only natural that there would be higher and lower level teams involved. While the media focused on the attendance numbers, he pointed out that the CEV saw things from a different perspective than the journalists, since its mission with EuroVolley was to develop Volleyball, to gradually build a Volleyball culture in those countries, and such a venture would not bring high numbers immediately.

Furthermore, Mr ARENA agreed that some less experienced federations in the area of international events, needed guidance also in terms of building the right leadership culture that would align with the vision of international events and EuroVolley. Nevertheless, he pointed out that he encountered



leadership issues also in bigger scale federations, operating in a “one-man-show” mode. Therefore, the CEV needed to cultivate the spirit of team work between the CEV team and the leadership of the federations. He added that personally he avoided following the media reporting on the first phase of the competition and despite their comments, he firmly believed that the introduction of more participating teams was the right one.

He acknowledged that the focus of the journalists was different, and while they might continue with bad press, the CEV should respect their work and only reply by forming solid arguments. He added that it was important and useful to receive negative feedback, as a form of constant improvement.

CEV Board of Administration member Geert De DOBBELEER emphasised the importance of consistent and professional TV production for making events like EuroVolley recognisable everywhere. Therefore, he believed that the CEV should continue on that path for the future. Secondly, he underlined the importance of ticketing, mentioning that the fans were the sponsors of the events. Big groups of fans were willing to buy tickets and pay decent amounts of money to enjoy a good seating within the venue. He was convinced that with the centralised data system, in which the CEV Board had decided to invest, they could provide valuable help to many federations. While he believed that the collaboration with the ticketing partner was good, he felt that the CEV should also focus on the total customer journey. There was much more than selling a ticket. The trip to a destination to watch a sport event involved many extra experiences, i.e. sightseeing, accommodation, restaurants, etc. He saw there a big potential for evolution.

De DOBBELEER wished to thank all federations with which they had cooperated in an excellent way, already before the start of the competitions, especially the federations of Poland, Serbia, The Netherlands, Italy, Hungary, Türkiye. Moreover, he indicated that the cooperation had been more challenging with the Ukrainian Federation, and it was understandable given the circumstances. He regretted to report the lack of cooperation with the Slovenian Federation, despite his efforts to get involved personally. Finally, he suggested that it could be a good idea to split the bronze and gold medal matches, since the EuroVolley Finals were such a big success and the demand for tickets greatly exceeded the capacity of the venue. He proposed to look into the pros and cons of such a change. Regarding the communication with the journalists, he admitted that it was normal to refer to the attendance numbers, but he pointed out that the attendance of such sport events did not only regard the numbers present in the venues, but it was also depicted on the social media, on TV, etc.

Mr EVERAERT affirmed that the CEV had been doing a much better job with ticketing than in the past, but also believed that there was still a lot to learn. They had to consider many factors, like having sometimes several matches in a day, which meant some matches were scheduled in the afternoon, and this made them less attractive for the spectators.

Referring to EuroBeachVolley in Vienna, Mr EVERAERT mentioned that promoters were very consistent on the dates they wished to organise events. They had a full house for the whole week, from the first to the last matches of the days they were sold out. The main request was to organise events during public holidays, since their target group would be available to attend the matches throughout the whole day and not only in the evening. Therefore, he firmly believed that they should take into account these factors when deciding on the timing of the matches.

Furthermore, Mr EVERAERT was convinced that if the CEV EuroVolley Finals were held in really big halls with a capacity of 20,000 and started a pan-European campaign a year before, there would be a lot of Volleyball fans who would love to attend the event and combine it with a visit to a big city, like Rome or Brussels. He saw a very interesting target group willing to pay a lot of money for tickets and would be a good base for an organiser to sell large numbers of international tickets. Therefore, he summarised that the timing of the matches, the point in the year and the finals location were very significant points to consider.

CEV President indicated that the standards of attendance in matches would change from country to country, irrespective of the match timings or the point of the year, stating that in many small countries only the matches with the home team would reach high attendance numbers. He also pointed out how the habits and behaviours of spectators changed over the years.

He thanked everyone for their great work and noted that in the future the preparation and promotion of the event should start much earlier, so as to be able to benefit from government support. Even if the next EuroVolley would take place in 2026, those three years should be used effectively for building up a great event. The CEV should make sure to be very fast in appointing the organisers, thus giving them the chance to prepare properly.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI agreed that the preparation of the event should start as early as possible. He shared similar methods they had followed in the Polish Federation when organising events, which had paid off and produced great numbers in the venues.

Mr EVERAERT suggested to aim at announcing the EuroVolley organisers as soon as possible. He illustrated the example of the World Championship organised in The Netherlands, the preparation of which had started seven years before. If the organisers are confirmed early, they have a lot of time to do everything right and bring the event to the next level. He prompted everyone to work on strategic calendar within the CEV to make sure to announce three or four years before the organisers.

The CEV President fully agreed with the concept and shared that despite the open tender for organisers, they only managed to confirm the host federations after a lot of close monitoring and repeated communications. He also commented that the location of the EuroVolley Finals should be strategically selected so as to attract a lot of spectators, bringing up the example of Italy; they had carefully picked up the best locations and they managed to achieve high income from the tickets. Therefore, he concluded that such decisions involved the consideration of several factors, regarding the country, the federation, the external companies working on the event, the state, the financial state in the country, etc. At the same time he was very satisfied with the wide geographical range of countries organising EuroVolley competitions across Europe in 2023.

Mr ARENA informed everyone that already since 2022 they had started planning the two following editions of EuroVolley. There were already some confirmations for organisers, but they were waiting for the confirmation of the calendar changes from the FIVB. Given that the calendar had now been confirmed, they were ready to start working for the editions of 2026 and 2028. Especially for the top events, he shared that the aim was to have a multi-year plan so as to give both the organisers and the CEV the adequate time to prepare for such a high level event. He also suggested that this approach could also apply to the age group competitions. He added that there was an increasing interest in the age group competitions on TV, especially for U20. He saw there a future opportunity from the marketing point of view.

### **CEV EuroVolley 2026 Qualifiers**

The CEV President indicated that this would be the longest period between two European Championships. There was a proposal to split the qualification matches in 2024 and in 2025 or to play all of them in 2025. He argued that since many federations did not have many activities, it would be more beneficial to split the qualification period in two years.

Mr EVERAERT referred to the different dates for the men's and women's qualification periods suggested in the proposal and asked whether there was a particular reason for that. The CEV President explained that this was due to the fact that in the FIVB they held different periods for men and women and the CEV had to follow that line. He further suggested that in December, when they would officially conclude the international calendar with the FIVB, they should finalise the exact period for organising the qualification for men and women in 2024 and 2025.

Mr ENDRES added that with the new calendar the FIVB had split the men and women competitions, there was no overlapping for the CEV EuroVolley Women and Men editions in the future. Based on the new calendar, every year there would be a high level event, either world or continental championship. Therefore, the EuroVolley Qualifiers needed to be advanced in the May, June, July period in parallel to the VNL. Given that some teams would potentially play in the EuroVolley Qualification tournament and also participate in the VNL at the same time, he explained that they needed to adjust the dates

accordingly. As soon as the dates would be fixed by the FIVB, the CEV would communicate the final period, which would most probably be similar to the initial proposal. He also specified that the proposal allowed for matches being scheduled only during the weekends and that the European League matches would be played in parallel with the EuroVolley Qualification tournament and the VNL.

The CEV President explained that in the past it was impossible to avoid working days for the Qualifiers, but with this new calendar it was feasible to only schedule matches during the weekends, giving a chance to organisers to attract more spectators. Furthermore, he recognised that the new calendar would pose some difficulties for some federations. Even after preparing the CEV calendar, there might still be some small changes. President BORIČIĆ also mentioned that the FIVB competitions had precedence over the CEV ones, and the CEV should inform the federations in case there was a clash of the dates of the two parallel competitions and apply some additional adjustments accordingly.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to split the six CEV EuroVolley 2026 Qualifiers legs (home & away matches) across 2024 and 2025 as follows (final dates to be fixed following the FIVB International Calendar):**

- **1st to 3rd leg for Women & Men from 17 August to 01 September 2024**
- **4th to 6th leg for Men from 14 June to 29 June 2025**
- **4th to 6th leg for Women from 19 July to 03 August 2025**

## CEV Volleyball European League 2024

The CEV President shared that they had encountered many problems with the European League in 2023: manipulation with the spectator numbers. The CEV Office made an effort to monitor the numbers and asked the supervisors to re-confirm their declared numbers, being aware that the supervisors were national federation delegates. Given the fact that supervisors that had made mistakes could be subjected to a suspension, the CEV President had suggested to avoid appointing board members and national federation presidents in such roles, due to their important political position. Therefore, he suggested to extend this rule also for the presidents of zonal associations.

In case there would a serious case of manipulation from the part of the supervisor, the proposal was to remove that person from the list of potential supervisors to be appointed. He shared that it had been the first time to encounter manipulation in the numbers after so many years. All supervisors had been asked to send a new report to reconfirm their numbers, and they were cautioned that in case it was proven that the data on the report was false, they would risk their suspension.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to avoid the appointment of Zonal Association President as supervisor for single matches.**

President BORIČIĆ continued by referring to some issues some small and mid-sized federations faced, citing the example of the Cypriot Federation, who had to pay more than 70,000€ in travelling to locations for single matches. In that view, Mr ENDRES presented the proposal that aimed at keeping the same number of matches but reducing the travelling. Therefore, the proposal was to keep 12 teams in the Golden League and then split them in 3-week tournaments, each team would be hosting one weekend at home and travel twice abroad. Each split tournament would be played with three teams. Consequently, team A would travel to play against the home team on Friday, then on Saturday team A would play against team B (both travelling) and on Sunday the home team would play against team B. Based on that, each team would have two matches per weekend, needing accommodation only for three nights, instead of a long tournament. Furthermore, they would maintain the same number of matches while reducing the cost of travelling. At the same time, this solution would ensure that each country would hold one tournament in their home soil, thus promoting Volleyball in many locations.



Mr ENDRES commented that with the proposed format not every team played against each other, but the total number of matches remained the same, so as to respect the CEV's obligations towards the commercial partners, TV broadcasters, etc. The costs of the host countries in terms of production were not increased, because they had to produce the same number of matches, while the travelling costs were reduced.

Regarding the Silver League, the proposal included the same format, with a similar tournament structure, but it was more flexible, depending on the number of the registered teams.

The CEV President affirmed that the proposal was a very good way to promote Volleyball by holding tournaments in all participating countries. They were planning to present the proposal to the participating national federations during the upcoming Calendar Meeting and take their feedback into consideration.

In response to a question raised, Mr ENDRES clarified that regarding the Golden League Final Four, the format would stay the same: if there were no applicants, there would be semi-finals and finals in "home" and "away" matches. In the calendar proposal, they had also foreseen an additional gap, after the feedback received from the federations that the Final Four had been scheduled too close to the last leg and the teams encountered issues with the travelling. Therefore, if feasible, with the new proposal, a two-week intermission was given between the last leg and the Final Four matches.

Mr HALANDA suggested to avoid organising games during the summer months, since the number of spectators would be scarce during that period. However, Mr EVERAERT indicated that contrary to the initial perception, when they indeed organised matches during July and August, they saw big numbers in attendance. He explained that they realised people would have more free time to attend and they did attract larger numbers of spectators in the halls.

Mr ENDRES added that based on the FIVB Board decision regarding the new calendar strategy, there was, for the first time, a very clear situation to be respected by all confederations. He further explained that the CEV was obliged to adjust to and respect this new calendar, so it could not decide when to play, since they needed to avoid clashes with the other competitions running at the same time. He commented that with a good promotion they could attract spectators irrespective of the period the matches would take place.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to adjust the CEV Volleyball European Silver and Golden League to a tournament structure, so that all participating federations will host one leg/tournament and to apply the proposed financial and organisational conditions.**

The CEV President suggested to everyone to support the application of the Czech Volleyball Federation to host the CEV Volleyball European Golden League Final Four 2024 Women.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Czech Volleyball Federation as the CEV Volleyball European Golden League Final Four 2024 Women Organiser.**

The CEV President wished to suggest that in the future any federation that expressed an interest in hosting an event should be directly granted the organisation. He pointed out that it was crucial to not waste any time with an additional tender and instead properly prepare and promote the event.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to decide on any application in any moment regardless of the tender process.**

## **CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals**

President BORIČIĆ stated that one of the interesting candidates for organising the Super Finals was Finland, but they could not confirm their application yet. He suggested that they should start looking for the next host as soon as possible and be able to confirm as soon as possible.

## **CEV EuroBeachVolley 2025**

The German Volleyball Federation had sent a letter for hosting the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2025 and the CEV President suggested to confirm it.

Mr ADLER mentioned that the German Federation intended to organise the event in conjunction with the World University Games and he inquired how would the CEV be involved in that event.

Mr ENDRES clarified that these two events would not take place together, they would just use the same facilities and venue. The World University Games would take place first and afterwards the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2025, so they were not linked in any way.

## **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the German Volleyball Federation as co-organiser of the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2025 event.**

## **CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup**

President BORIČIĆ reported that there was an issue regarding the organisation of the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup 2023. There were thoughts about modifying the conditions for the organisers, moving it directly to the following year, modifying the number of participating teams or even stopping that competition. He opened the floor to everyone to share their suggestions.

Mr LEITNER shared that the Austrian Volleyball Federation had expressed its interest through an official letter sent during the previous Board meeting, and that they were considering the options in order to organise that event in Austria in 2024. However, in the meantime, substantial challenges had come up since none of the preferred venues was available during the event dates. In addition, they were not able to get any TV time because it was the start of the football European Championship and, lastly, they were made aware of other countries expressing interest in hosting that event.

Therefore, Mr LEITNER proposed to reopen the tender process and reset the deadline in the following two weeks. This would on one hand put a pressure on the private organisers with whom the Austrian Federation was collaborating and was fully depending on. On the other hand, the reopening of the tender would allow the Austrian Federation to re-evaluate certain options with other organisers in Austria. In brief, he indicated that fundamentally they were willing to organise the event, but they could not take the risk to organise it as a federation without the support of a private organiser.

Having said that, since he was part of the Beach Volleyball Think Tank, along with Mr EVERAERT, he indicated that they needed to reconsider the future Continental Tournament in a different format. He noted that it was a big tournament, with the participation of 16 teams in both genders. He hoped that in the next Olympic Games there would be a possibility to have the top eight countries not qualifying through the FIVB ranking, to play quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals and thus qualify for the Olympics. This way, the CEV would avoid having to run a huge tournament with 16 teams, most of which already knew they would not have a chance of qualifying anyway. Despite his idea for the future, he affirmed that they stayed committed on the current format.

After having listened to Mr LEITNER and the request of the Austrian Federation, and based on the proposal made by the Beach Volleyball Think Tank, Mr ENDRES stated that in the absence of any

application, the proposal to be submitted to the Board was to cancel the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup Final for 2023 and reorganise the qualification pathway, so as to satisfy the commercial demands and commitments towards partners, but also to retain the sportive pathway, so as to be fair to the teams that had participated in the qualification in the 2023 edition. This meant that the teams that had qualified in the 2023 edition would play in the 2024 edition's final, in addition to the teams that would qualify from the 2024 edition, amounting to a total of 12 teams. The increased number of participating teams changed the conditions for the organisers, therefore it was fair to re-open the tender procedure for the following 1,5 month and give the opportunity to federations to apply.

### Decision

**In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to cancel the 2023 edition of the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup Final, move the teams that had already qualified in 2023 to the 2024 Final and keep the same number of teams that would qualify in the 2024 edition, resulting to a total of 12 teams for the final in 2024. In that context, it was decided to re-open the tender for the organisers to apply based on the new conditions.**

### Age Group Beach Volleyball European Championships 2024

The CEV President shared that Georgia, Türkiye, Poland, Spain and Latvia had sent applications to host the Age Group Beach Volleyball European Championships. He indicated that since Spain did not accept the participation of Gibraltar with its national symbol, the CEV had to respect the fact that Gibraltar was an affiliated CEV member federation; thus Spain could not be the host. He continued by mentioning that Latvia had already organised the CEV U20 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023. Therefore, he proposed to appoint Georgia for the CEV U18 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2024, Poland for the CEV U20 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2024 and Türkiye for the CEV U22 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023.

### Decision

**In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the federations of the following countries as hosts of Age Group European Championships 2024 events:**

- **CEV U18 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2024 in Kachreti (GEO)**
- **CEV U20 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2024 in Myslowice (POL)**
- **CEV U22 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023 in Izmir (TUR)**

## 7. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

### Proposals from the ERC

Before presenting the European Refereeing Commission (ERC) proposals, the CEV President shared his serious concerns about the level of the referees across Europe. He felt that the way some referees were handling some mistakes was not in favour of the sport but mainly aimed at protecting themselves. He then shared a few more anecdotes of referees behaviours that he found unacceptable and unfair towards some players. He believed that it was their duty to support the athletes and the teams and not attempt to dominate the game.

Mr LEITNER confirmed that he had also observed similar situations in Beach Volleyball games, especially during the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2023 in Vienna. He felt that this event did not present a good example of referee performance. He saw inconsistency from the referees to a level that was even visible from the

spectators. The coaches were recommending that the referees should be more in touch with the coaches and the players. He believed that they showed a deep lack of understanding of the game. He indicated that the sport in all disciplines was developing so fast that the players were coming up with new skills, e.g. the "jump setting", which was a widespread technique. He argued that the lack of consistency from the referees damaged the games, because teams were punished while working hard to avoid setting mistakes. He proposed to setup a mechanism so that coaches and players would be involved in the briefing or the learning procedures on how to officiate a game.

The CEV President informed everyone that he had been in contact with the FIVB in order to setup a more appropriate system for the referees to avoid such issues, but they did not manage to reach an agreement due to the extra costs. He also mentioned that the ERC was usually proposing referees for the various stages of each competition, and he suggested that they should not directly appoint the referees of the final stages, before even knowing which teams would be competing.

President BORIČIĆ then referred to the approach followed in football, with candidate referees for the final stage, who would be eliminated in the course of the competition in case they performed poorly or made mistakes in the early stages. He suggested that the FIVB as well as the CEV should provide for some kind of budget to help the organisers with these last minute appointments for the referees of the final stages. He emphasised that the ERC needed to make sure that they would appoint the best referees in the final stages.

Mr ARENA wished to also share some points regarding the referees and how the first and second referees had very different preparation levels and performance. In bigger federations, most of them had more experience as first referees on national level. When going to international events, they performed in the position of the second referee. As for the smaller federations, most of the referees lacked the experience to officiate a game on international level. He argued that the ERC should establish a communication link with the national federations in order to prepare their referees for the international competitions.

Furthermore, he observed that many referees were not so familiar with technology and did not have a good communication with the scorer during the game. He expressed his agreement in investing more money to develop the referees and reiterated the importance of the ERC communicating with the national federations for training refereeing for the international events.

Mr ADLER raised the issue of having two referee coaches for the CEV EuroVolley semi-finals and finals in Rome, since everything had worked really well in the early stages of the competition with only one referee coach.

The CEV President agreed with these points. He also added that they needed to minimise the required number of officials stated in the CEV Competitions Regulations and therefore make a careful appointment of officials, so as to only have the necessary number for the good delivery of the game.

He also expressed how dissatisfied he had been with the level of referees throughout the CEV EuroVolley competitions. He suggested that the ERC should directly address the issue and spot the referees with good and bad performances. For important matches on the top level competitions, like the CEV Champions League Volley no mistake could be permitted, because it could cause a great damage to a team's course in the competition.

Going through the proposals of the ERC, he confirmed that the request for a referee coach in final matches of CEV Challenge Cup and CEV Volleyball Cup would not be accepted. He supported the proposal of appointing a challenge referee in the final matches of the CEV Challenge Cup. For the CEV Volleyball Cup and the CEV Champions League Volley starting from the quarter-finals onwards.

Regarding the proposal to increase the per diem, he suggested to postpone this request once again, because he believed it was important to prioritise the quality of the referees performance and then discuss about how to support the best referees.

Mr ADLER indicated that in case the CEV Board decided to increase the per diem for the referees, they should also consider doing that for the supervisors and other officials.

Mr EVERAERT expressed his view that the majority of the referees lacked the professional level required to officiate international events. He argued that while players practiced every day, even if they did not have matches, the referees only officiated once a week. He mentioned the professional referees of other sports on top level, like the NBA for Basketball, and demonstrated that they had excellent skills because they spent a lot of time refereeing. He added that having more referees meant less matches to officiate for each referee. He firmly believed that the best referees needed to have a lot of experience throughout many matches.

The CEV President shared that he had proposed to the FIVB to compile a list with 10-15 professional referees, but the proposal had not been accepted. He suggested they could find a balance among the referees that were fully professional and those who did that along with another job. While recognising the importance of professional referees, he pointed out that Volleyball also needed the referees that worked part time.

He also stated that, in principle, he was not against increasing the per diem from 100€ to 150€, but he wanted to highlight that the quality of the refereeing was a more urgent matter that needed to be resolved and he opened the floor for discussion.

Ms FLEMING addressed everyone and said that in the many years she had been a member of the CEV Board she had never made any comments on the referees or officials, because it was not a field of her expertise. She wished to share two points; firstly, she felt that the standard of refereeing during the Women's CEV EuroVolley was not of the quality she would have expected. She believed that in many matches the referee standards were poor. This ultimately gave the supervisors their biggest problem, because the teams and the players complained about the referees standards. She also expressed her wholehearted agreement with Mr ADLER's comment. Ms FLEMING also shared that during EuroVolley matches in Brussels a second referee coach had been appointed but they did nothing during all the days of their appointment. She felt that they did not have any tasks.

Going back to the point of the per diem increase to 150€, while she did not have any objection to that, she stated that the standard must be improved. She argued that if the CEV Board agreed to an increase in per diem, the referees should also agree to raise their standards. She expressed her disappointment from the refereeing level in many of the matches. Her final point was that she found unacceptable to only have one female referee in the Women's CEV EuroVolley Finals in Brussels, and no female referee in the matches in Ghent. She stated that the CEV should check and challenge the referees and give them the message that if they wished that level of respect they should also provide the level of quality the CEV competitions deserved.

Mr THORSTEINSSON was wondering how it was possible to end up with more referee coaches appointed than needed, when the CEV Competitions Regulations had very clear rules about the officials in a match. He was convinced that the Regulations did not provide for two referee coaches during any match. He also spoke about the need of a better clarification from the ERC. Furthermore, he raised some questions on the way to determine the quality of the referees.

The CEV President shared that based on the approach followed by other sports, where they would increase the number of officials based on the level of the competitions, from quarter-finals, to semi-finals to the finals, considering that the responsibility was different in each stage. If a referee made a mistake in the finals of the football Champions League the stakes were enormous. The referees would risk being excluded for three years in case of a serious mistake. Therefore, the challenge they faced was to take this responsibility to protect the sport as well as themselves. For this reason, President BORIČIĆ suggested to start revising the whole compensation system for all kind of competitions in all levels and then prepare a proposal for the next CEV Board meeting.

Mr ARENA stated that he was in favour of increasing the per diem, recognising the overall increase in costs and the fact that there had not been an increase in years. During a competition at the level of EuroVolley, he believed that there should be an evaluation during the tournament for the referees. He



also indicated how important it was for the referees as well as the ERC to provide substantial work and service to the sport, without exploiting their power. Lastly, he noted that they should go back to keeping the two roles separate: the role of the supervisor who was responsible for the whole event and the role of the referee coach who was responsible for the referees. These two roles should not be mixed, to avoid having a referee as the "master of the game". He pointed that the responsibility for the event and the responsibility for the match were different, and they needed to establish a different control of the game.

The CEV President reiterated the need to evaluate the situation regarding the per diem, and pointed out that it should be made clear that any hesitations towards that issue did not concern money but the quality of refereeing, the results and the support towards athletes.

Mr EVERAERT expressed his support for the proposal to reconsider the structure and the necessary number of officials needed during the events. However, he noted that it was not only a matter regarding the ERC. In the development of the sport they needed to evaluate all the officials, define their added value, etc.

The CEV President agreed with the point made by Mr EVERAERT, mentioning that the referees must be prepared for the whole event and not only for the match. He cautioned that a potential bad behaviour of a referee could destroy the whole investment made in the event. He argued that the referees should have a completely different approach when it came to their role, which should be rather supporting and not against the athletes.

De DOBBELEER agreed with the idea to professionalise the role of the referees and with the notion that the number of referees appointed to a match should be in line with the level of the competition and the number of matches. Furthermore, he noted that after the referee coaches determined who would be the first and second referees, they did not really have any other significant tasks. For this reason, he suggested to assign them with an additional role during the match; they could be in communication with the first and second referees. By the time the referee coach did the evaluation it would already be too late to prevent any serious mistakes.

The CEV President raised serious concerns about this proposal. He shared that in the past, the Regulations provided for a "Judges Conference" to determine whether a referee had made a mistake and during which the match was stopped. This was very frustrating for the spectators. To avoid this, he was convinced that the first referee should have the full rights to make decisions. He also argued that the second referee should be included in the decision making process before reaching the final decision. After a decision is made, the second referees usually do not wish to challenge it. Therefore, their input should be provided before the final decision.

Mr De DOBBELEER highlighted that with the current system, the first referee could hide behind the fact that they did not hear the suggestions made by the second referee and just make their own decisions. President BORIČIĆ replied that such an issue could be settled after the match by the referee coach, but not during the match.

Mr HALANDA also agreed with the idea that the referee coach should not interfere with the decisions during the match. He also noted that often the second referees underestimated their role, they did not provide their much needed help to the first referee. Many of these referees when officiating as first referees were quite good at their job, but when they took the role of the second referee they did not fulfil that role adequately. Furthermore, Mr HALANDA felt that for the top events the appointed referees were not the best ones. He observed many referees during these top events who were not up to such a challenge.

Lastly, the CEV President reiterated that they would consult with the ERC and then come up with proposals for the future.

## Decision

- 1) The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to not appoint referee coaches in final matches of the CEV Challenge Cup and the CEV Volleyball Cup**



- 2) **The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint challenge referees in the final matches of the CEV Challenge Cup. For the CEV Volleyball Cup and the CEV Champions League Volley, challenge referees would be appointed starting from the quarter-finals onwards**
- 3) **The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to re-evaluate the whole compensation system for all kind of competitions in all levels and then prepare a proposal for the future.**
- 4) **The CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the organisation of seminars for female Volleyball and Beach Volleyball international referees in 2024.**

### **Proposals to change the Regulatory Framework**

Following the decision of the CEV XLIV Congress, the CEV President proposed the elimination of article 1.1.1 paragraph 4 point g from the CEV General Regulations.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the elimination of article 1.1.1 paragraph 4 point g from the CEV General Regulations.**

The CEV President clarified that he would respect the CEV Congress decision, even though it was within his rights not to respect it; he could appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), since the CEV Congress entrusted the CEV Board completely with making decisions regarding the CEV General Regulations. All those decisions were fully in the hands of the CEV Board. The CEV Congress had the right to propose amendments to be taken into account in the future. However, he wished to respect the Volleyball family and avoid going to the CAS and create a conflict within the Volleyball community. He truly believed that when a decision was made by an official CEV body, it should be respected and without any problems they could continue working together in the future.

## **8. Proposals from Board members**

Mr ADLER wished to give a follow-up from the CEV XLIV Congress presentation of the 2024 Budget, where he had mentioned the uncertainties of the CEV revenue due to the changes of the calendar and specifically the moving of EuroVolley from 2025 to 2026. The CEV Congress had been asked to approve the Budget as it was, but he wished to go on record that the CEV Board was asking the CEV Office to review the Budget of 2024 and the consequences and to present them to the next CEV Board meeting.

## **9. Any other business**

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI had a request regarding the way the CEV was cooperating with the national federations. He explained that any communication and cooperation the CEV had with national authorities was always conducted through the national federations. However, he explained that there was a situation where the FIVB had decided to open a tender for the next FIVB World Championship and they had employed an agency from London, which was sending the inquiries directly to cities in the whole world, including cities in Europe. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI described how this was causing issues in Poland, since the Polish Federation had a long term agreement with the cities and such inquiries created a confusion. Therefore, he suggested to discuss with the FIVB and asked them to at least inform the national federations if they intended to send an inquiry to a city within their scope.

The CEV President thanked Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI for sharing that situation and encouraged everyone to share such information so that he could provide his support from his position.



## 10. Next meeting

The CEV President informed all the CEV Board members that the next meeting would take place on Friday, 09 February 2024 in Luxembourg.

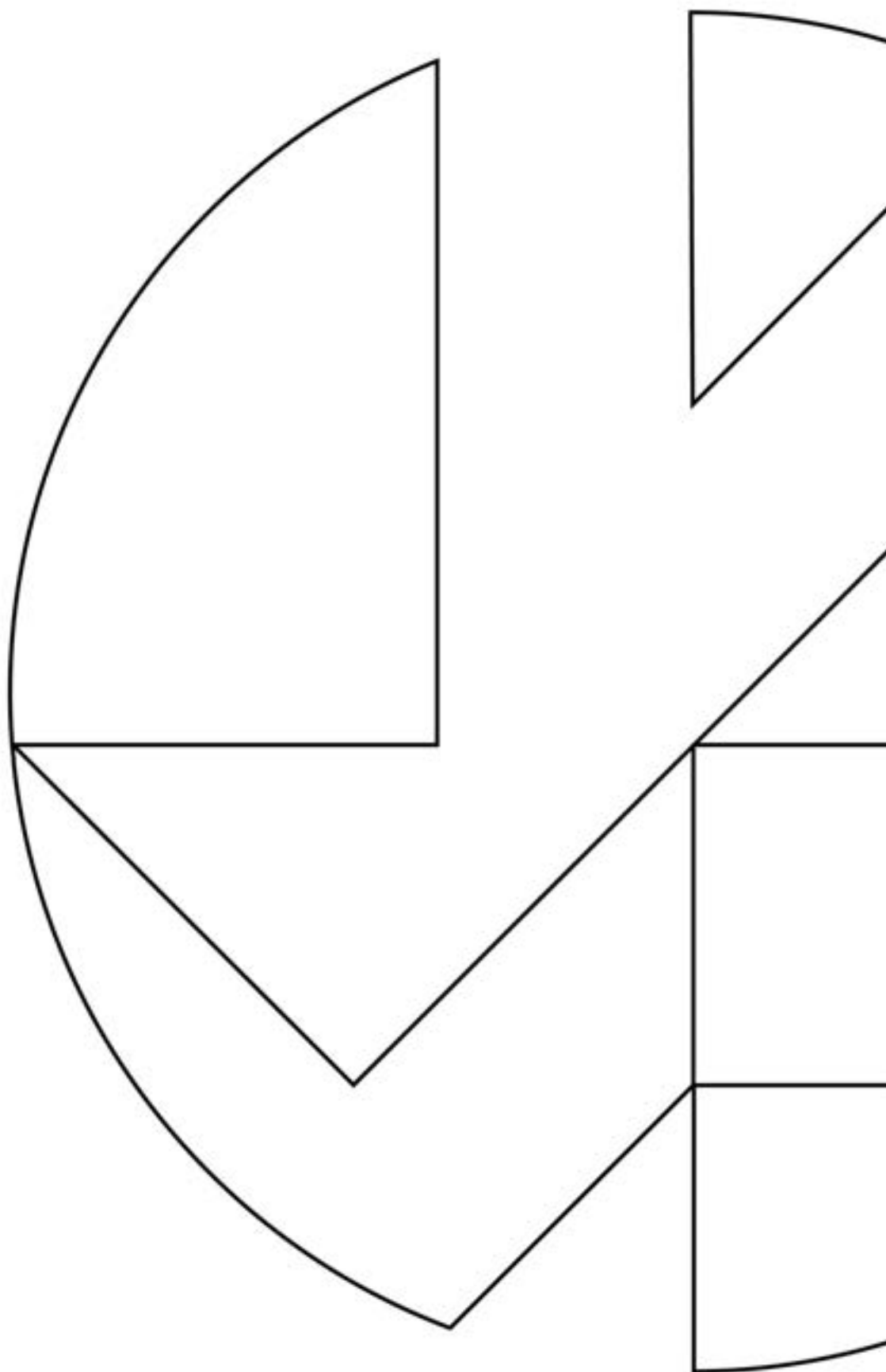
He also invited everyone to consider participating in the CEV Christmas Dinner with the CEV staff taking place in Luxembourg on 15 December 2023.

## 11. Closing of the meeting

Closing the meeting, the CEV President thanked everyone for their cooperation, the fruitful discussions and the important agreement signed with Mikasa.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the Hilton Eur La Lama Hotel in Rome (ITA)  
16 September 2023

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting held  
at the NH Piazza Carlina  
Hotel in Turin (ITA)

20 May 2023



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



Place: NH Piazza Carlina Hotel, Turin (ITA)

Date: Saturday, 20 May 2023

Attendees	Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F°	FIVB President
	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
FIVB	Mr Fabio AZEVEDO	FIVB General Director
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
ELC	Mr Alain FISCHBACHER	ELC President

Excused	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, greeted everyone and thanked the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº, and the FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO, for joining the meeting. He also thanked the Italian Volleyball Federation President, Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI, for the great hospitality and cooperation, noting that the Super Finals, one of the most important events in European Volleyball would take place later that day and it had all happened thanks to the great collaboration between the Italian Federation and the CEV.

Volleyball legend and Olympic Champion, Mr Joop ALBERDA took the floor, speaking on behalf of coaches, referees and players, expressed how honoured he felt to be invited, to participate and to see how the CEV and the FIVB were taking their history with them towards the future. Himself being at the end of his career, after having served elite sport for 45 years, he believed that Volleyball as a sport was capable of changing the world, as it all could start with a small group. He thanked everyone for the hospitality and the opportunity to attend such a prestigious event as the Super Finals, and hoped to see more players in the future get the same opportunity.

## **FIVB President's address**

The FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº, greeted everyone and thanked them for inviting him to attend the meeting. He apologised in advance for having to make a speech full of numbers, explaining that Europe was the platform that would spread Volleyball to at least 100 countries over the world. Responding to some criticism that he had received over the years, due to focusing a lot on numbers, he noted that without money, the sport could go nowhere. The first step was to acquire money and then invest it correctly.

The FIVB President highlighted the importance of the CEV and the amount of knowledge and skills Europe possessed, which could be passed on to the rest of the countries to spread Volleyball around the world. A lot of the countries outside of Europe were willing to put in the work, but they lacked the knowledge on how to proceed. He mentioned the organisation of the CEV Champions League Super Finals as an example of excellence in leading sports in Europe. He believed that the key of success was that the CEV was united and thinking big, not only for itself but for everyone's benefit. During a previous meeting, he had the pleasure of sharing the details of the partnership as well as the entire negotiation between the FIVB and CVC in an entirely transparent way. The CVC had invested \$100 million and they had to find the best way to utilise that investment.

He went on to share some results and future plans. Based on the original business plan created during the negotiation, quoting EBITDA, which stood for 'Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation', the figure was forecast at 59.7 million in 2022. He commented that when making an investment, it would generally take five to six years to mature. Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº advised that if their ideas were approved by the FIVB Board, they expected to make profit that would exceed \$100 million in 10 years, which he called sustainable growth.

Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº explained that people should consider the impacts from Covid and the war in Europe. He added that the money would go into new projects; that they had invested in Europe, and the way they were making money, they would continue to do so. He indicated that they were also investing in Africa, in Asia and the United States, while never forgetting the huge contribution of Europe. He described FIVB's vision as developing Volleyball all over the world by empowering the national federations, national teams, and players, to realise their full potential. He said the FIVB was working hard to achieve this goal through a revolutionary programme of Volleyball Empowerment and Development.

He believed that if you want to do something, you must have a product, and without one, you will not sell anything to anyone, adding that 'ideas don't sell'. He explained that national teams were needed and emphasised their importance, since those competitions attracted the involvement of the government, TV and sponsors. He pointed out that since 2017, the FIVB has approved a total of 770 projects across five continents, at a total of 20 million. Of the 770 projects, 299 were coach support

programmes, 391 Volleyball equipment programmes, and 80 knowledge transfer programmes. Since 2017, the FIVB has invested over 7 million into the National Federations and Zonal Associations in Europe and 185 projects have been approved in 45 National Federations across Europe, with a total investment of 6 million, including 73 coaching support projects, 91 Volleyball equipment projects, and 21 knowledge transfer projects. He stated all money that leaves the FIVB is transparent and can be explained via the dashboard.

As for further numbers, he explained that 73 coaching support projects totalled an investment of 4 million, with 35 Volleyball and 38 Beach Volleyball coaching projects. Through 91 Volleyball equipment projects, the FIVB provided 4,170 balls, 31 courts and 13 net systems to the European National Federations, totalling an investment of over £1.5 million. The FIVB President noted that in the past, the money went to the bank, and never to the National Federations. He said this project includes the joint initiative between the FIVB and the CEV to provide the National Federations hosting the CEV age group European Championships with an official Gerflor court. He noted that an investment of over €300,000 is being shared equally by the FIVB and the CEV, to provide the best-in-class flooring. He indicated that they were always together in all investments they were making.

Speaking of initiatives, he advised they were in line with CEV President, Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, to involve more National Federations in co-hosting age group European Championships, and that initiative worked hand in hand with the FIVB Volleyball Empowerment and Development programmes. He acknowledged that the idea of a European Championship incorporating several countries came from Europe, and remarked that it was an excellent idea, to be followed also by the FIVB. He clarified that the FIVB approved 21 knowledge transfer programmes in Europe, 10 national team coach development projects, three national federation sport management and administration projects, and two referee development projects. He explained the money coming out of sport, goes back into sport in a very transparent way, and highlighted the global data dashboard if people wanted further information on all the numbers.

According to the FIVB President, Europe was leading the world in the areas of knowledge transfer and high-level expert coaching. He stated that half of the coaches in the Volleyball Empowerment and Development programme were from Europe – exactly 63 out of 126 coaches. The programme was to send coaches all around the world, teaching Volleyball and the administrative operations on how can manage a federation.

He was satisfied that the Volleyball Empowerment and Development project in Europe had already delivered results, stating he would provide some examples. He recounted the French Men's Beach Volleyball teams won the gold medal at the Pro Tour elite 16 event in Australia, the silver in the Challenge event in Ipanema in Brazil, and third place at the Futures event in Thailand. He reminded everyone that previously France did not have any cup in the World Tour.

At the same event in Thailand, in the Women's competition, he stated that Lithuania earned the silver medal, while Czechia took the bronze one; both teams were supported by Volleyball Empowerment. At the Commonwealth Games in 2022, 14 of the 24 qualifying Beach Volleyball teams were beneficiaries of the FIVB Volleyball Empowerment, including Cyprus and Scotland. He added that the FIVB also provided court support to The Netherlands' Women's national team for their preparation to compete on home soil during the FIVB Volleyball World Championship. The FIVB, since 2017, has also supported a total investment of over £1 million to the six zonal associations in Europe. They have also allocated a monthly allowance of \$1,000 to each Zonal Association President for their commitment, time, and effort in developing Volleyball in the respective zones.

Additionally, the FIVB President explained almost 2 million were transferred from the FIVB to the CEV from 2012–2021. From 2008–2016, the FIVB sent the annual allocation of 750,000 to the CEV, totalling 6 million. He declared that the money that comes from sport, must go to sport and not stay in the banks.

He reported that in Africa the invested amount of \$20 million had disappeared. However, the system had changed now. He noted that no money would leave the FIVB without a project, where the money would be watched by the Presidents of the Zonals. Since 2008, the FIVB had invested over 50 million into

Europe through CEV National Federations and Zonal Associations. He stated that the money was distributed to all continental confederations.

On the events front, 2023 continued to be an exciting year for Volleyball, with the return of the Volleyball Nations League (VNL) in a few weeks, with host cities announced in Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. The venues for the VNL finals were no exception, with the top eight Women's teams set to battle in Arlington Texas (USA), from 12-16 July 2023 and eight elite Men's teams were to compete in Gdańsk (POL) on 19-23 July 2023. He outlined that Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ was supporting to hold events worldwide, since most events were being predominantly held in Europe. President GRAÇA noted that currently events were held everywhere, in Saudi Arabia, China, and the Philippines.

Moving closer to the Olympic Games in Paris 2024, President GRAÇA noted that six spots would be available at the Olympic qualification tournaments scheduled from 06-24 September 2023 in China, Japan and Poland for the Women's teams. For the Men's edition, the qualification tournaments would take place from 30 September to 08 October 2023, in Brazil, Japan and China. He was convinced that there would be a strong competition. In October, he highlighted that Mexico, who were now doing a lot of competitions also in junior level, would host the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Championship for the first time in the country's history, where 48 teams per gender will fight for the title, with the winners guaranteeing their country a place in Paris 2024. He noted that the FIVB and the CEV were working together on a strategical plan to develop Snow Volleyball globally and reminded that the CEV President was also the President of the FIVB Snow Volleyball Commission. Their goal was to increase awareness of the sport and support youth programmes to foster dedicated players in Snow Volleyball. He indicated that there were around 20 countries that organised Snow Volleyball championships or Snow Volleyball national activities. He clarified that the FIVB encouraged all National Federations to proactively be part of the sport.

The FIVB President maintained that they were on the right track and talked of the importance of continuing their great progress by working even closer with the CEV and all the National Federations in Europe. He remarked that unity was of vital importance and that Europe should not be divided. In the past, he stated there were 30 countries participating; now there were 131 countries participating in FIVB programmes. He argued that this great result was due to the change of attitude and change in the FIVB Constitution introduced in 2016, where they put politics aside and focused on the sport, by only confirming investments that were destined to fund a project.

In the CEV, since the introduction of the new EuroVolley format in 2019, with four National Federations co-organising the event, the numbers of hosts had increased. He indicated that now, 19 National Federations had hosted a preliminary pool of a final round of the event. He stated that was development, with everyone participating. He said that was the goal all over the world.

Despite the pandemic and the financial crisis, he reported that the number of registered teams for EuroVolley was stable. He stated there were 38 teams for the Men's event and 35 teams for the Women's event, which was the result of the excellent work carried out by the CEV Board of Administration and the Presidents of the European National Federations that understand the modernisation of Volleyball.

Furthermore, President GRAÇA said that the CEV Regulatory Framework change proposal was crucial to align the policies and structure of the global Volleyball family across the five continents. He recognised that they were stronger together, rather than separately. He also highlighted that Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, shared the same vision as the FIVB, that the two institutions working together as one united family could build a legacy for Volleyball and grow together. This way they could ensure a sustainable growth of the sport and of the National Federations, providing more opportunities and implement innovation. President GRAÇA finished his address by stating that they could achieve all that by staying together and united.

## **FIPAV President's address**

The Italian Volleyball Federation President, Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI, opened by welcoming the audience to Turin, Italy. He thanked the FIVB President, Dr Ary S GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup>, for his thoughts and information he shared for the sport's growth. He said that it was the result of great work and a vision for Volleyball's future. He thanked FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO, for his important work and also the CEV President, Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, his friend, not only for his great friendship but for something very crucial: for teaching everyone to love not only the sport itself, but all the community that came with it, like the clubs, the federations, etc. and characterised him as the real authentic Volleyball player. He stated that based on what Mr BORIČIĆ had taught them, the Italian Federation was growing through cooperation with other federations in Europe. They were determined to talk less and do more.

Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI explained that in 2023 they had concluded an important agreement with Turkey, exchanging major initiatives. Moreover, they had cooperation agreements with Israel, Albania, soon with Kosovo, with Ireland, which had been made possible as a result of the CEV sustaining their projects. He thanked the FIVB for next week's signing of a protocol together to help federations develop, such as Mozambique and Gambia.

He outlined that everything they were achieving was made under the guidance of either the CEV or the FIVB. He shared that for him personally the greatest satisfaction was to hear from the President of a Federation they were working with that after only one week of that cooperation with the coaches they observed that their athletes had greatly improved. He said their work was done with their hearts and would therefore be successful. He remarked that big federations had the duty to provide their help to everyone and that the Italian Volleyball Federation were always at Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ'S and Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup>'s disposal and available to offer help to other federations.

Drawing attention to the Super Finals, he mentioned that he was sure it would be a success and wished everyone an enjoyable stay in Turin, Italy.

Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup> thanked President MANFREDI, commenting that his federation encapsulated the mentality the FIVB wished to pass worldwide, the mentality of helping each other.

FIPAV President MANFREDI left the meeting afterwards.

## **Follow-up questions on the FIVB President's address**

Mr Michel EVERAERT inquired about whether the 'Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation' (EBITDA) concept resulted to almost a billion in 10 years, practically 100 million per year. The FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO, responded that Volleyball World was 70% from the FIVB and 30% from Volleyball World, so dividends should be shared. He explained that they went through due diligence performed by PWC. The main investor, the CVC, also performed a due diligence audit with their own audit company. Therefore, based on the business plan there was already an increase of 10% from the first year and in the projection of that business plan they expected a second increase. The FIVB President, Dr Ary S GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup>, explained that the FIVB expected their value would be \$1.2 billion in the next 10 years.

## **Official opening of the meeting**

The CEV President officially opened the meeting and thanked once again the FIVB President as well as the FIVB General Director for honouring the CEV with their presence in the CEV Board meeting. He then informed everyone that the President of the CEV European Legal Commission (ELC), Mr Alain FISCHBACHER would also attend the meeting and thanked him for his presence.

CEV Vice-President, Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING, and CEV Board member, Mr René HECHT, were excused.





Once again he wished to thank the Italian Federation for the hospitality, for hosting not only the Super Finals, but also hosting the EuroVolley Men's Finals and the 50th Anniversary Gala in Rome.

In addition, he informed everyone that the opening match of the CEV EuroVolley Women's competition would take place in Verona in the historical Arena Di Verona. He noted that it was the first time that the Italian government accepted to host a sport event in that historical monument since 35 years.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the agenda.**

## 3. Approval of Minutes

### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 25 February 2023 in Mannheim, Germany

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 25 February 2023 in Mannheim, Germany.**

## 4. FIVB – CEV

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ confirmed that the CEV was very happy with the cooperation with the FIVB, which, in many cases, was practically a partnership between the two institutions. The FIVB had many times supported the European National Federations. He remarked that the CEV did not ask for money but for the FIVB's support for the European projects, which were working well.

He also drew attention to the fact that for many years the CEV had been in a difficult position within the FIVB, all four continents being against the CEV, since they felt that the CEV wanted to assume a dominant role over them. He noted that the other continents now recognised that CEV had no such aspirations and, instead, wanted to provide support and work. He highlighted one of the best projects of the CEV that was delivered with the help of the European Union and the Erasmus+ School Project with Asia, noting that Africa had requested similar projects. The CEV and the FIVB had worked together to help the federations in different countries, which he said was their main goal, supported and recognised by all the Board members.

He continued describing how in the past many competitions at world level were held in Europe and it imposed a great financial burden in the European National Federations, who also wished to invest their money in continental level competitions.

He said that the main problem in the past has been the international calendar everywhere. In the upcoming FIVB Board meeting that would take place in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic in June 2024, they would have the opportunity to set up a unified international calendar for many years ahead. As a result, it would be easier to set up the national calendars, offering a clear competition overview for the clubs, facilitating their investment, so as to arrange the media, the sponsors, and to ensure support. He expressed his satisfaction over the stabilisation of the future of the competitions and highlighted the importance of good communication with the states and cities.

The CEV President clarified that in Europe there was significant interest in Snow Volleyball and recounted the first ever zonal Snow Volleyball championship organised by the Balkan Volleyball Association (BVA)

in Bulgaria, including many countries. He hoped that other countries and federations could organise similar tournaments, arguing that even a small step forward could have a snowball effect, long-term for the development of all disciplines of Volleyball. Both he and the FIVB President understood that small countries needed support. Therefore, the two institutions cooperated in order to provide support to the small countries hosting an age group European championship. He indicated that many small countries, like Ireland, Scotland, Faroe Islands and Iceland, Cyprus, and Armenia, had hosted for the first time a competition that was top level for them.

He added that he hoped to find solutions for small countries in relation to Beach Volleyball, due to the challenges for some countries to host an indoor Volleyball competition. He continued that thanks to the good cooperation, Beach Volleyball activities were easier to support in many countries, and commended Sweden's progress with their young Beach Volleyball team, becoming one of the most important in Beach Volleyball.

## 5. 50th Anniversary

The CEV President highlighted the importance of the CEV 50th Anniversary celebrations, because it would be a good opportunity to show respect towards history and towards all the people that had been part of that history and have contributed in their way to what the CEV has become in the present.

He talked about how happy he was to see many Volleyball legends arriving in Torino to attend the Super Finals event, marking the transition from one generation to another. One of the main messages of the 50th Anniversary celebration would be teaching young players to respect previous generations, legends, and working much harder to improve the standard already set.

He expressed motivations of promoting the international events in Volleyball, rather than just focusing on the national level. Italy would be a testament to how much more income those international events bring. If the international level was promoted, all the European federations would benefit. He indicated that countries should use that ethos to become stronger.

While in other institutions the anniversaries were celebrated only in one occasion, the CEV aimed to hold many events throughout the year held in various countries. Mentioning the several celebratory occasions in 2023, the CEV President pointed out that even though the headquarters of the CEV had been in Luxembourg for so many years, not many major events had been held there. Therefore, it was particularly important that for the first time Luxembourg would host the CEV Queen and Kind of the Court European Finals end of June 2023. He thanked the FLVB President, Ms Norma ZAMBON, for her hard work, as well as the CEV and the team of Sportworx.

On that note, Mr BORIČIĆ recommended that the CEV and the FIVB should support Switzerland, where the headquarters of the FIVB were located, with Beach Volleyball, as well as Indoor events. The CEV President said they had spoken with Switzerland and were happy to be involved and work on something in the near future.

Furthermore, he went on to mention the various events throughout the year that would offer the opportunity to celebrate the 50th Anniversary: CEV EuroBeachVolley in Vienna, the opening CEV EuroVolley match in Verona, the XLIV CEV Congress in Brussels next to the CEV EuroVolley Women's Finals, the official 50th Anniversary Gala in Rome next to the CEV EuroVolley Men's Finals, a Snow Volleyball Festival in December. The CEV President also informed everyone about the preparation of a 50-year anniversary book as a special thanks to all federations' Presidents.

The CEV President invited the rest of the Board members to connect and talk with their national authorities about ideas on promoting Volleyball. He noted that all momentum and support from the state was welcome and positive, however small.

## 6. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial partnerships

#### **Infront**

The CEV President expressed how grateful he felt for the understanding shown by Infront during such difficult times, like the pandemic, etc. He said that the CEV would have to confirm its intention to continue working with Infront in the future and handle together the difficulties that had emerged.

#### **Mikasa**

The CEV President informed everyone on the intention to update the existing contract with Mikasa and on the challenges encountered, due to the reduced volume of supply from Mikasa. After the great job performed by the CEV team, they agreed that Mikasa would maintain its overall supply.

#### **Lagardère case**

Then Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the Lagardère case which was in court and after four years there was a ruling in favour of the CEV. The Lagardère Group would have to pay to the CEV the amount of €388,500 plus interest and court expenses.

### Strategic Planning

CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, Mr Eric ADLER, reported on the strategic planning and the future of European Volleyball. He highlighted the previous proposals the working group had raised in one of the previous meetings. He said the goal was to relay the feedback in the meeting and get an approval from the Board today, so they could bring the proposal to the CEV Congress in September. He noted they had received feedback from federations and had asked the CEV Commissions and the CEV Office for their views, and then had consolidated all that information.

He mentioned that the CEV Board had agreed in principle on the mission and vision, which would stay as is, but asked for input on strategic direction. He highlighted the strategic areas they wanted to work with:

- *Volleyball community*; (events, competition system, sports pathway, enlarging grassroots community)
- *popularising Volleyball*; (improved media presence, create awareness among the general public, expand the CEV's global footprint, increase the reputation for public authorities)
- *fan engagement*; (develop loyalty, bring the game closer, improve fan experience, online and in competition halls, expand the CEV's global footprint, leverage technology)
- *financial growth*; (brand growth, diversity of revenue streams, monetising products, sustainable investments)
- *governance* (regulatory improvements, women's representation, transparency, ensuring involvement of stakeholders, not keeping things in a small group, transfer of knowledge)

CEV Board member of Administration, Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, described how they defined five key values that steer the daily business, highlighting **togetherness**, where respect and unity needed to be shown in the Volleyball family. The next value was **responsibility** to build sustainable futures for all activities. He said that they strived for **excellence**, the highest quality of professionalism and enhancing innovation. The next was **inclusiveness**, highlighting that Volleyball was the number one sport worldwide in its gender equality and that it was important to fight against intolerance and discrimination. The final value was **integrity**: to conduct all CEV activity in a transparent way and following the rules of good governance.



He thanked the CEV Managing Director, Mr Thorsten ENDRES, and his team, and wanted to confirm their work around values and to bring it to the CEV General Assembly.

Mr BORIČIĆ highlighted the importance of a good product and the efficient use of that product was vital. He invited all Board members again to submit ideas, considerations, or proposals.

### Decision

**In the absence of any further comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the presented strategic planning to be presented for final confirmation to the General Assembly.**

### Zonal Associations

The CEV President officially informed everyone that the Luxembourgish Volleyball Federation sent their application to become member of the Middle European Volleyball Zonal Association (MEVZA), who accepted. He congratulated MEVZA for understanding that Luxembourg needed more support. He thanked MEVZA for their support in Volleyball. He added that smaller federations had requested more activities and needed more support.

### Decision

**In the absence of any further comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the change of membership by the Luxembourgish National Federation from SCA to MEVZA.**

Mr BORIČIĆ further explained that in line with the Regulatory Framework and following the approval of the CEV Board of Administration, the request will be presented to the FIVB for final confirmation.

## 7. Competition Matters

### CEV EuroVolley 2023

The CEV President reported that various applications for hosting EuroVolley had been submitted, but he wished to first confirm the international calendar during the FIVB Board in June 2023 and only then confirm all the competitions in senior and in age-group level.

CEV Senior Vice-President, Mr Renato ARENA, thanked the FIVB for increasing the level of technology to enhance top events. After three editions of the CEV EuroVolley with the new format, with which the value of the competition went up, he said the next focus was increasing the value for ticketing, by investing money and making more money. He added that Italy's income from ticketing for the CL Super Finals was almost €700,000, that the idea for the future was how to add more value to the sport.

For the CEV EuroVolley 2023 organiser countries Belgium, Italy, Estonia, and Bulgaria, he said there were no organisational problems. In Israel, there were a few issues, since it was their first time to organise such an event, but they managed to find technical solutions thanks to the hard work and cooperation of the CEV Sports Events Department. Overall, he informed the audience that everything was under control.

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ gave thanks to Mr Renato ARENA and Mr Thorsten ENDRES as well as the CEV Events team for establishing a good communication with the organising federations and for encouraging them to intensify their interactions with their governments.

## **CEV EuroVolley 2025**

The CEV President wished to congratulate CEV Board of Administration member, Mr René HECHT, who, in his function as President of the German Volleyball Federation, had sent a letter expressing their intent to organise the next edition of CEV EuroVolley Men's competition. Mr BORIČIĆ explained that a confirmation from the Bavarian government's support was still pending, but he proposed to the CEV Board to nevertheless express their support for the German Federation's appointment as co-host. He also noted that it was a sign of great progress for the German Federation, as well as for Europe and for the FIVB.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously acknowledged the letter of intent from the German Volleyball Federation to co-host the CEV EuroVolley Men Final in the next edition (one pool, four eighth-final matches, two quarter-finals, 2 semi-finals, bronze medal match and final match)**

The CEV President also informed everyone that the Turkish Volleyball Federation had confirmed their intention to organise the next CEV EuroVolley Women (one pool, four eighth-final matches, two quarter-finals, 2 semi-finals, bronze medal match and final match).

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Turkish Federation as co-host of the CEV EuroVolley 2025 Women for one pool, four eighth-final matches, two quarter-finals, two semi-finals, bronze medal match and final match.**

Furthermore, given the anticipated changes of the international calendar, the CEV would discuss with the already appointed organisers of CEV EuroVolley 2025 (ROU, FIN).

## **Beach Volleyball**

### **CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup 2024**

The CEV President reported that the Austrian Federation was interested in hosting the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup for 2024 and explained that there was still no organiser for that event for 2023. He added that Austria always did a fantastic job and that they were happy to go to Vienna for such events.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Austrian Federation and Acts Group as co-hosts of the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup 2024.**

CEV Board of Administration member, Mr Gernot LEITNER, expressed that it was an honour to host the event and said the CEV had the open invitation to Vienna this year, as the Austrian Federation was celebrating its 70 year anniversary. He stated they would send an official invitation and were planning an evening/lunch celebration with the CEV President, Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport, Mr Werner KOGLER, and the President of the Austrian Olympic Committee, Mr Karl STOSS, who was also the Chair of the Olympic Programme Commission. He said they wanted to use that platform to communicate the strength of Volleyball and mentioned how lucky they were in the Austrian Federation, having a very strong and active promoter of their events.

With the opportunity of Dr GRAÇA's presence, Mr LEITNER wished to raise the point of upgrading the VW Beach Pro Tour "Future" events. He explained that while most national tours have €6,000-8,000 prize money per gender, promoters believed that the easiest way for players and organisers to make

money were the "Future" events, since they did not have high costs and they provided a good platform to sell. Therefore, he proposed to consider widening the span of prize money at "Future" events to €5,000-20,000, due to the large number of nations competing.

Moreover, he raised the issue of medium-sized federations holding top-level events. He explained that while there were enough promoters in Austria, it was a challenge to hold multiple level events at the same year (top, medium, zonal level), since they were running the risk of promoters taking away sponsorships, ground and media exposure, etc. He pointed out that they should consider keeping some sort of balance of the events for each year.

### **Champions League Beach Volley**

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the intention of organising a Champions League clubs' competition in Beach Volleyball. After a survey, they discovered that 15 countries in Europe held national championships. However, he commented that the strongest countries in Beach Volleyball on World and European level (like BEL, CZE, GER, POL, LAT, LTH, NOR, SUI, SWE) still did not have a national championship. He argued that it was not possible to have clubs competitions without the best teams competing in them. Before starting with a Champions League competition, the CEV President proposed to first start with a test event. In the meantime, the CEV Office would send a letter to the strongest federations in Beach Volleyball in order to prompt them to consider the introduction of national Beach Volleyball club championships in the next two years and he reconfirmed the intention of the CEV to support the discipline. He believed there was a great potential in Beach Volleyball club competitions. He also cautioned on the importance of players and teams being registered in their National Federations in order to organise official tournaments.

CEV Board of Administration member, Mr Lennart NEOVIUS, confirmed that in Norway and in Sweden there was interest about organising Beach Volleyball club competitions and promised to bring more updates at a later stage on that matter.

## **8. Financial Matters**

### **EFC Meeting updates**

CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, Mr Eric ADLER, started by informing that there had been European Finance Commission (EFC) meeting the previous week, where they had discussed, among others, the CEV banking strategy, around issues with US and Swiss banks and on whether the CEV should spread its banking activity to other banks, but they decided to remain with the current house bank, given the good ratings.

He noted that the CEV Finance department had approved the cooperation with a new fiduciary company, with more modern approach and software, but given the busy period, the new partnership would only start beginning of 2024.

He explained that CEV had invested half of its savings in various investment products. The investment partner Indosuez made a presentation and provided the EFC with an overview of the current world market status, as well as of the CEV's future investments. Mr ADLER explained that the CEV had a conservative approach with a maximum of 30% equities, and the rest would be in bonds and in safe investments. He said the investment would take time but there were possibilities of growth in the future. He stated that the EFC had advised to let the world market stabilise and not increase the risk of investment. Therefore, until that moment the investment did not cover the inflation cost, but it did mitigate some of the financial exposure.

Looking at the numbers, he stated that the Lagardère litigation had ended, which would not improve the balance sheet. He noted if Lagardère would pay, it would help the CEV's cash situation.

## **Accounts 2022**

The overall account results, if they started looking from 2020, were better than expected: €2.5 million and originally planned €1.6 million. As he had explained in the past, there was movement of money and that they would see a positive result. He said €10 million was invested in sports and events (60%), over €6.8 million was allocated for prize money and €2.9 million was additional support for national federations, or clubs linked to activities. He stated €9.6 million was paid directly to the national federations and clubs.

CEV Board of Administration member, Mr Helgi THORSTEINSSON, asked whether there were revenues from the core CEV competitions and generally wanted to be informed about the origin of the cash flow. Mr ADLER explained there was revenue flow from the CEV EuroVolley competitions, which covered the expenditure. He outlined that Beach Volleyball was one of the areas where the expenditures were not covered yet, but there was potential for revenue in that discipline. The Champions League also had potential for revenue.

CEV Managing Director, Mr Thorsten ENDRES, added that comparing the accounts of National Teams and European Cups competitions one would observe a big gap in the European Cups, due to high expenditure and not so much income. The income budgeted under the European Cups were the licence fees, the participation fees paid by the clubs, etc. What was missing in the revenues in those accounts were the sponsorship and marketing rights, including also TV rights. He recounted that a big part of the €8 million budgeted in income on sponsorship and marketing was for Champions League TV rights and he agreed that there was potential, since for the moment it was a break-even business case. The CEV EuroVolley with the hosting fee brought a lot of revenue and was the most valuable competition. While currently the clubs competitions did not bring a lot of income, Mr ENDRES reminded everyone on the strategical CEV Board decision to invest in the clubs competitions in order to raise their value and to eventually receive more revenue in the future. The ultimate and main strategical and political goal was to keep the ownership of the clubs' competition under the CEV umbrella, contrary to the approach of other sports who involved private organisations.

Mr BORIČIĆ said that he was very satisfied with the CEV's approach in investing in new projects and noted that every investment amounted to an income eventually. He illustrated how the bonus of €1 million from the cooperation with Infront was invested back in events production and not kept in the bank. A result of that investment was that the Super Finals were broadcasted in 75 countries across the world. He saw this as a very fruitful investment and was convinced that it would get better gradually every year.

The FIVB President, Dr Ary S GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup>, agreed with the CEV President's comments, that investing money into their business would make more money in the future. He offered the CEV the possibility to observe how the FIVB was handling their financial applications and portfolios and to also see the new technology that they were using. He invited them to collaborate if they thought the financials were relevant, without needing to disclose any information, and see how much their fees and taxes were.

President GRAÇA went further to explain the various financial systems they used, noting that everyone who invested money used the system of the triangle: the first part is no or low risk, then medium risk, and then some risk. He explained the drawdown system was great for recovery and confirmed that the FIVB was at the disposal of the CEV to demonstrate all the numbers and their approach.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any further comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Accounts 2022, which would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final consideration.**

## **Updated Budget 2023**

The CEV Treasurer proceeded to 2023 accounts, explaining that at the CEV General Assembly the previous year, the expectation was a minus of €870,000, but the reality would be a minus of €1.6 million, which is approx. €750,000 more than expected. He stated the breaking budget was almost €22 million in expenditures, which was around €1 million more than planned. He illustrated that they had invested €13 million in sports and events, around 60%, with over €9 million prize money and €3.4 million in added direct support to National Federations and clubs.

As he had mentioned at the last CEV Congress, they needed to consider the numbers of 2020 and 2021 together. These were the years during the pandemic, where big losses had occurred. He noted that 2022 had been fantastic, more than they had expected, though not so good in terms of numbers. He highlighted they had almost plus €1 million for 2022/2023, which he said they would not use right away.

He noted that the CRM platform had cost around €250,000 plus €110,000, but considered it an investment, which would hopefully generate a return in the next couple of years. He reported that CEV's revenues were adjusted between 2022 and 2023.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the updated budget 2023, which would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final consideration.**

## **Budget Proposal 2024**

Mr Eric ADLER proceeded to the budget proposal for 2024 and said the expected result was a minus of €2 million, noting that the revenue budgets were on the conservative side. He commented that they had compared with 2022 to get a more accurate image for a year after the EuroVolley and have some balance. He highlighted an expenditure of over €2.3 million and would have €10 million invested in sport, which was 54%; over €7 million in prize money; plus direct support to national federations of around €3 million. In comparison to figures from 2022, they had a plus of €250,000 for the general management, commissions and working groups, due to many online meetings, whereas they had now returned to physical meetings.

Staff had increased compared to 2022. Some staff members had left in 2023 and new members had joined, and this difference would be visible in the budget of 2024. He also informed that in Luxembourg there was automatic indexation for salaries when inflation grows. He added that they were looking at possible recruitments in 2024. He noted there were fewer EuroVolley payment flows because they came in 2023. Still on the expenditure side, there was more investment on the data platform than in 2022, plus more investments on the website and the Erasmus+ project. Revenues were calculated at €2.4 million less than 2022, plus a bonus which they had not calculated, at €700,000. He remarked that they expected more income from the Champions League due to the changed format, which had been approved last year.

The payment flow for EuroVolley 2025 was different compared to 2022 and would have some influence of €1.5 million. He stated the EU fund payments appeared in 2023 and 2025, not in 2024. One important thing to mention was the missing sum of €3.5 million due to the FIVB decision to change the continental Olympic qualification, a fact that needed to be addressed. Mr ADLER felt that the CEV needed to start looking at other revenue streams. Because of these changes, there was some insecurity and challenges with Infront, relating to the missing events. He was looking forward to the clarifications regarding the international calendar expected during the FIVB Board meeting that would take place in June 2023, which would greatly facilitate the work of Infront in selling the CEV products.

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ stated that President Dr Ary S GRAÇA F° had greatly contributed to allocating power to professional people, who in turn could bring something good for politicians. He noted that the CEV had invested in the development of FIVB competitions. The CEV supported the FIVB decision but had resulted with a loss of €3.5 million. He commented that he was sure the FIVB could find a



compensation solution in a project together with the CEV. He described that €3.5 million was a significant amount for the budget of the CEV which would completely change the balance image. The CEV strived every year to reach a higher level and achieve a bigger income. He specified that the focus on income was not to keep it in the bank but return it through investments to sport projects.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the budget proposal for 2024, which would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final consideration.**

The FIVB President agreed with the CEV President and said the FIVB recognised the issues they faced. He was convinced that as soon as the proposed changes would be approved by the FIVB Board in June 2023, solutions would be found for the challenges the CEV was facing.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked the FIVB President for his message and said it was very important for CEV's future that they had support from the FIVB for investments in competitions and for making better events.

# 9. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

## Proposals from the ELC

### Changes in the CEV Statutes

CEV Senior Vice-President, Mr Renato ARENA noted that the FIVB wished to align the Statutes and Constitutions in all five continental confederations and expressed his full support for that proposal. However, with regards to the mandate period of the Confederation President, he believed that it would be appropriate to keep it for four years, given that the confederation was a different institution than the FIVB, and also in order to leave room for the future generations to take over the leadership.

The President of the European Legal Commission (ELC), Mr Alain FISCHBACHER, thanked the CEV President and explained that the FIVB's initiative was to start aligning the regulatory framework of the FIVB and the confederations. The ELC had already started working on the project, they had submitted their proposals in the previous CEV Board meeting and, after the feedback, they amended certain points and also introduced some additional points. Mr FISCHBACHER would focus his presentation on those new additional points.

In order to achieve the alignment with the FIVB Regulatory Framework, the position of the CEV President would become a separate institutional body, as it was the case for the FIVB President. This led to the additional need for a clarification in the CEV Statutes, and Mr FISCHBACHER noted that this clarification had not been included in the ELC Minutes that had been presented to the CEV Board.

Currently, the CEV Statutes stipulated that a National Federation presents one candidate per vacant position. Therefore, Mr FISCHBACHER proposed to amend article 1.2, paragraph two of the CEV Statutes, so that federations could present a candidate either for the position of the CEV President or for the position of CEV Board member, not for both. Without this amendment, this would be possible and until now there was no such possibility, so the amendment would not introduce anything new, but rather preserve the status quo.

CEV Vice-President Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI asked for a clarification in case a federation proposed a presidential candidate and that candidate did not get elected; he enquired whether that meant that this federation would entirely lose the opportunity to be represented at the CEV Board.

Mr BORIČIĆ argued that this was a risk that each federation should take into consideration when choosing which candidates to propose for each position. He added that this rule was introduced in

order to prevent agreements under the table and safeguard the institution. He also added that a presidential candidate that did not get elected should not be directly included as a Board member.

CEV Board of Administration member, Mr Metod ROPRET, stated that while he understood the principle behind this rule, he indicated that they would run the risk of missing the representation of the strongest countries in the CEV Board in case those strong countries presented a presidential candidate and that candidate lost the elections.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI believed that they should avoid the risk of losing the representation of strong countries in the CEV Board and asked whether they would consider including the losing presidential candidate as a Board member.

Mr BORIČIĆ accepted to have an open discussion on that matter.

CEV Board of Administration member, Mr Lubomir GANEV, expressed his support for the proposed amendment, adding that being the President or the Board member of the CEV was not just a title, but a position that involved a great deal of responsibility and hard work. In addition, he stated that he was in favour of having a candidate first serve in the position of a Board member, where they could demonstrate their skills and then be able to apply for the position of the CEV President.

Mr BORIČIĆ then mentioned that they should take account of the personality of the potential presidential candidate. If a presidential candidate had the personality of the leader, in case they were not elected, they might not accept or be appropriate to fill in another position.

CEV Vice-President, Mr Michel EVERAERT, expressed his support for the argument of Mr BORIČIĆ regarding the personality of the potential presidential candidate, maintaining that the presidential candidate that had lost the election could potentially be overly disruptive in the discussions of the CEV Board.

Mr LEITNER recalled a similar situation that had occurred during the last elections and while some big countries were no longer represented in the Board, he believed that it was a risk that each federation had to assume. He fully agreed that the presidential candidate had to have a different stature, but he believed that a federation should be able to propose both a presidential candidate and a Board member, because it was important to have the strong federations represented in the Board for the development of the sport.

At that point Mr FISCHBACHER wished to differentiate the two points for which they had to find a solutions. Firstly, it was the question whether a federation could send two candidatures, one for the position of President and one for the position of Board member. That was the point mentioned in paragraph 2 that needed to be amended and clarified. He indicated that up until today this was not possible. He also pointed out that if this would be allowed, then a federation could potentially have two representatives in the Board. The second question regarded paragraph 3, and it was whether a presidential candidate that was losing could still be candidate for the Board, to which the Board had answered with a 'no'.

Mr THORSTEINSSON wished to express his opinion and while he believed that anyone should be given the right to apply for the presidency, he felt that it would not be fair and ethical to allow a federation with two representatives in the Board, because they would have more rights than others.

For paragraph 2, the solution that CEV Vice-President, Ms Emma LABRADOR, proposed was to allow a federation to present two candidates (i.e. one presidential and one for the Board) and to also include a clause stipulating that in case the presidential candidate won, the candidature of the Board member would be automatically cancelled. Such a clause would eliminate the risk of not having the strongest federations represented in the Board.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS agreed that each national federation should be able to propose one person for the presidency and another for the Board member. He said if the presidential candidate was elected, then the Board member candidate should be eliminated. If the presidential candidate was not elected,



then the CEV General Assembly should decide whether they wanted to elect the Board member candidate. He believed that this was the more straightforward approach and beneficial for the development of the sport.

Mr Lubomir GANEV remarked that it was better to keep the status quo, whereby one federation was only able to propose one candidate. Citing the example of Turkey, he clarified that they only had a candidate for the Board and not for the President, and that candidate had not been voted by the General Assembly. He said it was very important for every federation to take a candidacy risk on the right person for the right position. He outlined that if a federation had someone that matched the capacity for President, they should put them forward, and added that if the federation was not sure, they could propose the candidate for the Board. He stated that, in his opinion, this was the right way in terms of process.

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ stated that the presidential candidates were supposed to be the best persons for Volleyball in the country. Therefore, in case a presidential candidate lost the election, would it be wise to eliminate them and choose another person for the Board? He said it was up to the federation to propose the best people and that it made no sense to eliminate these best people and choose someone else if they were unsuccessful.

Mr Eric ADLER questioned whether the elimination of good presidential candidates was good or healthy for Volleyball. He said he was concerned they were complicating the discussion by trying to find solutions to get around everything. He said he understood the risk of agreements under the table in the past, and felt they needed to ask themselves whether they should try to manoeuvre the rules to get things to work or to keep the rules as they are today and let the CEV Congress decide who the best candidates were and what they were allowed to do. Lastly, he questioned what was more important; to block any potential agreements under the table or to allow the democratic process to regulate what they were doing?

On the contrary, Mr BORIČIĆ felt that the situation was clear, he believed they must choose to support one candidate from one country, they should not eliminate the presidential candidates, thus give the chance to the best people to be elected for the Board. In case of several presidential candidates, it would be a disaster to eliminate all of those. Therefore, in case those candidates lost the presidential election, they could be subjected to the vote of the General Assembly in order to be elected in the Board and thus contribute further as the best persons. The rest of the CEV Board members agreed with that.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed that each federation could only present one candidate either for the position of the President or for the position of Board member; the non-elected presidential candidates could be eligible for Board members to be voted by the CEV General Assembly.**

Mr Alain FISCHBACHER explained that they would implement the decision for the President and Board, and for the possibility to apply the same person for President and Board member. He stated they would amend paragraph three in article 1.2. of the CEV Statutes accordingly. He also clarified that this possibility would be limited for the positions of the President and Board member; it could not be further transferred to a candidacy as CEV Commission member, etc.

Mr FISCHBACHER went on by briefly informing about some amendments that were quite straightforward and did not need any discussion. He continued by mentioning an amendment for the term of office for President and therefore, proposed they add article 4, paragraph one, and that they use the same wording for the President as for the Board members (as well as the same as the FIVB had for the Board members). He noted that the president would be elected for four years and may serve a total of three terms, consecutive or not. This would lead to a total of 12 years for the President, which was the same as the FIVB. The CEV Board members agreed with that proposal.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the proposed changes of the CEV Statutes to be presented to the General Assembly for final consideration.**

### Changes in the CEV General Regulations

Mr FISCHBACHER indicated that the proposed amendments regarding the eligibility in Article 1.1.1. paragraph four, did not aim to exclude but rather sharpen the profile of the President. He suggested that they should change the meaning of that point, that it should only apply for Presidency and not for the Board members. He added that expertise in Volleyball was a prerequisite for all positions and that measuring this expertise was difficult. For the important position of the President, they needed clear and fair and transparent conditions that everyone would be aware of and everyone could check. He proposed that they clarify the point for the position of CEV President, to have a 'broad experience in Volleyball and leadership, including serving at least four years as a board member in a National or International Volleyball Federation.' He indicated that with this clarification the requirement of the Volleyball expertise would be sharpened and would be easy to check and control, expressing the opinion that it produced a clear profile for such an important position.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS believed that Mr Alain FISCHBACHER's point around the CEV President should be in the profile and not in the Regulations. He noted that someone could be the best candidate and not have four but only three years' experience or even not at all. He also stated that the President of a federation, of a CEV or FIVB body does not have to be a Volleyball expert. He mentioned the example of the Swedish Football Federation who had elected as their President the former Prime Minister. While a direct comparison was not possible, he argued that he was a typical person one could expect to have a strong power to develop the sport and a person that liked the sport. He commented that formal experience was not definitive; it should be a list of leadership roles, experience in working with major companies and so forth. However, putting those stipulations in the regulations was completely wrong, in his opinion.

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ disagreed with Mr Lennart NEOVIUS's position citing a similar example from the past. He continued by saying that experience in Volleyball was of vital importance for the betterment of the sport. He said that the sport needed people from within the Volleyball community, adding that every National Federation had the right to propose their Board members to run for certain positions, and that this would guarantee the democracy. The CEV General Assembly should decide who the best candidates were for the various positions. He considered it very important for the candidates to have served Volleyball for a certain period. The CEV President remarked that politicians liked to take whatever was good for them and would not necessarily have the sport's best interests at heart.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI agreed with the CEV President's sentiments but remarked that not all members of National Federations' Boards were people of the Volleyball community, since there were many politicians involved. While he agreed that the presidential candidate should have a broad knowledge of Volleyball, he believed that the condition of serving as Board member for four years would completely eliminate candidates that were very capable. He also added that the CEV General Assembly should be the body to choose.

The CEV President believed that experience in managing European Volleyball was crucial and he hoped that the National Federation would choose to present their best people as candidates. He argued that politicians wished to produce fast results, without knowing the details and the needs of each European country in terms of Volleyball, since they could switch to another sport at their next mandate.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI asked how the situation was today and whether there was any regulation around the topic. Mr Alain FISCHBACHER replied that currently there was a broad mention of needed experience in Volleyball and noted that the challenge was around measuring this experience for such an important position. He pointed out that clarifying the requirements of this outstanding position was the correct approach in the sense of good governance, transparency and clarity.

Mr Lubomir GANEV highlighted that changing the Statutes was not only the CEV's wish, but also the wish of the FIVB. He noted that the Statutes of the two institutions should be more unified. He also added that in the FIVB Constitution it was stipulated that only the FIVB Board members could be presidential candidates. He believed that the candidate for the CEV President position should certainly come from the Volleyball community but they should also be an expert in good governance, considering it one of the most important qualities. He expressed his full support for Mr FISCHBACHER's proposal, stating that the CEV would be much more aligned with the FIVB. In the future the CEV might even have to include the same condition as the FIVB, but for the moment he considered that this proposal was more fair than the previous one and they needed to support it. And while the CEV General Assembly would be the one to vote on it, the CEV Board should at least propose this solution.

The CEV President explained that the CEV Board's duty was to prepare and present the best proposal and then the CEV General Assembly could decide on that.

Mr Gernot LEITNER strongly supported the proposal and said they had striking examples at the International Ski Federation at the last election, where there was a lobby for a businessman who only had experience in producing skis. This person ended up braking the whole system, ruining partnership agreements and causing a havoc with court cases. Mr LEINTER said the message from that example was that they needed people who understood the history of the sport and would protect what had been built in the last decade through the institution. Switching the point of view, he noted that as National Federations, they were forced to increase professionalism in leadership, in the Board, in Volleyball skills, in communication skills, in language skills, in project skills. He also illustrated the case of people from the CEV staff bidding for a candidacy, and expressed the opinion that the President of such a large organisation should have presidential experience. He outlined that the President's job was political with a strong responsibility to sell to the outside world in the interest of Volleyball.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration confirmed the proposed amendment in Article 1.1.1 paragraph four of the CEV General Regulations, that the candidate to the position of CEV President should have a broad experience in Volleyball and leadership, including serving at least 4 years as board member in a National or International Volleyball Federation.**

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ stated that there were two abstentions and the rest supported the proposal.

Mr Alain FISCHBACHER stated they were adapting all the provisions for the Board elections according to the adapted CEV Statutes, the provisions for the gender in minority, and also adding a new Athletes' Commission. In addition, he mentioned that they were fusing the European Cups Commission (ECC) with the European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC) to form the European Volleyball Commission (EVC). For the Athletes' Commission, in Article 19.3, 'Candidatures to this Commission shall be submitted to the Secretariat by a National Federation by registered letter', Mr FISCHBACHER proposed that they should add 'sending by facsimile or email shall also be accepted', since it was the case for the other Commissions.

Mr BORIČIĆ added that in the last election there was a case of candidate in three commissions, something which would not be possible anymore. He argued that they needed stronger Commissions with experts in the future.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS commented on the provision in paragraph 50, regarding the Zonals, saying that he believed they needed more people in various roles, and not putting more roles on the same person. He said it was also against the initiative taken, making the Zonal Presidents more active. He remarked that excluding non-presidents and non-general secretaries was a strong limitation and would make it hard to find people for the Zonal Associations.

Mr Alain FISCHBACHER clarified that in the end they would have to take the FIVB wording, which was still being processed. As soon as the FIVB adapted their wording on that topic, the CEV would also have to adapt one to one.

Mr THORSTEINSSON also commented on that provision, saying that it would exclude potential good candidates that would have the energy and the time to work and contribute to the Zonal Associations. He described that many times the Presidents or the Secretary Generals did not have the time to fulfil this role and they delegated it to someone else. He believed that they should embrace this possibility and keep 'more hands on deck', because he knew from first-hand experience that there was a lot of work in such roles. Therefore, he strongly urged the FIVB to reconsider that provision.

Mr LEITNER disagreed with that point saying that they needed the best possible persons to be involved in a Zonal Association, deeming the work conducted there as very important. He explained that the Zonal Association was associating member countries, therefore the Board of that association should have a direct executive leadership role in its own federation, in order to keep close to the interests of the National Federation. While recognising the problem that this provision would pose with the extra work, he asserted that it should be accepted as it was. He also added that it was because of that load that they were reforming the Austrian Federation in such a way that the President would nominate a strong First Vice-President who would be dealing with the daily business.

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ clarified that they needed Zonal Associations to be active and said they had a great cooperation with the FIVB. The CEV could provide support but not in terms of additional financing. He noted the Turkish Federation was working hard and had managed to bring sponsors for the Balkan Volleyball Association. He added that each Zonal Association should draft a strategic plan for the next four to six years, so as to be able to receive support from the CEV and the FIVB.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the rest of the proposed amendments to the CEV General Regulations.**

### **Changes in the CEV Disciplinary Regulations**

Mr Alain FISCHBACHER said that the CEV needed to align with the FIVB changes. The FIVB would dissolve the distinction between simple and major offenses. This would have a positive effect, as it would broaden the possible sanction categories and offer more flexibility for finding the right sanctions.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes in the CEV Disciplinary Regulations.**

### **Changes in Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations**

Mr ENDRES wished to clarify that the changes in the Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations included the age group championship, which had been decided in the last Board meeting, therefore the changes were meant to sharpen these regulations by setting the same standard as with Beach Volleyball, and raising Snow Volleyball to a more professional level.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes in the CEV Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations.**

### **Proposal from the CEV Development and Cooperation with ZAs WG**

Mr ENDRES continued to present the proposal from the CEV Development and Cooperation with Zonal Associations Working Group. He explained that the WG had formulated a Volleyball curriculum with teaching material for physical education teachers and coaches for young people, which had been requested for several years. He said the material was created in the frame of the Erasmus+ School Project. There was also a request to create dedicated teaching material for Beach Volleyball, in order



to make the sport appealing to boys and girls at the starting level. He continued by mentioning the proposal for a collaboration with the well-known top coach, Mr Kåre MOL, who has a broad experience in age group competitions, in order to create the dedicated Beach Volleyball material. There was an overall cost of €41,000 and the proposal from the Working Group was to approve this, so as to have the same material for Volleyball and Beach Volleyball.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal from the CEV Development and Cooperation with Zonal Associations Working Group for the creation of dedicated Beach Volleyball teaching material.**

## 10. Proposals from Board members

No points discussed.

## 11. Any other business

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked the Bulgarian Federation, for hosting the CEV Coaches Convention in Sofia. He reported that 163 teachers and young coaches would attend from 42 federations. He also thanked the previous host countries: Slovenia and North Macedonia. He explained that the CEV Coaches' Convention was very beneficial for the teachers and young coaches in each country. Mr BORIČIĆ noted that this event was a fantastic investment for the CEV.

## 12. Next meeting

The CEV President reminded all the CEV Board members that the next meeting would take place on Saturday, 16 September 2023, in Rome, Italy.

## 13. Closing of the meeting

Closing the meeting, the CEV President thanked everyone for their cooperation. He also thanked the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup> and the FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO for honouring the CEV Board with their presence during the meeting. He felt that this sent a strong message that the CEV and the FIVB were close together.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the NH Piazza Carlina Hotel in Turin (ITA)  
20 May 2023

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting held  
at the Radisson Blu Hotel in  
Mannheim (GER)

25 February 2023



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



Place: Radisson Blu Hotel, Mannheim (GER)

Date: Saturday, 25 February 2023

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
Excused	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, greeted everyone and officially opened the meeting. He thanked the German Volleyball Federation and its President, Mr René HECHT, for the invitation to the German Cup Final.

He expressed his sympathy to the people who had been affected by the devastating earthquake in Türkiye at the beginning of February 2023.

Ms LABRADOR was excused for that meeting.

# 2. Approval of Agenda

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

# 3. Approval of Minutes

## Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 17 November 2022 in Naples, Italy

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 17 November in Naples, Italy.**

## Minutes of the CEV EBVC, ECOC, ELC, ERC and Legal Chamber Meetings

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration acknowledged the Minutes of the CEV EBVC, ECOC, ELC, ERC and Legal Chamber Meetings.**

# 4. FIVB – CEV

## FIVB Board meeting

The FIVB had called for an FIVB Board meeting on 20 May 2023. However, the CEV President noted that since the CEV would hold the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals and the CEV Board meeting in Torino, Italy, on that day, another solution had to be found. They had suggested to establish a video link between the two Board meetings, but the CEV President felt that such an approach would give out a message of competitiveness between the two institutions, and that was to be avoided. The new proposed date for the FIVB Board meeting was 21-24 June 2023.

## Joint CEV-FIVB Gerflor donation

The CEV President expressed his appreciation towards the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup>, for the joint investment of the Gerflor donations to National Federations of category 1 and 2 co-organising CEV

Age Group European Championships. He also thanked the CEV Board members for accepting to provide an additional support of 10,000€ to those small scale federations.

### **Cooperation of big and small federations**

In the spirit of cooperation and solidarity, the CEV President referred to the cooperation of the Polish Federation with the Scottish one, as well as the cooperation of the Italian Federation with the Albanian, the Israeli, the Irish, the Maltese, the Turkish and the Slovenian federations. He commented that he was very pleased to see two big federations like the Italian and the Turkish one cooperating and not competing against each other. He hoped to see more such collaborations in the future and pointed out that this was a new approach, that had not been witnessed in the past and he was very pleased about it. He emphasised how beneficial these cooperations would be for everyone in the Volleyball community and how important it was to show respect for one another, no matter the budget each federation had available.

### **International Testing Agency**

While doping is not such a frequent issue in Volleyball, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) had developed a more accurate system to perform controls. The CEV Managing Director, Mr Thorsten ENDRES, explained that further to a recent meeting with the FIVB legal and medical team and together with the CEV European Medical Commission (EMC) President, Mr Manfred HOLZGRAEFE, he reported that the WADA code had changed recently. In the past, it was the CEV deciding which competitions and players would be selected, based on the draw. After the change, the responsibility did not lie with the organising federation or with the governing body but with a neutral authority. Therefore, the IOC had created the International Testing Agency (ITA) on a world level. The FIVB had already collaborated with ITA in the previous year, in the framework of the FIVB World Championships. The CEV was the first confederation to raise that issue with the FIVB since it has many upcoming competitions. As a result, the FIVB is currently negotiating with ITA in order to create a project for all confederations. Considering the fact that with the new WADA code the FIVB should be in charge of that procedure, the CEV believed that they should also bear the cost for the doping controls. Anyhow, each international federation gets support from the IOC for anti-doping. Therefore, the CEV was in negotiations with the FIVB, in order to integrate the confederations –and thus the CEV events– into the FIVB agreement with ITA.

### **International Calendar**

The CEV President gave a brief account of the current situation regarding the proposed changes in the international calendar by the FIVB. After the initial reaction to those changes, the situation had reached a kind of stalemate and currently there were no new updates. For the upcoming FIVB Board meeting, the CEV President advised the European representatives in the FIVB Board to speak openly about the matter when given the opportunity.

### **Constitutional alignment across confederations**

Furthermore, the CEV President noted that before the electoral Congress of the FIVB, there was an attempt to review the statutes of all the confederations in order to align them. For this project, the CEV was represented by the CEV European Legal Commission (ELC) President, Mr Alain FISCHBACHER. The key changes to be proposed to all confederations were the duration of the presidential mandate, the eligibility criteria for Board members, etc. A draft document had been produced and shared in the working file of this meeting. It had to be finalised before the Congress of 2023, where it would receive the final approval.

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President & Treasurer, inquired whether the constitutional framework project would be presented to be voted in the following Board meeting. The CEV President specified that the

project was still in progress and that the aim was to be aligned with the provisions of the FIVB and the rest of the confederations and avoid proposals that would put the CEV in conflict with them and cause discrepancies. He explained that the aim was to provide some information as a first step and as soon as there would be a concrete proposal, it would be presented for a vote in the next Board meeting.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial Partnerships

#### **Infront**

Mr BORIČIĆ opened but stating how happy and satisfied he was with the Infront partnership and the agreement signed just before the pandemic hit. He felt it was a very beneficial partnership for both sides and it had come at the right moment. However, he admitted that it was a very critical moment for the market and many companies struggled. More specifically, the exclusion of the Russian market has had an impact on the industry. Despite all that, Infront remained loyal to the CEV agreement's terms. At the same time, though, they had expressed some serious concerns on the imminent International Calendar changes that the FIVB intended to apply. Mr BORIČIĆ commented that while the proposed changes might be good for the sport, they were not as favourable for the business side. Eliminating the 2024 Continental Olympic Qualification tournaments would prove beneficial for the Olympic Games, opening the way to the strongest teams. However, from the business perspective that meant more than a 1 million EUR loss for Infront and 3.5 million EUR loss for the CEV. He then asked Mr ENDRES to brief the CEV Board members on the meeting held with Infront the previous week.

Mr ENDRES started by mentioning that since the beginning the CEV-Infront partnership had been characterised by openness in the discussions and the exchange of opinions. The aim was to reach mutual solutions, going beyond the contractual obligations in order to increase the value of the products in terms of additional production standards for the Champions League Super Finals, Graphics, Lighting, etc. Due to some incidents, some of which were caused by force majeure and were impossible to predict, Infront had found itself in a challenging situation.

First of all, the cancellation of the Olympic Qualification tournament, which had been part of Infront's business plan for the three editions (2024, 2028 and 2032) when they entered the partnership and which amounted to 3.5 million EUR. A solution was needed in order to compensate that loss. Based on the agreement, Infront was to cover the TV production for the CEV EuroVolley events for one city per country. In the co-organisers agreement there was a provision that if for any reason they chose additional host cities in their country, they would bear the additional costs of production. However, the CEV argued that it was beneficial for the sport and for the events to have more host cities and utilise iconic venues, so there was an open negotiation on covering those additional production costs.

Furthermore, there were discussions on the new Beach Volleyball products. Based on the contract, the first negotiation rights for any new competition lied with Infront. A solution had been found, but with the increasing costs and the low market movement Mr ENDRES expected that they would challenge that solution with the additional production costs. He argued that they could not back up on the income on such a short notice.

The last point mentioned during the meeting, which was their concern on the ban of the Russian teams from the CEV competitions. There had been an agreement with Match TV, a Russian broadcaster, but due to the fact that no Russian teams participated in the CEV competitions, there was a certain decrease in the business.

There were also discussions on the upcoming CEV EuroVolley event. Even though the Russian National Team would not participate in the event, a decent agreement had been signed with Match TV. However, Infront was expecting a higher amount to come from that agreement. Mr ENDRES concluded that it was a challenging time; all the available figures were going to be analysed internally as well as in the



following CEV-Infront Steering Committee. He indicated that, based on the contract, there was an escalation process: Infront first addressed the issues on an operational level, they gave the CEV time to analyse and then there was another approach during the Steering Committee to discuss. In case no solution could be found, then, according to the contract, the issue would be escalated to the two Presidents of both sides in order to reach a solution.

In addition to the concerns expressed by Infront, the CEV had asked them to comment and analyse the potential International Calendar changes. Infront's Media Intelligence team had evaluated a potential impact, only as an anticipation. In the present, no one could predict the impact of moving the EuroVolley events from odd to even years. The first anticipation was that the proposed changes would have a negative impact for European Volleyball of 35% on the media revenues and 30% on viewership in terms of spectators, mainly due to the clash of events and due to holding EuroVolley in the same year as the Olympic Games.

Regarding the discussion of a biennial World Championship, Mr ENDRES Infront informed CEV that the budget of the broadcasters for Volleyball was limited. Putting more Volleyball events in the calendar would not mean more money. He concluded his report by stating that all the mentioned points and analyses would help the CEV in its upcoming discussions with the FIVB.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Vice-President, stated that it was a very accurate summary of the current situation and he was convinced that the CEV had made the right choices and decisions. With the unexpected circumstances in Türkiye and Ukraine changing the scenery solutions had to be found even if they did not seem ideal. Regarding the elimination of the Olympic Qualification tournament, it was mainly an FIVB decision that the CEV had to follow. Personally, Mr EVERAERT agreed with it, since it was providing access to more European teams in the Olympic Games. He argued that such a decision would prove financially beneficial for the entire European Volleyball community. Furthermore, he pointed out that if the decision made by Volleyball World and the FIVB would increase their income and cause damage to the income of the CEV, there should be a negotiation on how to compensate the CEV for that lost income. He believed that the CEV should insist on that.

The CEV President expressed his agreement and suggested that there should be a meeting at the end of 2023 where the CEV could present some proposals to the FIVB. He believed that any aggressive movement should be avoided, stating that no good thing could come up from such an approach. The CEV should try and make them realise the situation for Europe. Moreover, since the CEV was investing on developing each National Federation in Europe, it should also be included in the share of revenues and organisation of events when that Federation was organising something on the World level. Overall, he believed that the CEV should always go forward with a positive approach and strong arguments. He was going to inform the FIVB President GRAÇA that the CEV was preparing a project in order to have an open discussion about the upcoming changes.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President, started by thanking Mr ENDRES about the report and expressed his agreement with Mr EVERAERT's point. He then added that the impact from the upcoming changes in the International Calendar would go beyond the 35% mentioned by Infront, because it would apply to the whole market. The National Federations would also have a negative impact. They needed to consider the general impact for the whole industry in the Volleyball community. He also felt that the FIVB wanted to take a final decision on the matter in their upcoming FIVB Board meeting in June 2023 for the future calendar period from 2025 until 2032. Therefore, the CEV did not have so much time to prepare and discuss on the issue.

Mr ARENA also believed that the feedback received from the National Federations should be taken into consideration, their voice needed to be heard, since they were also members of the FIVB. It was a matter that regarded the future of Volleyball and he believed that it went beyond the scope of Volleyball World for it to decide alone on that. Open discussions should be conducted on the matter and the decisions should not only be made by the commercial part of the FIVB. He felt that such an approach would be more realistic. It was not a question of going against the FIVB or having a clash, but a question of working together in an open way to decide on the future of the sport.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President, also agreed with Mr EVERAERT and Mr ARENA and the fact that the CEV should handle the discussions in a delicate way, since the FIVB was fully supporting the actions of Volleyball World and was very satisfied. He added that it was the beginning of the collaboration, which was always difficult. He saw a lot of mistakes in the course, but he noted that the aim was not to cut the collaboration but to find ways to improve it. He also talked about the importance of forging the role of the National Federations in that discussion. He had the feeling that they were not included in these discussions, since Volleyball World was talking directly with governments, with TV broadcasters, etc. The National Federations were stakeholders of the FIVB and the CEV but not of Volleyball World.

Mr ADLER also expressed his support on the points that had been made and added that the cooperation with Volleyball World and CVC was not exactly at the beginning, since three years had already passed. The maximum CVC would stay would be seven to eight years and then they would try to sell. Therefore, they could not still be perceived as being in their learning path. Volleyball World was aiming for the short-term profit, but the FIVB's duty was to also look on the long-term. Mr ADLER felt that the issue regarded the whole eco-system of Volleyball: clubs, National Federations, Confederations and the FIVB. If one were to introduce too much change in that eco-system, it could fall apart and that would not be in the interest of the FIVB for the future. Consequently, the main message to be made would be that the FIVB should be the entity looking into the long-term and the future. And while Volleyball World was a key player, the FIVB had the majority of the Board and had major influence. He believed that the main discussions should be made with the FIVB, because there was no point in trying to change Volleyball World.

The CEV President then commented that in the recent years major changes had been made globally in the communication, investments, etc. Volleyball World was considered the start of a new era in Volleyball, since a big investment was made in the sport. During the discussions of the CEV with the CVC for a potential partnership the CEV President had made a point of putting the identity of the CEV as a sports institution in the centre of the discussion and the negotiation. The commercial entities willing to make an investment would clearly focus on profit. The CEV was an "eco-system" consisting of 56 countries. The CEV needed to protect that eco-system and avoid risks like the ones experienced in Football with the Super League. In the current circumstances in the industry, the CEV should carefully and smartly choose the steps to take.

Furthermore, Mr BORIČIĆ informed that he was going to have a meeting with the FIVB President on 10 March 2023 in order to discuss face to face all the challenges. He felt that it was important to discuss in depth some issues and not to try and solve everything at the same time. He considered the International Calendar as the main issue for the moment. He added that both sides needed time to understand each other. In addition, he indicated the importance of how the National Federation Presidents handled the matter. It was important to approach it with a positive and solution driven attitude.

Coming back to Infront, the CEV President noted that the situation was critical. He intended to meet with Mr Philippe BLATTER, Infront President and CEO, in order to have a discussion and to define the main problems and find ways to alleviate them or determine changes that should be made from the CEV side. Therefore, in the next Board meeting that would take place in May, he would be able to follow up on the meeting with the FIVB President and the potential meeting with Mr BLATTER.

## MIKASA

The CEV President started by mentioning that Mikasa was faced with difficulties even before the pandemic and they wished to reduce the supply in terms of financial support and number of balls. They encountered issues in many stages of the whole process: production, logistics, and transportation. An official meeting had been held with the company in The Netherlands, where the CEV had stated that it intended to increase the cooperation and not reduce it. The offer made by Mikasa could not be accepted by the CEV. The CEV was ready to look for other companies to partner up, since Mikasa could not align with the higher position Volleyball currently had in the sports world.

Nonetheless, Mr BORIČIĆ acknowledged that Volleyball was still very far from beneficial collaborations with marketing agencies. Even as a sport that is very popular among women, it could not seem to attract big companies with women's products. As for the collaboration with Mikasa, despite the ambitious plans to start a project of 1 million balls to distribute to children in Europe, the company did not seem completely aligned with the CEV's goals and claimed that they had already reached their peak of production capacity, not very willing to look into solutions.

Mr ENDRES confirmed that meetings were held on operational level, given the approaching end of the contract on 01 April 2024. Based on the contract, there would be an exclusive negotiation period with the company until March 2023. After that period, the CEV would be free to explore the market and look for other collaborations.

Mr EVERAERT stated that unfortunately in Volleyball, unlike in skiing or in cycling, there was a very small internal market with Volleyball products, with the most important things being shoes and balls. When it came to balls, Volleyball had to deal with a quite small company all the time and he felt that the company had reached its limits, they did not have the power to think bigger than they already did. He believed that a change of mentality was needed; on a global level Mikasa was a quite small company compared to many other companies.

The CEV President also informed that the company wanted to operate in a monopolistic system; with their contract with the FIVB, all major events used their balls. He also believed that it was important for the game to be consistent with the type of balls used, since it was not so easy to have the players (especially the setters) constantly adjust to different balls, based on the event. He also stated that the actual company was not small, it was just the investment in the sports section that was a bit limited.

Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, CEV Board of Administration member, expressed his support for finding a solution with Mikasa, in order to stay aligned with the FIVB and felt that the ball for the game was a very crucial matter. In addition, in Europe there were a lot of activities and affiliated players in all levels and that ball was used a lot in Europe.

While Mr BORIČIĆ agreed with discussing this matter with the President of the FIVB, he wished to avoid raising too many issues at the same time, because he felt that this way their importance was diluted and lost. He would inquire on where the FIVB was standing with Mikasa and inform him that Europe was facing problems in that area.

### **Centralised Data Platform Project**

Mr ENDRES informed everyone that following the CEV Board decision and the presentation during the XLIII CEV General Assembly, the CEV had worked together with an external expert to prepare a tender document under the supervision of the CEV Marketing Working Group. Mr SPRENGER, one of the members of the CEV Marketing WG, was running one of the companies that had been shortlisted. His company offered a tailor-made system created for each customer, something that took time and required in-house specific knowledge. At the moment, the CEV Office did not have those resources or the time to build a system in the following three to four years. Therefore, it had been made clear in the discussions and the negotiations that the intention was to seek an already existing software/tool that the CEV could start using straight away.

Therefore, as seen in the working file distributed to all the CEV Board members, there were two more companies left. By evaluating those two companies and the additional services offered in terms of activation and promotion, the proposal to the CEV Board was to go with the offer of InCrowd. Mr ENDRES commented that it was a very well-known company on the market and there was positive feedback from Marketing WG members, including Mr SPRENGER. He added that it was a good proposal and required a financial investment of 110,000€ in the starting phase and then an annual cost of approximately 70,000€.

Mr ENDRES also clarified that this system would only constitute a first step: starting to collect centralised fan data. Then, there would be a possibility to initiate promotional and activation campaigns already for the Beach Volleyball events during the summer of 2023 and the CEV EuroVolley events. This would give the CEV the possibility to promote merchandising, ticketing, the OTT platform, for an immediate increase of revenues. Furthermore, the CEV could help and support the co-organisers in making a European ticketing campaign, based on the data already collected at the beginning of the project. With time, the possibilities would be greater, with a growing amount of data collected through the various events covered and with more clubs and National Federations joining the project, leading to a bigger benefit and higher value of the tool for everyone involved.

At the beginning, the CEV would use the service from the company's side, since the CEV Office did not currently have the knowledge to perform fan engagement, etc. With time, the CEV would proceed to an evaluation and a potential in-house recruitment; a person who would manage these activities as a Customer Relation Manager. Based on all that, Mr ENDRES indicated that the advantage of the company InCrowd was that they had the knowledge, the people and the tools and they could provide help in launching the project. Afterwards, step by step the CEV Office would explore the possibilities to build an in-house team.

Mr BORIČIĆ remarked that it was the beginning of a new era for the CEV and he was convinced that the full merit of that project and that company would come into surface after one year, after they would be able to collect enough data.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI, in his function as President of the CEV Marketing WG, wished to add that the proposed company had the full support of the WG. After completing the first step of creating a fan base, he pointed out that they should be looking into how to engage with that fan base. He believed that the second step would be more challenging and it was rather the CEV and not some external company that could run it. It was the CEV engaging with the fans and having all that knowledge on the Volleyball community. In a smaller scale, the Polish Federation was already active in that direction and their experience could serve as reference for the bigger scale on European level.

Mr BORIČIĆ agreed that for the engagement of fans the CEV should not solely rely on the company but use its knowledge of the different Volleyball communities across each country in Europe and how each of them relate to Volleyball based on their culture, their history, their mentality and, of course, on the national Volleyball stars. He also pointed out that while it was important to have a sold out venue full of fans, it was also very crucial that those fans recognised the Volleyball stars playing on the court.

Mr Metod ROPRET, CEV Board of Administration member, believed that this was the right way to follow and that the CEV as an institution should be brave enough to embrace changes. The CEV should follow an open approach to implement the new ideas and make smart decisions within an ever-changing world. He felt that it was in the very role of them as CEV Board members to find the best ways to integrate the changes happening in the world for the benefit of the sport. In addition, he stated that the CEV should cultivate a good and stable cooperation with the FIVB, because this way the two institutions could achieve together great things. He was very appreciative of all the new views and ideas expressed during the meeting, and he was convinced that this was the right way to lead the sport to the highest level.

The CEV President informed that the CEV competitions had exceeded the boundaries of Europe and had reached spectators from Indonesia, Thailand, India, etc. In that context, the data project seemed all the more necessary to explore these new markets of fans and spectators.

Mr De DOBBELEER affirmed that the data project constituted a historic step for the CEV. With such a project the CEV would be able to support all National Federations and manage to connect with the young generation and open the way for new partnerships. He was convinced that in the next five years the value of that investment would fully unfold and the beginning of that project would leave its mark in the history of the institution. He concluded by congratulating everyone who had worked in that project.



## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the partnership proposal with InCrowd in order to develop a centralised data platform.**

Mr BORIČIĆ took the opportunity to thank all the members of the CEV Marketing WG and everyone that had worked for that project. He stated that it was a project that would slowly show its merits and would yield good results in the years to come.

## 6. Competition Matters

### CEV EuroVolley 2023

The CEV President praised the decision of the Italian Federation President, Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI, to change the venue of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men's Finals from Bologna to Rome. The Italian capital would be more suitable in order to host, along with the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men's Finals, the CEV's 50th Anniversary Gala.

Mr ARENA addressed the meeting and also referred to the proposal for the venue transfer from Bologna to Rome by the Italian Federation. He commented that the city of Rome was the perfect location in order to attract more attention for the competition and the celebration of the CEV's 50th anniversary. Furthermore, the opening match of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men's competition would take place in Bologna, in Unipol Arena. The CEV Events Department had conducted inspection visits to the various venues and Mr ARENA confirmed that everything was running smoothly.

As for the Women's competition, the Arena of Verona had been confirmed for the opening match. This had not been an easy achievement, due to restrictions blocking the delivery of sports events in that historic venue. However, after several years, a solution had been found and the Italian Minister of Culture had sent a letter stating that this would be the first sports event to be hosted in the Arena since 1985. He commented that Volleyball had worked as a pioneering force inspiring new ideas for the future.

Mr ARENA, along with the CEV Events Department and Mr ENDRES, had also visited North Macedonia and Israel, two of the host countries of CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men's competition. Some issues were pending for those two organisers and the CEV wished to receive some additional information. In Israel, the host city had changed to Tel Aviv, due to some security concerns. Mr ARENA also reported that the updates from the other host countries were also positive and everything was under control. With the new composition and leadership of the CEV Events Department, Mr ARENA was quite optimistic about the result of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 and he wished to thank Mr Roko SIKIRIĆ, CEV Head of Volleyball and Events, for creating that team, because they had a very high level of experience and professionalism and a lot of positive energy. Ms Maike BOUWER is coming from European Handball with a lot of experience in event management. Ms Elena ARSOVA is a former Volleyball player from Bulgaria, living in France with a lot of experience in the field. Mr Mariano CARCATELLA from Italy and working at the European Sport University Association in Slovenia, has a lot of experience in university sports and football. He felt it was a very promising team, which would deliver a very positive outcome for the future. Lastly, he informed everyone that the ticket sale was scheduled to start on 27 February 2023 in all countries.

At that point, the CEV President asked for some updates regarding the ticketing in Germany.

Mr ENDRES explained that the previous day the German Volleyball Federation announced in a press release the starting of the ticketing, despite the fact the official coordination with the CEV was that all Federations would start the ticket sale on 27 February. The main concept was to promote the ticketing in the framework of the German Cup Final during the weekend of 25-26 February and then start the sale on 27 February, along with the other countries.

The CEV President stated that everything relating to the CEV EuroVolley competition should be aligned under the umbrella of the CEV and that each host country should respect the communication and agreed planning. Everyone should work as parts of a big team and not individually.

The CEV President informed about the appointments of the National Jury Presidents for each co-hosting country:

### Women's Competition

Belgium: Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING

Italy: Mr Maris PEKALIS

Estonia: Mr Lennart NEOVIUS

Germany: Ms Emma LABRADOR

### Men's Competition

Italy: Mr Eric ADLER

Bulgaria: Mr Lubor HALANDA

Israel: Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON

North Macedonia: Mr Zdeslav BARAČ

### **CEV EuroVolley 2025**

The CEV President wished to congratulate the CEV team under the leadership of Mr Renato ARENA. Finland had sent the first official letter stating their readiness to organise one pool of the CEV EuroVolley 2025 Men. After Romania, Finland was the second country to apply as organiser for CEV EuroVolley 2025. The CEV was also on discussions with the German Federation about organising the Men's Finals. While nothing had been confirmed at that point, the CEV President already expressed his appreciation for that development.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Finnish Volleyball Federation as co-host of the CEV EuroVolley 2025.**

The official announcement of the event would follow in a separate communication.

Mr René HECHT, CEV Board of Administration member, informed that the German Federation would have an important meeting on 17 April 2023 with the Minister of Internal Affairs in Bavaria, and confirmed the great interest from the side of the German Federation to host the CEV EuroVolley 2025, in view of the expected opening of the new sports hall SAP Garden Arena in Munich, which was under construction and expected to be finished in 2025.

The CEV President stated that having such a big competition in German would be beneficial to German and European Volleyball, and he noted quite a big progress in the attitude of the German Federation, because they had adopted a more active and motivated attitude.

Additional potential applicants for organising were the Serbian Federation for the Men's competition, the Austrian Federation for Women's competition, the Swedish and the Portuguese Federation. He also informed that he had discussed with the Turkish Federation about organising the Women's Finals, but there was no written confirmation. Due to the difficult situation in Türkiye because of the disaster caused by the earthquake, the discussions on that matter would resume in May 2023.



## **CEV Volleyball European Golden & Silver League 2023**

Mr ENDRES reported that after the CEV Volleyball European Golden & Silver League meeting that had taken place in Luxembourg in December 2022, they had concluded to 12 men's teams and 9 women's teams in the Golden League. During that meeting, the Croatian Federation applied for hosting the Golden Men's Final Four tournament. In the absence of an organiser for the Women's Final Four tournament, discussions were made and the Swedish Federation expressed their interest in organising. Given the urgency of the approaching deadlines, the CEV was in close cooperation with the Swedish Federation. Since there would only be nine teams in the women's Golden League, the CEV had the right to reduce the prize money, based on the business model developed together with the Federation. However, the CEV President stated that if a federation among the participants took the initiative to host the tournament, the CEV would commit to maintain the initial prize money. Despite that offer and the various discussions, no federation was willing or in position to host the event. Therefore, it had been agreed to finish the women's edition with "home" and "away" matches.

After the registrations for the Silver League, many federations had reported that they encountered financial issues. There were six teams for the men's edition. For one pool (LAT, CYP, FAR), it was mutually agreed to hold "home" and "away" matches and the "home" matches of Cyprus would be played in Faroe Islands and Latvia. With only six teams in the men's edition, there would be no Final Four and the semi-finals and finals would be played in "home" and "away" matches. In the women's edition there were eight teams and the Final Four would take place in Austria. In addition, there was a proposal to support with 5,000€ each team participating for the first time in that competition.

The CEV President was delighted to see small scale federations, like the Faroese one, participating with their national teams in both men's and women's editions. He felt it was a very significant success for the development of the sport and he thanked them for all their efforts and commitment.

## **CEV Champions League Volley 2023 Super Finals**

The CEV President wished to thank once again the Italian Volleyball Federation and their President for making some strategical decisions regarding the venues hosting the important events of 2023. The official proposal for the host city for the CEV Champions League Volley 2023 Super Finals would be Turin, where the next CEV Board meeting would also take place. He informed that the preparations for that event were progressing and the prospects were very promising.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Italian Volleyball Federation as the co-host of the CEV Champions League Super Finals 2023 on 20 May 2023 in Turin (ITA).**

The official announcement of the event would follow in a separate communication.

## **CEV European Cups Calendar 2023-2024**

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the CEV European Cups Calendar 2023-2024.**

## **Beach Volleyball**

Mr ENDRES briefly informed the Board members that 15 tournaments have been confirmed in Europe for the World Tour Future series so far: 2 in Spain, 3 in Italy, 1 Switzerland, 1 in France, 1 in Czechia, 1 in Greece, 1 in Finland, 1 in Belgium, 3 in Poland, 1 in Austria.

Mr LEITNER stated that everything is running smoothly and that a positive outcome is expected for the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2023 to take place from 02 until 06 August 2023 at the Danube Island in Vienna (AUT).

The CEV was in negotiations in order to be able to organise the CEV Queen and King of the Court European Finals in Luxembourg. The CEV President indicated that while there were several challenges in the course towards that project, he believed it was important to organise a big event in the country where the headquarters of the CEV Office were located. He stated that the CEV would take part of the financial risk, while he praised the President of the Luxembourgish Federation, Ms Norma ZAMBON, for her hard work and her insistence to overcome all the challenges. The CEV President also emphasised how important it was to seek support from the local Ministries of Sport and city authorities, the Local Olympic Committee, whenever a federation tried to organise something in their country.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the organisation of the CEV Queen and King of the Court European Finals in Luxembourg, by taking part of the financial risk for this event.**

Furthermore, the CEV President expressed how satisfied he was about the progress made in Beach Volleyball in general. He mentioned that discussions had been initiated regarding the organisation of club competitions in this discipline. A few countries in Europe were already in that path. Information on that data was pending from the side of the CEV European Beach Volleyball Commission (EBVC).

Mr ENDRES informed that the deadline for that information had been set and it was yet to be submitted. The CEV Beach Volleyball Department was in contact with all the National Federations in order to collect information and registrations and inquire about their national activities. He also invited all the CEV Board members to assist with encouraging the people in the federation of their own country to provide that essential information. He referred to Mr ROPRET's point that the CEV needed to be brave and ready for changes. While in some countries Beach Volleyball did not have any club structure, Mr ENDRES argued that this effort to create such a championship could be a game-changer for the discipline. In Indoor Volleyball most of the activities are based on the clubs. Therefore, he asked everyone to use their connections and their network in order to put forward that project.

Mr Gernot LEITNER, CEV Board of Administration member, stated that in Austria they had held a Zonal club Championship with the participation of five countries and eight clubs and the feedback of the participating teams and clubs had been very positive. The President of MEVZA, representatives of the FIVB and himself had also attended and they observed that such a competition had proved as a very nice missing piece for the younger players, those who were at the edge to the World Tour, where older and young players were mixing to gain experience. The format was very interesting with very good feedback from the organising team, which would be shared with the CEV Beach Volleyball Think Tank and the EBVC. He indicated that it constituted a product which could be quite attractive for Beach Volleyball clubs but also for Indoor Volleyball clubs building up their Beach Volleyball division.

The CEV President also added that seeing the pictures of that event he was quite impressed and said that it was very positive that they organised such events not only on national but also on zonal level. On that note, he reiterated the importance of collecting information regarding Beach Volleyball clubs from across all European federations; it would be impossible to proceed with creating a Champions League competition for Beach Volleyball otherwise. It was quite crucial to see whether there were enough clubs in order to constitute a proper championship. Therefore, he referred to Mr ENDRES's prompt to all the CEV Board members to facilitate the collection of such data, by forwarding that agenda through their country's federation and through their network. In order to make a decision and start the promotion of the event, the CEV needed that information.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS, CEV Board of Administration member, reported that in NEVZA the Beach Volleyball Department had organised a workshop and they would plan for a Zonal event. In addition, the member federations of NEVZA were working on organising championships.

## **Snow Volleyball**

There were four official tournaments for Snow Volleyball organised by the CEV and the FIVB. However, the main events were to take place in the part of Türkiye which was heavily affected by the disastrous earthquake that had hit the area in early February, which resulted into the cancellation of those two events. Some other tournaments had been organised in Italy, Armenia, Georgia and in Bulgaria, a fact that looked promising for the development of the discipline.

Mr NEOVIUS stated that in 2023 Snow Volleyball national championships would take place in 12 countries. The events in Italy would be organised in four phases. He commented that in the Balkan Zonal Association they would hold their first Zonal tournament since 2020, which constituted a very positive step. He added that a multi-sports event venture had expressed interest in integrating Snow Volleyball among their activities for their winter edition. Lastly, he mentioned the 2025 Winter European Olympic Youth Festival in Georgia.

He also reported that the CEV Snow Volleyball Working Group had held two meetings and they had also organised a Snow Volleyball Administrators Seminar with the participation of 22 National Federations.

Next, the CEV President referred to the proposal shared in the working file, about the intention to organise in the season of 2023-2024, the first ever CEV U20 Snow Volleyball European Championship and to create a small budget for it, in order to provide a support of 30,000€ at the beginning of this new competition.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to organise the first ever CEV U20 Snow Volleyball European Championship and to budget a financial support of 30,000€ for it.**

## **7. Financial Matters**

### **Donation to Turkish Federation**

The CEV President stated that he sent an official letter to the Turkish Volleyball Federation President, Mr Mehmet Akif Ustundag, in which he expressed the sympathy and solidarity of the entire European Volleyball Family with the victims of the natural tragedy in Türkiye.

He proposed a 100,000 Euros first aid support to be transferred to the Turkish Volleyball Federation, in order to provide support to the members of the Volleyball family in Türkiye that had been heavily impacted by the disastrous earthquake.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to donate 100,000€ as a first aid support to be paid to the Turkish Volleyball Federation, in order to provide support to the members of the Volleyball family in Türkiye that had been heavily impacted by the disastrous earthquake.**

### **Request NF POL regarding CL fees**

Next, the CEV President referred to a letter received by the Polish Federation President requesting, on behalf of the Polish clubs, to modify the payment method of the CEV European Cups participation fee. Their proposal was to exempt the clubs from the mandatory payment of the fee before the start of the competition and to extract that amount from the prize money after the end of the competition.

Mr PRZEDPELSKI stated that this request should not been discussed, as this letter was only sent by the federation based on the request of one club.

### Decision

**In the absence of any further comments, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously rejected the proposal in order to maintain the value of the competition.**

### Update regarding the Finance

Mr ADLER reported that the Finance Department at the CEV Office was working hard on the final bookings and on closing up the 2022 Accounts. The plan was to have the Internal and External Auditors visit the CEV Office in April. The CEV President and himself would hold an online meeting with them, during which they could finalise any question that they might have. Then, the CEV European Finance Commission would meet in May 2023, shortly before the CEV Board Meeting would take place. He expected that they would be ready by then so that the CEV Board would be able to approve both the Accounts and the upcoming Budget.

The CEV President thanked Mr ADLER and the CEV Finance Department, praising them for their hard work and for coping despite the heavy workload. He was very pleased with the cooperation.

## 8. Proposals from Board members

No points discussed.

## 9. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

### Appointment of CEV ECOC Secretary

Mr ENDRES explained that since the previous CEV European Coaches Commission (ECOC) Secretary, Mr Thomas BRO-RASMUSSEN had resigned, the ECOC President, Mr Philippe BLAIN, had proposed to appoint Mr Remko KENTER from The Netherlands to fill that position for the remaining mandate.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint Mr Remko KENTER as CEV ECOC Secretary.**

### Review and evaluation of CEV Commissions proposals

Mr ENDRES introduced the first proposal regarded the allocation of continental spots for the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Championship. There were four spots to allocate and the CEV European Beach Volleyball Commission (EBVC) had proposed to split those spots between the CEV EuroBeachVolley and the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup. However, after some internal discussions they had concluded that such a solution would intervene in the running process. The registration for the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup had already been finalised. As per principle, it was not possible to apply changes in the midst of the competition. Therefore, it was proposed to maintain the same allocation for 2023 for the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Championship as in the past; that meant that the winner of the CEV EuroBeachVolley would be qualified directly and then the remaining three would be qualified by the world ranking. The EBVC proposal could be applied from the next edition of the World Championship.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the implementation of the proposed allocation of continental spots to the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Championship from the 2025 edition onwards.**

He ten described that the EBVC had proposed to change the quota per national federation for the CEV EuroBeachVolley. It had been internally discussed to increase by one the quota for the host and to decrease from four to three the quota of the participating teams. However, given that currently the Olympic Qualification process was running and the federations had already made their plans, since the CEV EuroBeachVolley in 2023 would be very important for the qualification pathway, Mr ENDRES explained that it was not the right moment to apply that change in 2023. The teams had already made their plans and such a change would have an impact on the qualification to the Olympics. Consequently, for the moment, it was preferable to also postpone that proposal for the next Olympic cycle, starting from 2024 onwards.

Mr EVERAERT disagreed with the approach and said that the argumentation of the proposal was that by changing the maximum number of teams from one country from four to three, more countries would have a chance to participate. However, he expressed his reservations about that concept. To test this concept he made some calculations, and he concluded that it was questionable that this change would have the desired effect for the composition of the teams and he was convinced that it would have a very significant impact on the qualification for the World Championships and eventually for the Olympics. Therefore, he was of the opinion that this change should not be implemented.

Consequently, Mr ENDRES stated that it would be preferable to ask the EBVC to further examine and analyse the impact of the proposal and refrain from making a decision at that point, since it would anyhow only affect the following season. Therefore, the CEV Board would ask the EBVC to prepare some clarifications to be submitted for discussion during the next CEV Board meeting, which would take place in May 2023.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided to ask from the EBVC further clarifications and an evaluation of the impact of the proposed change of the quotas for CEV EuroBeachVolley to be submitted for discussion during the CEV Board meeting in May 2023.**

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to not hold a Drawing of Lots at the end of the Pool Phase and to follow the single elimination path, based on the ranking after pool play.**

Mr ENDRES referred to proposals No. 1 and 2 made by the CEV European Cups Commission (ECC), included in the working file and distributed to all the CEV Board members. He commented that the reasoning behind those proposals was very good and beneficial for the sport, however the ECC was expected to submit a more concrete proposal and not only some general guidelines or ideas. Regarding proposal No. 3, in terms of fan engagement, it was covered by the previous discussion on the data platform and therefore it had to be aligned with the project that was already underway. The data platform would anyway benefit all European Volleyball clubs. That meant that, for the moment, he saw no need to further invest in a similar project, given that the projects that were already in progress would successfully cover those needs.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed that further clarification and input was required from the ECC on the guidance book and the revised match protocol before the final consideration.**



### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided that the scope of the proposed tender for fan engagement was already covered by the recent launch of the WSC partnership and the approval of the centralised data platform, which would benefit all stakeholders; therefore, the proposed motion did not pass.**

Furthermore, Mr ENDRES referred to a question raised regarding the Russian teams. Regardless of the status of the Russian teams for the following season, the proposal from the ECC intended to protect the position, the status and the ranking of teams from Russia and Belarus, as it was not their decision to not play in the CEV European Cups in the running season. According the CEV Regulatory Framework, if a team did not use its slots, it would lose ranking points. However, in line with what the FIVB had applied for the world ranking, the proposal from the ECC was to freeze the position of the Russian and Belarusian teams and as soon as they would come back, they would start in the same position.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to lift in this particular case article 157 §1 and therefore freeze the CEV European Cups slots of Russian and Belarusian National Federations, until their club teams are eligible to participate again in CEV competitions.**

Mr ENDRES continued with the ECC proposal No. 5 regarding an onsite supervisor seminar. He commented that while there might be some value in that idea, it was lacking the budget component. He believed that there should be a process developed towards all CEV Commissions, that every submitted proposal should be accompanied by a budget plan. The 50,000€ cost of the seminar had not been budgeted for 2023. He added that such plans should be anticipated a year in advance. Therefore, he argued that such a proposal should be considered in the budget for the following year and not in such a short notice. Furthermore, given the familiarity most people already had with online meetings and the CEV e-learning platform, it would be a good way to organise this in a more cost-effective way.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed that, since the proposed on-site CEV Supervisors seminar had not been budgeted, it should be delivered remotely, through the CEV Campus platform; therefore the proposed motion did not pass.**

Mr ENDRES then referred to the proposal of the European Legal Commission (ELC).

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal for a postponement of a decision on the anticipated changes in the CEV General Regulations and the CEV Disciplinary Regulation until the FIVB Board has approved the proposal from the FIVB Legal Commission.**

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal that the CEV wait for the final EU Court decision on the pending European Sport Model Charter case before considering any new provisions in the regulations.**

The CEV European Legal Commission (ELC) would have to study and prepare in advance potential provision based on the initial European Court statement.



## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the motion that the ELC should draft and present a separate CEV Good Governance Code.**

The CEV European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC) had mainly examined and commented on the International Calendar, which would also be subject of discussion with the FIVB. Mr ENDRES commented that it was helpful to receive the opinion of the experts and the discussion on the political level with the FIVB needed to follow.

The ESOC, upon request of the CEV Board, had examined the possibility of increasing the contribution fee for the CEV Volleyball age group competitions. Taking into consideration the inflation and the accommodation costs, they proposed an increase from 70 to 100€. However, given that the participating teams of the running age group competitions had registered with the old conditions, Mr ENDRES pointed out that the new contribution fee would not apply for the running competitions of 2023, but only for the registrations that would open in 2023 for the season of 2023–2024. The CEV President supported the proposal stating that the CEV should support the organisers in that way.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the increase of the contribution fee for the CEV Volleyball age group competitions from 70 to 100€. The change to be implemented only for the future editions with an open registration not for the running competitions.**

The CEV European Refereeing Commission (ERC) had proposed, similarly to Indoor Volleyball, to introduce a Beach Volleyball Challenge Referee, following the FIVB principle.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the creation of a new group of CEV Officials: Beach Volleyball Challenge Referees, in line with the FIVB principle.**

The proposal No. 2 regarded the introduction of a Challenge Referee for the CEV EuroVolley events and one for the CEV Champions League Volley, starting from the quarterfinals. Mr ENDRES commented that while it was a good proposal, there needed to be some further evaluation regarding the logistics of those extra persons and they needed to also consult with the organisers. Therefore, the decision was postponed for the CEV Board meeting in May 2023.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed to require further evaluation from the ERC on the impact of introducing a specific Challenge Referee for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 events and for the CEV Champions League Volley from the quarterfinals onwards.**

Further evaluation and input was required also for the ERC proposals to increase the number of Referee Coaches for Volleyball competitions and Beach Volleyball "Future" events. Mr ENDRES first commented that, in general, the principle was to reduce rather than increase the CEV Officials. In case those extra officials were introduced, it would have an impact on costs for both the CEV and the organisers. The CEV Board needed more concrete figures in order to estimate the feasibility of such a decision. It was also mentioned that there was not enough argumentation indicating the need for an extra number of Referee Coaches.

Furthermore, the ERC had proposed to introduce a Referee Coach and more International Referees for the Beach Volleyball "Future" events. They believed that they needed more people for the observation of the candidates and the International Beach Volleyball Referees. Mr ENDRES noted, however, that the

officials appointed for the FIVB "Future" events were defined by the FIVB. Consequently, if the CEV would increase the number of the officials it would once again incur more costs for both the CEV and the organiser. In addition, he pointed out that with the new Beach Volleyball events that had been introduced in 2022 (CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup and CEV Queen and King of the Court European Finals), where a Referee Coach had been presented, the CEV had increased the opportunities for the ERC to observe Beach Volleyball Referees. Therefore, he believed that on the level for the "Future" events, the CEV should avoid increasing the costs and the number of officials. If a specific need would arise, then an exception could be made on a case-by-case basis and not for all European "Future" events.

The CEV President agreed that in order to increase the number of Referee Coaches the CEV Board needed concrete arguments to explain the necessity of that change and also the additional financial investment.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed to require further evaluation and input from the ERC on the proposals to increase the number of Referee Coaches for Volleyball competitions and Beach Volleyball "Future" events.**

The ERC proposal No. 5 regarded the increase of the per diem compensation for the CEV Officials from 100 to 150€. Mr ENDRES stated that this proposal also needed further evaluation on the potential financial impact of such a change and review it again in the CEV Board meeting in May.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed to require further evaluation on the impact on stakeholders and on CEV of the increase of the per diem compensation for the CEV Officials from 100 to 150€.**

The last ERC proposal was about the increase of the financial package for the Referee Coaches appointed in the CEV Champions League Volley competitions, starting from the quarterfinals onwards. Mr ENDRES referred to a decision taken a few years ago that due to the prestige of the competition, the Referees and the Supervisors should be compensated with 500€ for each match (300€ paid by the clubs and 200€ by the CEV). Therefore, the proposal was to match that amount also for the Referee Coaches.

The CEV President proposed that the ERC perform a thorough analysis of the financial impact as well as a consultation with the CEV Treasurer. He added that it was very important to respect and protect the value and the prestige of the competition and attract the best professionals with a high compensation.

Mr ADLER observed that the role of the Referee Coaches was not as active as the one of the other CEV Officials officiating during the match, thus it did not account for the same compensation.

Mr LEITNER shared that they had similar discussions on the matter of increased costs in the Austrian Federation and he agreed that a mechanism should be put into place in order to handle these discrepancies.

Mr ADLER wished to point out that the increase in the per diem would mainly impact the organisers and that this should be taken into consideration in the calculations performed for that matter.

Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING expressed her agreement on considering the capacities of the organisers with regards to the per diem increase, while also recognising the need for that adjustment due to the inflation.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed to require further evaluation on the impact to increase the financial package for Referee Coaches in the CEV Champions League Volley.**

## Proposed changes in the CEV Statutes and CEV General Regulations

Mr ENDRES referred to the proposals submitted by the ELC regarding changes in the CEV Statutes, the CEV General Regulations, the CEV Volleyball Competition Regulations and the CEV Beach Volleyball Competition Regulations. All the proposals to change the CEV Regulatory Framework had been reviewed and supported by the ELC.

For the CEV Statutes and the CEV General Regulations, two main changes were needed: The first change was to allow the payment of the per diem via a bank transfer, because several federations had trouble paying it in cash, due to taxation issues. The second change was following the FIVB decision to have two genders among the eight FIVB Board members elected by the CEV; minimum one gender in minority should be among those eight members. It had already been decided by the FIVB Congress, therefore the CEV was to adapt to it.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes in the CEV Statutes and the CEV General Regulations.**

## Proposed changes in the CEV Volleyball Competitions Regulations

The changes regarded mainly improvements, corrections, clarifications, based on experience. He wished to highlight a few of those changes: Namely the proposed change No. 6, to reduce the requirements for the age group championship for the Finals. Instead of the mandatory TV production, streaming would also be allowed. Given that the standard of streaming was as good as TV, that change would be a relief for the organiser. Then, for the payment of the per diem, the adjustment was made also for the Competitions Regulations to allow the payment to be done through a bank transfer.

Furthermore, Mr ENDRES indicated that proposal No. 9 was a crucial one from the ECC for the additional licence player for a club team. At the end of the season, there was an exception that they could have one additional licence in case of an emergency injury. After pressure from several clubs, the ECC proposed to remove the limitation existing in the Regulations, based on which if a player is hired, they would have to come from a different competition and not someone the club had played against from a running cup competition. However, for the integrity and protection of the CEV competitions, Mr ENDRES suggested that the existing wording should be maintained in the Regulations; lifting that limitation would open the possibility of manipulation of the competitions.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously agreed to maintain the limitation of article 33.§3.b, based on which a Player whose licence is removed from one CEV collective licence in order to be included in another one should come from a different CEV competition; therefore the proposed motion did not pass.**

The next proposal was to increase the level of the CEV Volleyball Challenge Cup Finals by introducing wireless headsets and making LED mandatory for the Final of the Challenge Cup. This suggestion was to be implemented from the following season. Then, it was also proposed to align the licence fees for players. Mr ENDRES explained that across the various senior competitions the licence fees varied from 30 to 50€, therefore the proposal was to align the senior licence fees across all disciplines to 50€.

Based on the discussions during the previous CEV Board meeting and in line with the principle of gender equality, another proposal from the ECC was to have the same minimum average spectator attendance requirements for both men and women in the CEV Champions League Volley. In the past, it was 1,500 for women and 2,500 for men. Therefore, the proposal was to set the same requirement to 2,000 for both genders. It was also proposed to skip the minimum average spectator attendance for the first three Rounds in the CEV Champions League Volley.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the ECC proposals to:**

- a. Make wireless headsets and LED mandatory for the Final Phases of the CEV Volleyball Challenge Cup;**
- b. Align the senior licence fees across all disciplines to 50€;**
- c. Require the same minimum average spectator attendance for both genders in the CEV Champions League Volley; the minimum requirement to be set to 2,000 spectators from the 4th Round onwards.**

### Proposed changes in the CEV Beach Volleyball Competitions Regulations

Following the decision of the CEV Board to introduce the new Beach Volleyball products, there had been many changes in wordings and terminology in the CEV Beach Volleyball Competitions Regulations, in view of the introduction of the new club competitions, the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup, etc.

Furthermore, there were also some proposals with changes that would have a more significant impact, such as the introduction of the participation fee for the BeachVolley Nations Cup and the clubs competition. There was the suggestion to align the licence fee to 50€, the payment process of per diem for Beach Volleyball and also to increase for the age group Beach Volleyball Championship the contribution fee from 70 to 100€.

Lastly, there were also some proposals for the adaptation of the financial sanctions in order to reflect the CEV's increased commercial activities, in line with what the CEV Board had expected: to make sure that the sanctions were severe enough, in order to cover for potential damages.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes in the CEV Beach Volleyball Competitions Regulations.**

## 10. Any other business

### CEV 50th Anniversary

The CEV President stated that the concept of the celebration would not be limited to one event but it would rather transform to a whole year of celebrations.

Mr ENDRES informed that, based on the discussion in the previous CEV Board meeting, a special 50th Anniversary logo had been developed and was implemented in all possible occasions (e.g. letterhead, website, etc.) A communication to all Press Officers from the Federations encouraged them to integrate the logo as much as possible in their own communications and in the CEV competitions, the LED banners, the TV Graphics, watermark, etc. He also kindly invited all CEV Board members to spread through their network the message of the CEV celebration and advise the federations and the clubs to use the anniversary logo. A letter by the CEV President had been sent to all National Federation Presidents informing them about the concept.

Next to all the CEV competitions, where the anniversary would be promoted, several events had been identified to signal that special occasion. Starting with the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals in Torino in May, then in end of June-beginning July with the CEV Queen and King of the Court European Finals in Luxembourg. Later in the year, an occasion to celebrate with the clubs would be to organise a Club Forum together. Then, there was the CEV EuroBeachVolley in Vienna from 02-06 August, the opening match of the CEV EuroVolley Women on 15 August in Verona, the CEV Congress on 02 September in Brussels next to the CEV EuroVolley Women's Final. The key and centralised event and celebration would be the Anniversary Gala in Rome on 15 September, one day before the CEV EuroVolley Men's Finals. A Snow Volleyball Festival in December would be organised to conclude the celebration and finish the year in a nice way. Therefore, the aim was to cover all three disciplines, national teams and club Volleyball and have a whole celebratory year of European Volleyball.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the activity plan and actions in the frame of the CEV 50th Anniversary.**

### **XLIV CEV General Assembly**

The CEV President wished to thank the President of the Belgian Federation for hosting the XLIV CEV General Assembly in Brussels.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed that the 2023 XLIV CEV General Assembly would be held on 02 September 2023 in Brussels (BEL).**

### **CEV Coaches Convention 2023**

The CEV President thanked the Presidents of the Slovenian and North Macedonian Federations for hosting the previous editions of the CEV Coaches Convention, as well as the President of the Bulgarian Federation for hosting the 2023 edition from 22 to 24 September in Sofia. Mr Lubomir GANEV, President of the Bulgarian Federation confirmed that the whole event would be held in a new sports hall in Sofia, with the hotel being very close to the venue.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Bulgarian Volleyball Federation as co-host of the CEV Coaches Convention from 22 to 24 September 2023 in Sofia (BUL).**

With the opportunity, the CEV President wished to thank the CEV Development Department for their excellent work and informed everyone that the Erasmus+ funding had been granted again. There was a very good cooperation with many countries regarding the School Projects and the training of teachers, which were shaping the future of the sport.

### **International School Sport Federation**

The CEV President informed everyone about a proposal from the International School Sport Federation to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with them for support, which they had already signed with the FIVB. However, the CEV President explained that since the FIVB had already signed, covering the international level, it was not necessary to also involve the CEV, who was focusing on the European level.

## **Zonal Association Presidents Meeting**

Furthermore, the FIVB had reached out for the first time to all Zonal Association Presidents and they wished to organise a meeting with all the Zonal Association Presidents from all over the world on 09 March 2023. The CEV President felt that this move was a very good progress and suggested towards all the European Zonal Association Presidents to get ready for a strong participation during the meeting.

### **Mobile-friendly website**

Lastly, the CEV President referred to the website and pointed out that it was very crucial to have a mobile-friendly version, through which visitors could easily and quickly get access to all the important information about the competitions. In order to achieve this, a recruitment of an IT developer was necessary.

## **11. Next meeting**

The CEV President reminded all the CEV Board members that the next meeting would take place on 20 May 2023 in Torino (ITA), in the frame of the CEV Champions League Volley 2023.

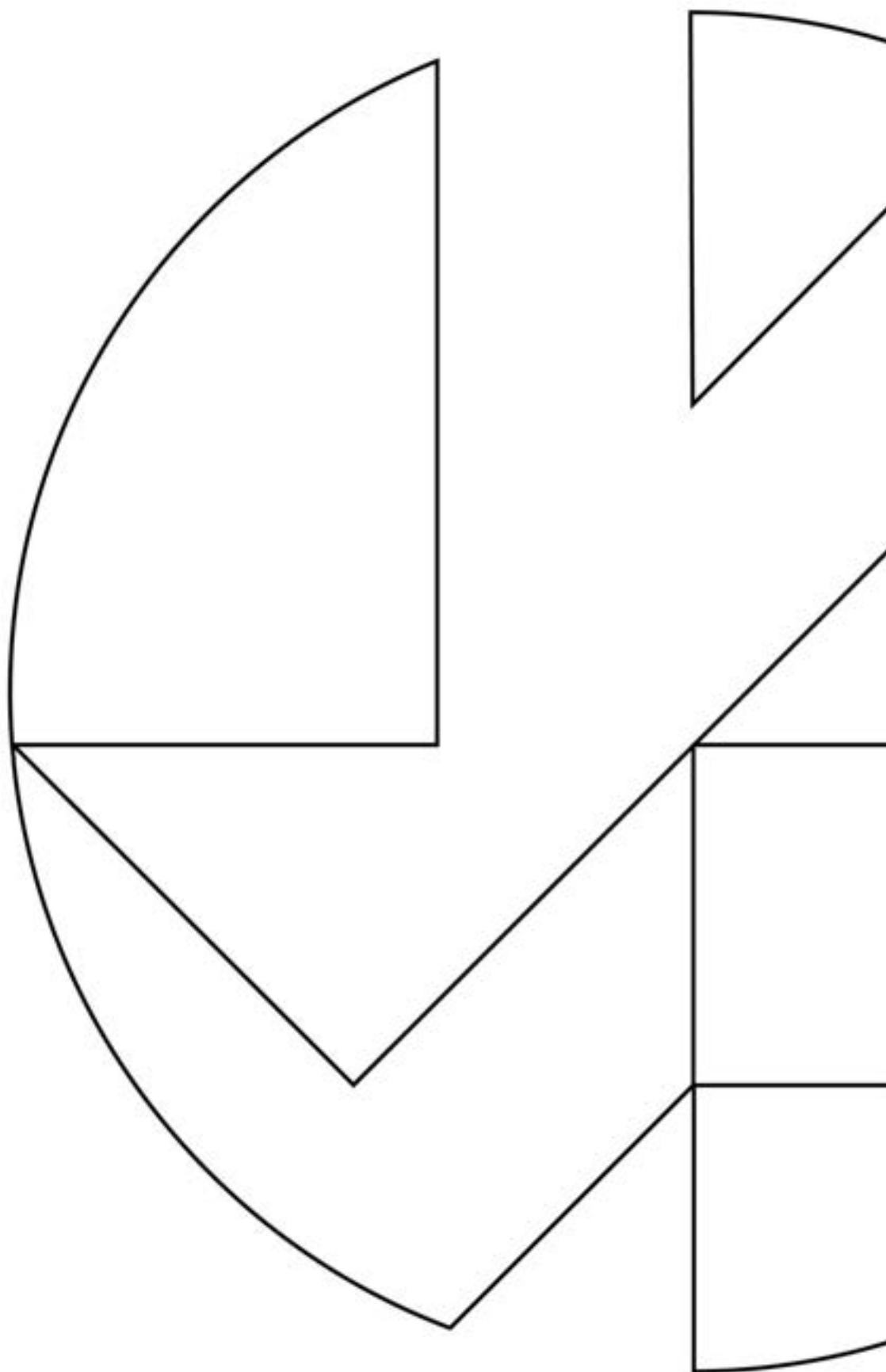
## **12. Closing of the meeting**

Closing the meeting, the CEV President thanked everyone for their cooperation and for all the decisions made during the meeting. He also thanked the German Volleyball Federation President for the hospitality.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Mannheim (GER)  
25 February 2023

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting held  
at the Renaissance Hotel  
Mediterraneo in Naples (ITA)

17 November 2022



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball



Place: Renaissance Hotel Mediterraneo, Naples (ITA)

Date: Thursday, 17 November 2022

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director

Excused	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, greeted everyone and officially opened the meeting. He thanked the Italian Federation, the Italian Federation President, Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI, as well as the professionals of the CEV Office for the excellent work they did in delivering the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Drawing of Lots, making an impressive show. As soon as the event had finished, the FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO, had sent a congratulatory message, thanking Europe for creating such powerful and beautiful images for Volleyball.

# 2. Approval of Agenda

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

# 3. Approval of Minutes

## Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 21 May 2022 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 21 May 2022 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.**

# 4. FIVB – CEV

The CEV President opened this point by stating that each of the five confederations under the umbrella of the FIVB was totally different and had its own needs and expectations. Based on discussions with various National Federations regarding club competitions in Europe, he indicated that Europe had a very high number of such activities, mentioning as an example the more than 200 clubs registered in the CEV cups competitions. That was not the case in the rest of the confederations. The investment in Volleyball from European countries had been the highest. Top players from all over the world came to European clubs to play. He explained that, in many ways, there was a clear difference in the volume of Volleyball activities in club and national competitions. This difference created an incompatibility of priorities among the confederations when it came to devise the international competitions calendar.

He was looking forward to the FIVB Volleyball Council that would take place on 02 December 2022 in order to discuss various critical matters, including the International Calendar, the new format of the age group competitions, as well as the “less is more” approach when it came to competitions. However, he expressed his concerns regarding that last matter, noting that this approach would not be beneficial for smaller scale federations, which needed more activities in order to develop and expand Volleyball in their country.

As for the Age Group competitions, during the FIVB ad hoc working group for that topic, a lot of discussions centred on the categories of U19 and U21. The CEV President had some objections about that approach. He was opposed to the idea of unifying the age categories for both genders, stating that women players by the age of 21 had already a lot of experience that pertained to senior level.

He was satisfied that the proposal for U17 age category had been accepted and also backed by the President of the South American Volleyball Confederation (CSV) and President of the FIVB Volleyball Council, Mr Marco Tullio TEIXEIRA. Mr BORIČIĆ then explained the reason that the U17 age category was so important: in Europe, age categories start with U15 in zonal activities, with U16 in continental activities and with U17 in world activities. He pointed out that it was already difficult for Volleyball to compete with other sports, like Basketball or Handball, in terms of popularity and multi-million budgets in the professional level. If Volleyball also lacked a lower age category to attract young people to the sport from an early age, it risked losing potential future Volleyball stars. The CEV President considered this as a very crucial point for the future of Volleyball in Europe and beyond.

He then presented three points that differentiated Europe from other continents in terms of Volleyball: The first point were the impressive results achieved by European teams, collecting medals in various world level competitions. Secondly, the most successful world events were organised on European soil. Thirdly, Europe was the leader in terms of spectatorship in the court and online.

Speaking of spectators, he illustrated how during in 2022 Beach Volleyball World Championships in Rome (ITA), while the online reach of the event was record breaking, the spectators onsite were not as many as they expected. Mr BORIČIĆ commented that online spectators were a valuable area to be explored. However, with regards to the onsite spectators –an integral part of every sports event, contributing to the atmosphere and the energy of the moment and even supporting the performance of the athletes–, he noted the lack of cooperation of Volleyball World with the Italian Volleyball Federation. He indicated that the CEV's approach was to organise events always involving the National Federation under its umbrella.

In the framework of the "less is more" approach, the CEV President reported that the CEV leadership had consented to the proposed cancellation of the Continental Olympic qualification tournament; such a cancellation meant an immediate loss of minimum 2,750,000 EUR for the CEV. Infront, the media rights partner of the CEV, had raised some serious concerns regarding that issue, as well as regarding the International Calendar and the intention to shift the European Championship to winter months. He explained that during winter time in Europe, there were many more popular winter sports than Volleyball, which drew most of the media attention. The CEV President intended to hold a meeting with the FIVB President on that matter. He explained that the European Representatives in the FIVB were outnumbered in terms of votes and support by other confederations, who usually had completely different interests and status of Volleyball in their respective countries. That meant that the European proposals were consistently refused, so the CEV leadership had to find other ways to lobby for its interests.

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the fact that for the first time ever, six European National Federations of category 1 and 2 (SCO, IRL, FAR, ISL, ARM, CYP) had taken the initiative to organise Age-Group European Championships. For this reason, he proposed to the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº, that the CEV and the FIVB cooperate and cover jointly the cost of Gerflor floors to be provided to the federation so as to support them in their first effort. Dr GRAÇA had accepted that proposal.

The CEV President, who also chaired the FIVB World Championship Women 2022 Control Committee (Jury), had received a report with some negative observations regarding the events. He indicated that while Volleyball World had made a great job in promoting the events, they had not involved the FIVB delegates and had only worked with the National Federation. That had led to several logistic and organisational issues. He then encouraged all the CEV Board members that were themselves Presidents of National Federations, or were involved in committees and big events, to communicate openly whenever they were faced with issues, so that they could be resolved in time. As CEV Board members they had a duty to protect and defend the interests of Volleyball in general and not only of their home federation. It was essential to safeguard the sport and everyone involved in it, react promptly and to not leave a problematic situation escalate and spoil the image of Volleyball in the media.



Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President, commented on what the CEV President had mentioned about the people involved in organising big events, and more specifically on the situation during the FIVB Volleyball World Championship in Poland. He noted that when it came to the organisation of big events, the role of the National Federation of the host country, the FIVB, Volleyball World and the CEV was not expressly defined. He advised that they should work further towards that. He shared that after the two World Championships held in Poland, there was a significant investment in Volleyball from the country: 180 million EUR for the FIVB and Volleyball World and a new contract with the CEV and Infront. Therefore, he observed that despite the large investment made by the country, there was no set role for the National Federation. Polsat, the Polish national TV broadcaster, had found a way to communicate directly with the FIVB and Volleyball World, as well as with Infront and the CEV, without involving the National Federation. He was convinced that they had built a very attractive product in Poland, which could go on the European and global market.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI continued describing the obstacles they were facing. More specifically, the clubs were experiencing difficulties, because the state-owned companies had stopped providing financing. As for the World Championships, he divulged that the FIVB and Volleyball World had come directly into contact with the Polish Government and Polsat and had not involved the Polish Federation. Consequently, while they managed to get great deals in terms of media rights, the Polish Federation was not able to receive any support from the government. In the Men's edition they managed to gather some money through the tickets. However, in the Women's edition, they kept the ticket prices low in order to attract the public, but they ended up with very little income and hence not the ideal standards for the competition. With regards to the accommodation for the Women's edition, the state had provided support, but stipulated that there had to be a tender assigning the cheapest offer. The FIVB and Volleyball World did not wish to provide support, claiming that it was not their competence.

Furthermore, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI disclosed that the Handbook for the World Championship had only arrived one week before the event and it included extra requirements that they had to comply with. He agreed that the European Representatives in the FIVB bodies should voice their concerns and objections during the official FIVB meetings. The CEV was the strongest organisation in Volleyball and needed to take a strong stand on that issue. He expressed his concerns about the business model presented by Volleyball World. He urged that the CEV should adopt a common line and act on that.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI also reminisced about the time, back in 2014, when he was the FIVB Executive Vice President in charge of TV & Marketing and President of the Polish Federation. He observed that they were able to easily make decisions and achieve a lot, because it was clear whom they should contact in order to ask for support. Currently, they were swaying back and forth from the FIVB to Volleyball World with no clear indication of each entity's role and duties. To finish his argument, he repeated how important it was to involve the National Federation in all the negotiations that took place in its territory.

The CEV President stated that he did not wish to point fingers at anyone. Nevertheless, it was important for everyone to be pragmatic, analyse the facts and acknowledge the strong and the weak points of each situation. It was crucial that people involved in the organisation of such big events express their concerns when they were faced with challenges. In such situations, they should all stick together without looking to accuse anyone. Each member of the CEV Board represented CEV and had a duty to guard and protect its interests.

Mr BORIČIĆ also raised the issue of National Federations closing deals for big events directly with the FIVB or Volleyball World without involving the CEV. He highlighted that in such cases, the CEV could not get involved and intervene to protect the National Federation, in case things were not working well. He also stated that he would be the first one to always acknowledge his mistakes, but each Board member, also representing National Federations or other entities, should take ownership of their actions and their oversights.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Vice-President, expressed his agreement regarding the perplexing situation between the FIVB and Volleyball World. While they had not encountered many problems with the FIVB,

it was not the same with Volleyball World. The financial construct of the Dutch Volleyball Federation was different than the one of the Polish Federation, therefore they were in control in terms of finances. However, Mr EVERAERT expressed serious concerns regarding the competence of the team of Volleyball World, who came up with new requirements and demands at the last moment and did not deliver the items they were in charge of. At a certain moment, Mr EVERAERT had even advised his team to disregard any requests coming from that direction, because their demands were impossible to meet. They had to build extra platforms for TV, because the team of Volleyball World had not fixed anything, and that meant a great deal of extra costs.

While he agreed that this was a very problematic situation, he also argued that the CEV represented all European Federations; as an international institution the CEV had a lot more influence and power in the FIVB than individual federations. Mr EVERAERT had raised his concerns with the FIVB and Volleyball World leadership and had expressed all his objections. Even though the Dutch Federation did try to react and resolve the recurring issues, Mr EVERAERT suggested that the President of the CEV had more power and influence and, therefore, they needed his support in order to change things.

Mr BORIČIĆ stated that he was always willing to step in and provide his support as long as he had the information in time. He also argued that the main responsibility for the challenges should fall on the FIVB leadership, because the issues regarded areas in which national federations did not have a right to intervene. He described in detail the unacceptable conditions in the accommodation for the athletes, the officials and for National Federation Presidents during the World Championship in Poland; the FIVB leadership had also recognised that. Some athletes even requested to change to another hotel. In the Netherlands, athletes, officials and leadership were dispersed into six hotels with no logical concept. Mr BORIČIĆ claimed that such events were opportunities for the officials to get together and discuss. However, the many different locations had made it impossible to gather in one place and interact.

The CEV President maintained that, when it came to competitions and events, the FIVB should be the one defining the rules that Volleyball World should follow and not the other way round. He observed, to his regret, that it was not the case, given the interventions Volleyball World tried to make in the calendar, the FIVB Constitution, etc. For such events there were expressly defined specifications in official documents (e.g. regarding who would be in charge of the accommodation) and the FIVB had recognised their importance and necessity. Based on that, it would be very clear and straightforward to apply the same system and standards in competitions of that calibre in any country they would take place.

Mr Gernot LEITNER, CEV Board of Administration member, reminded everyone about some past discussions on the protection of the National Federations' territory with regards to Volleyball activities. Referring to the example of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), where the National Olympic Committees (NOC) are the full gatekeepers of every single issue concerning the Olympic Movement – marketing rights, rings, etc. –, he believed the same principle should be applied in Volleyball. After the first full year of operation for Volleyball World, Mr LEITNER had noted the experience in the organisation of Beach Volleyball events by them in various cities and saw some promoters stepping out of those events; the promoters felt that Volleyball World was overstepping its scope in the territory of National Federations. After witnessing the two World Championships and the Beach Volleyball World Tour, Mr LEITNER suggested to find a structure and define mechanisms to protect the territory of the 56 member federations.

He then illustrated a practical example: in the spring of 2022, Austrian Volleyball clubs had declared they wished to organise a league independent from the National Federations. Mr LEITNER commented that they were always pleased to see the clubs wishing to be proactive with organising their league. They agreed to put everything on the table and discuss. In the end, they found a way to proceed. This experience had been a reality check. Mr LEITNER shared that the Italian Federation had a similar experience with Volleyball World: they wanted to go over the Italian League, Volleyball did not broadcast in public TV anymore, the fan numbers were falling dramatically; overall, they were not satisfied with their cooperation.

Mr LEITNER believed that the CEV should devise a protection mechanism. He suggested forming an agreement with the Sports Ministries, the National TV and the main stakeholders and promoters in the country in order to ensure that the National Federation would always be involved in any agreement for small or big events in its territory. He commented that clubs were always dissatisfied with the federations and sought for independent solutions, which made them an easy target for Volleyball World, as it was the case of the Italian League. In the Austrian Federation they had made an agreement with the league to always concede signature and voting rights to the Federation for any activity. He claimed that Volleyball World wished to take over as many Volleyball products as they could have access to.

Mr BORIČIĆ commented that not all federations were concerned about that, since Volleyball World approached countries in terms of market interest and not sports achievements, bringing up the example of Serbia who was a World Champion, but did not constitute a big market. A commercial entity like Volleyball World was bound to seek for a return on its 100 million investment and it would try to work in any interesting market. While some countries constituted attractive markets, the people of that country's federation were not very active, so Volleyball World was compensating that void. Mr BORIČIĆ felt that it was clear that this commercial entity was mainly interested about its profit and not in the development of the sport. He advised that everyone should proceed with caution regarding that matter and was against opening a conflict with the entity and with the FIVB on that. He was convinced that not all federations had the same view on Volleyball World. Therefore, he felt that the best solution would be to treat each case based on its facts and data and resolve the issues one by one. He advised against any rushed decisions and actions.

Since the CEV would celebrate its 50th year Anniversary in 2023, the CEV President mentioned that before the CEV was founded, the only institution presiding over Volleyball was the FIVB and the continental part featured like a small department within it. Mr BORIČIĆ cautioned that the aim was to go back to having one decision centre in the future. He firmly believed that the major National Federations standing together could achieve many things to protect the sport and also benefit the smaller federations.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President, wished to offer some clarifications regarding Infront. Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, were members of the CEV-Infront Steering Committee and held meetings every 3-4 months to exchange information with the Infront partners. The CEV had a contract with Infront, who was selling the media rights directly to the TV and had no contact with the National Federations, because it was the only agency in charge for selling the rights. During the long standing cooperation between the CEV and Infront, some National Federations had approached the CEV to ask for some information on that matter. Infront had been open to discuss in case some federations expressed any interest. However, if the CEV did not receive any information they could not act on it. He also referred to the example of the Italian Federation, which had approached the CEV Office, asking for information about TV rights. The CEV Office informed Infront and then they managed to establish a cooperation. In the context of that partnership, the position of the CEV and of Infront were clearly defined.

Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, CEV Board of Administration member, indicated that the federations were busy with the long term plan to develop the sport, the clubs and the national teams. He believed that the CEV should prevent commercial partners and player agents interfering with the market. He described their approach as "cherry-picking", choosing the opportunities that would bring them a lot of profit. He was in line with Mr LEITNER in terms of finding a legal basis in Europe so as to protect the CEV's market.

Further to the point made by Mr LEITNER, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI wished to add that the CEV should be involved in the selection of the TV partners, since the decisions should be made not only based on the mere financial value, but also on the political one. He claimed that the National Federations knew the market of their country and they could guide Infront in making those decisions.

Mr BORIČIĆ illustrated that the aim was that the CEV, along with the respective National Federation, would work on the delivery of an event (i.e. CEV EuroVolley) in its territory. He also explained that the CEV could not be involved in the internal matters of the National Federations, like dealing with their national clubs' requests. The CEV was authorised to work, along with the National Federations and their governments, in the organisation of the major international events (i.e. European Championships in senior and age-group level). The aim was to raise additional funds for such events and not to compromise the National Federation budget.

When working with the FIVB and Volleyball World, he acknowledged that the system was different and some activities were agreed upon directly with those entities. The CEV was striving to work with the National Federations in organising Volleyball activities, as soon as they declared that they were ready to do so. Mr BORIČIĆ explained that there was no point for the CEV to approach a country's government and request funding for a competition if the National Federation was not in a state to work on such an event. He added that not all federations had the same mentality and the same interests. Each country had its own specific situation and complexities and the solutions to be found had to be specific for that context. He claimed that it was difficult to apply the same model in all countries across Europe.

In addition, he wished to open a discussion with the FIVB in order to express, on behalf of many European National Federation Presidents, their wish to communicate more with the FIVB. They were dissatisfied by the fact that Volleyball World and the FIVB were organising events in some countries without involving the National Federation. Such a situation could create a negative impact, in case the federation wished to promote such activities. He firmly believed that the CEV should avoid creating more discord with the FIVB. He deemed important that the two institutions were aligned. He suggested to open discussions with the FIVB and highlight the problems, which might not be experienced only in Europe. He mentioned, for example, the fact that on the website of the FIVB the only projects that were advertised were project the FIVB and Volleyball World were working on and the European products were not featured. Mr BORIČIĆ also expressed his hope that things could take a more positive turn, since the FIVB President, in a meeting he held with the team of Volleyball World, had raised some concerns about the way some projects were handled and this could mean that there might be some changes in the near future. Mr BORIČIĆ was looking forward to the FIVB Volleyball Council that would take place on 02 December 2022, because it would be a good opportunity for all the members to discuss openly.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial Partnerships

#### **Infront**

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, started with a clarification regarding Infront and the negotiations with Polsat. Even though he did not have the full information on that project, he declared that Infront always took into consideration the state of the TV market and was in close contact with CEV Office, who always contacted the concerned National Federation before getting back to Infront. He explained that Infront would never sign a partnership without involving the CEV Office beforehand. In the context of the discussions about Volleyball World, he wanted to highlight that Infront did not have in any way whatsoever the same approach and always respected the partnership with the CEV.

He then reported on the CEV-Infront Steering Committee meeting that had taken place in the previous week at the headquarters of Infront in Switzerland. He described how positive the past few years have been with that partnership, with the bonus sealing that success. Some of the changes in the International Calendar and the Olympic Qualification system had caused concerns and financial pressure on the side of Infront. Furthermore, the uncertainty around the situation with Russia and Ukraine had also influenced the production cost and they had lost some revenue. They were working on a proposal along with the CEV Office in order to address that issue. Even if the market was not in the same state as in the first cycle, they felt that it was still positive and they expected to see the outcome of the



second cycle. Infront did raise some concerns regarding the future, in view of the potential imminent changes with the World Championship being held biennially and how that would affect the CEV and Europe.

Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON, CEV Board of Administration member, asked whether the CEV was considering a scenario where it would cooperate with Infront without Russia and how such a move would impact the revenue stream for the future. He also inquired whether there was any input for that to be shared with the CEV Board. Mr ADLER replied that from a revenue perspective there would not be such a big impact. However, the agreement included some production costs that would normally be taken over by the Russian teams or Russian TV companies. Without Russia in the agreement, these production costs would be moved to the CEV in other tournaments and that would have some influence.

Mr Thorsten ENDRES, CEV Managing Director, indicated that the revenues for the CEV European Cups had not been influenced for the moment, since the contract and the broadcasting agreement was still running. Even though no Russian teams participated, the Russian broadcasters were still broadcasting the Champions League matches, since some Russian players were involved in other clubs. That situation was subject to change in the future. With regard to the CEV EuroVolley 2023, the same treatment could be followed. If Russia would not qualify in the sportive way, there would be no agreement with the Russian broadcasters in 2023; and that accounted for a six figure agreement. On the other hand, two teams would replace the Russian team in CEV EuroVolley, so as to reach the number of 24 participating teams. Therefore, he concluded that, for the moment, the Russian situation did not have any major financial impact on the media rights revenue.

The CEV President specified that the CEV had respected and followed the decision made by the IOC, because it was important that all sports be unified on that matter. The CEV needed to be aligned with the global sport family and respect those decisions. In case of any changes, the CEV would adjust accordingly.

Mr De DOBBELEER, observed that on international level the next few months would be difficult business-wise, which would probably improve by the beginning of 2023. He commented that China, Europe and the USA were trying to find a solution between them, noting that for China the USA market was more important than the Russian one.

Shifting the focus back to European Volleyball, the CEV President recognised that the Polish broadcaster, Polsat, was one of the biggest companies in the broadcasting industry. However, it was important to highlight how Infront proved to be a valuable partner, which helped the CEV navigate through the pandemic. Signing the multi-year agreement in Vienna in 2020, just before the Covid crisis broke, had been immensely beneficial for the CEV. During that period, Infront had respected all the conditions of the agreement without changing anything. Currently, Infront was facing difficulties that went beyond the impact of the Russian conflict. They had expressed concerns about the changes in International Calendar clashing with the calendars of other stronger winter sports.

He also recognised the difficulties that many stakeholders were facing and he highlighted how important it was to find solutions which would avoid depriving the support the CEV wished to provide to the federations. Mr BORIČIĆ also elaborated on the fact that Volleyball needed more money and investments but no sudden increases. It needed the right amount of investment that could be handled at the current stage of its development.

Mr ADLER wished to highlight that the whole process of the cooperation and discussion between the CEV and Infront had always been very open, with all numbers on the table. While the two parties did not always agree, they could hold open talks to express their different opinions and both parties trusted each other in that cooperation.

## AMI

Mr ENDRES opened by reminding everyone that AMI was the agency partner for betting data-wise and sponsorship-wise. Ever since the CEV had signed the contract with AMI in Paris in 2019, a trustful relation had been established over the years. Betting data rights were granted or supplied from that agency to

IMG Arena, one of the biggest players in that industry. Similarly, on operational and technical level, a very good collaboration had been established; the CEV Office was keeping contact with the working groups on a weekly basis. Thanks to that effective collaboration, the two parties had managed to avoid any major disruption due to the challenges related to the Covid crisis, like the cancellation of matches, etc. In addition, the cancellation of some Snow Volleyball events had been compensated with the additional Beach Volleyball portfolio, introduced in the summer of 2022. Mr ENDRES felt that there was always a very good understanding between the two parties.

Recently, the AMI had also raised some concerns due to the crisis, since Russia is a big betting market for the sponsorship rights. In addition, imposed limitations in the legislation of some countries had posed a challenge to AMI when trying to sell sponsorship and betting rights. Currently, the CEV was in negotiations with AMI. Mr ENDRES was convinced that with open communication they could find a good solution, without imposing any legal issues. He was confident that they would achieve a favourable outcome, given the existence of many betting partners in the various countries across Europe. It was also important to note that the owner of AMI, Mr Robert PICKLES, is a well-connected business man in the sports industry, working with football leagues and Formula 1. Mr PICKLES had opened his network to the CEV in order to connect it to agency partners, so that the CEV could also explore various commercial contacts and get in touch with people who could help in promoting Volleyball in areas to which the CEV would not have any access on its own.

Next, Mr ENDRES referred to an incident where Volleyball World had claimed to IMG Arena that they had ownership of the rights to deliver the "Future" Beach Volleyball events, when in fact the CEV had signed a contract with the FIVB and had renegotiated it in 2021 with Volleyball World, agreeing that the CEV would cover the "Future" events, including the betting rights, according to what had been granted before based on the agreement with the FIVB. He commented that such approaches were not good for the sport and they lacked professionalism.

The CEV President argued that Volleyball World was a powerful entity which could have a sweeping effect in the sports industry, so they needed to handle the cooperation with caution and respect. He also added that he was very pleased with the work of the CEV Office and wished to congratulate Mr ENDRES and everyone in the Office for their professionalism and excellent work. The Office, following the instructions of the CEV President, held an open communication with the FIVB and shared all information. Unfortunately, this approach was not mutual; the Office had to strive to receive information, and even when they obtained it, it was subject to change at any moment. He felt that they operated with a different mentality. He observed that the incident described by Mr ENDRES was indicative of that entity's reckless and impetuous approach. If they operated like that with a big institution like the CEV, one could assume that the impact would be much more powerful when dealing with a smaller scale institution, like a national federation.

## **MIKASA**

The CEV President stated that the CEV had a sound agreement with Mikasa until 2024. However, they were facing difficulties and had started talks about making some changes for the prolongation of the agreement beyond 2024. Mr BORIČIĆ observed that over the years when the CEV was aiming to increase the budget and the value in kind service, Mikasa was hesitant due to limitations in their capacities. He stated that the CEV was determined to find a solution in order to continue the cooperation and protect both parties' interests. However, the CEV was ready to explore different solutions, in case the cooperation could no longer serve the increasing potential of Volleyball.

## **CEV Strategic planning**

Mr ADLER opened by saying that, as it was often communicated to the National Federations, in order to be able to make decisions for the future, they all needed to start thinking strategically. He started his presentation by referring to the four key aspects of the strategic planning: The "Vision" statement would represent the aspirations, the hopes and dreams and essentially the "why" of the CEV. The "Mission" statement would portray the "what" of the CEV and focused on the present day. The "Values" summed



up the core moral principles based on which the CEV made its decisions. Lastly, the "Strategic goals and objectives" delineated the "how" of the institution.

Looking at the vision, mission and values statements of other sports institutions in its attempt to compile the strategic planning, the ad hoc working group collected best practices from other organisations like the IOC and UEFA. By studying the statements of those institutions the working group concluded that there was no specific or standard way of describing these key points across the various organisations. They had sent a questionnaire to all the CEV Board members and received their feedback. Next, they tried to consolidate that feedback, find common threads and realise the meaning behind the words used. Based on that, they formulated the proposal on the strategic planning that was presented to the Board members during the meeting:

*"CEV Vision: to be the most engaging, responsible and inspiring sport enjoyed by all generations across Europe."*

The working group felt that those were the key words resulting from the input received. In their extensive discussions they intended to include many ideas, but they believed that it was important to be as clear and precise as possible.

*"CEV Mission statement for European Volleyball: to lead, promote and develop the sport together with our member federations and stakeholders, by ensuring it is done in a fair, transparent and sustainable way."*

Further to the previous discussion on the role of the National Federations, Mr ENDRES noted how important it was to highlight that the mission was carried out together with the member federations and stakeholders. He felt it was very crucial to define from the beginning that the CEV was not an institution acting alone, but always in collaboration with its member federations and partners.

Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING, CEV Vice-President, expressed her appreciation for the mission statement. However, she felt that in the vision statement the word "engaging" might not capture with precision what the CEV wanted to communicate. As for the values, she believed they were too many and that there should not be more than five, so as to maintain their powerful message. She recognised how difficult it was to take a huge amount of input, condense it and try to capture everything. She congratulated the working group for all their work.

Mr De DOBBELEER thanked everyone for their input and indicated that they had tried to be very clear with the vision and mission statements and include all the necessary elements. He thanked Ms FLEMING for her feedback and argued that the word "engaging" was meant to be addressed not only towards athletes but also towards active members, fans, media. He highlighted the importance of such a statement for the external partners and the internal stakeholders; it was crucial to clearly state what the CEV wanted to achieve and how. He added that the most important part was yet to come, meaning that they needed to have a real support base for the next phase. He felt that the outcome had been a good basis on which they could work further but also recognised that it should represent everyone.

The working group intended to open a period of discussion and sharing of input from January to March 2023, involving the CEV Commissions, Working Groups and stakeholders. The CEV President suggested to share the draft Strategic Planning also with the National Federations in January in order to give them sufficient time to reflect on it and provide feedback.

Referring to the feedback from the CEV Board members, Mr BORIČIĆ said that there were many different and interesting comments. Some comments mentioned names of Volleyball players that could be promoted to be the next Volleyball stars. He considered this as very important for the promotion of the sport. He suggested to find 5-6 young players willing to cooperate and have some experts work with them in promoting them as the next Volleyball stars. He explained that this process would possibly involve the sharing of positive as well as negative information about them. He suggested to reach out to the CEV European Coaches Commission and see if they could contribute with any ideas or help in providing access to the players. He thanked everyone for their work and he believed that the draft had been a very good starting point.

Mr THORSTEINSSON congratulated the working group for their hard work. He agreed with the concepts included in the statements and suggested to also include the word "competitiveness" as one of the main notions of the institution. In addition, he suggested to include something about the core products and the disciplines the institution was working on. He admitted that it was a very difficult task to include and combine all the different opinions and views in one statement.

Referring back to the promotion of Volleyball stars, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI informed that the Polish Federation had just launched an app people could download and access information for the Polish League (Men and Women) and the Polish National Team (Men and Women). He said that a few hours after it was launched, over 4,000 users had downloaded the application. There were games for the fans and prizes to be won. The application could draw information from each player's social media accounts. Therefore, the fans could access everything from one point. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI was convinced that this was the future the CEV should work towards to. He also mentioned that the application offered a lot of new spaces for sponsors.

Following that, Mr BORIČIĆ suggested to include two more focus areas in the strategic planning: drawing more fans to Volleyball, and involvement and cooperation with the National Federations. After collecting the feedback from the National Federations in March and hopefully collecting more inspiring ideas, the CEV President proposed to inform the FIVB about the CEV Strategic Plan. It was a crucial step in the spirit of building a good cooperation between the two institutions and they could also contribute to building a solid CEV Strategic Plan.

### **Centralised Data Platform Project**

Regarding the Centralised Data Platform Project, approved previously by the Board of Administration and presented during the CEV XLIII General Assembly in 2022 to all stakeholders, Mr ENDRES reported that the CEV Office had launched a tender process and had contacted several companies on the market working in that industry. Among those were general service and consulting companies, but also marketing agencies specialised in sports technology, as well as companies that had their own technology. The CEV team was in contact with all of those companies and the deadline had been set for 25 November 2022. Based on the discussion the CEV expected to receive a bid from at least 10 companies. The internal team, together with the external adviser, would select three companies in the period of December-January and then a proposal would be submitted to the CEV Board Meeting on February 2023 in order to make a final decision.

### **Zonal Associations**

Mr BORIČIĆ had a talk with the new President of the MEVZA, Ms Valentina BIFFLIN, who shared that they were experiencing issues with the documents from the former leadership. In the framework of the European League Calendar Meeting which would take place in Luxembourg in December 2022, they would have another discussion in order to share all the relevant information about that matter.

He also spoke about the intention of the Luxembourgish Federation to join the MEVZA. Support had been already expressed by three federations and he hoped there would be much more in the near future. Mr BORIČIĆ argued that it was very positive that the Luxembourgish Federation wished to go to a higher level and play with strong federations (Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Hungary, Israel, Slovakia and Slovenia); it was something that would benefit Volleyball.

The EEVZA had also changed its leadership and were experiencing communication problems. The CEV President argued that it was important to respect the internal dealings of the Zonal Associations and not intervene in their discussions. However, he claimed that it was crucial that they communicate some of those issues when it came upon respecting the CEV Regulations or in case they were faced with problems. Any Volleyball entity in the European territory should have an open communication so that the CEV could provide its support.

## 6. Competition Matters

### **CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals**

The CEV was in discussions with the Italian Federation for hosting the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2023 in Italy. The CEV President announced that there was a verbal agreement and they were working on the details in order to unify all the conditions. He was very pleased that the Italian Federation had taken such a step. In the meantime, the Lanxess Arena in Cologne, Germany had expressed interest in knowing the conditions for organising the Super Finals in the near future and they wished to hold a meeting with the CEV team. The CEV President observed that this was a very good sign that promoters and organisers of events viewed Volleyball as a strong sport and as an attractive business opportunity.

### **CEV EuroVolley 2023**

Following the Board decisions, Mr ARENA reiterated that the Israeli Volleyball Federation would take the place of the Ukrainian Federation in organising a Preliminary Pool in the Men's Competition. Initially, the host city was Jerusalem but due to some technical conditions as well as some political reasons regarding also the safety of the participants, it was agreed to organise the pool in Tel Aviv.

In addition, the CEV team had received official information for the host cities, especially from Italy. Therefore, the opening match for the Men's Competition would be held in Rome and afterwards they would play in the other cities: Perugia, Ancona, Bari, all the way to Bologna for the Finals. As for the rest of the host countries of the men's edition, the competitions would be held only in one city.

Regarding the Women's Competition, the previous day the CEV had received an official communication from the Mayor of Verona that they had agreed to host the opening match in the Arena of Verona. Mr ARENA pointed out that this was an immense achievement, because along with the Giro d'Italia final stage it was the first time after 35 years that the Arena of Verona had agreed to host a sports event. The occasion was even more special since the season of 2023 would mark the 100th Anniversary for the Opera at the Arena of Verona. For Belgium they had confirmed two host cities: one for the Pool phase and one for the Finals. As for the other two host countries, they would only have one host city.

On that note, the CEV President commended one more time the organisation of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 DOL, the location and the venue of the event. He hoped they would all have the same positive feeling at the opening matches of the event as well as at the Finals. He also hoped that the CEV EuroVolley 2023 event would symbolise a positive shift in Volleyball activities in Europe. He spoke about the importance of including the media in such events so that they would embrace and promote CEV EuroVolley everywhere. The CEV EuroVolley DOL was the perfect kick-off for the promotion of the future events, the host cities and countries and all the upcoming competitions in order to attract international spectators in all of the venues. He felt that this would be a clear sign of success for the events.

Mr ENDRES added that the previous week the CEV team had organised a workshop with the Press Officers of all 29 participating countries, which would continue on a monthly basis. He highlighted that the promotion of CEV EuroVolley needed the contribution of all involved parties. The aim was to make as many people as possible aware that their National Team would play in the EuroVolley events. Therefore, the CEV strongly advised the Press Officers to start promoting already and keep a continuous communication channel and a concrete promotion plan until the event. It was essential to start early, using the new technology material provided by the new partnership with the WSC. The CEV offered to all the participating federations the opportunity to use footage and material of their National Team players from the CEV European Cups competitions and previous CEV EuroVolley events. With that material they could promote in their channels their National Team players as well as the EuroVolley event in their country. He reiterated that the CEV needed the collaboration of all 29 participating countries to promote, to create awareness and to bring as many people as possible in the venues.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS, CEV Board of Administration member, shared that in Sweden they had created a Facebook group for going to Düsseldorf to support their National Team and they hoped to gather a big group to travel to Germany.

Mr De DOBBELEER believed that the combination of the Drawing of Lots for both Men and Women's competitions in one event had created a very strong moment for Volleyball and cautioned that they might have to avoid the clash with the CEV Champions League Volley 2023 for the future.

### **Age-group competition alongside CEV Champions League Volley**

The CEV President suggested to follow the example of Football and to elaborate to organise during the CEV Champions League Volley a similar competition for the junior level. He stated that the final decision would be from the clubs, the CEV did not intend to put any pressure on them on that. He suggested that in the applications of the CEV Champions League Volley of the following season, the clubs could also state whether they were willing to hold such a junior parallel competition. Even if there was interest only from a few clubs, a small scale pre-Champions League European tournament could be organised.

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to consider the organisation of an age-group competition alongside the CEV Champions League Volley matches, based on the feedback received from the clubs.**

### **CEV EuroVolley 2025**

The Romanian Federation had sent all the required documents, as well as a declaration of support by their Sports Minister, in order to apply to organise one pool for the Men's competition of CEV EuroVolley 2025.

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Romanian Federation as organiser of one pool for the CEV EuroVolley 2025 Men's Competition.**

The Turkish Federation had expressed interest to organise the Women's Final for the CEV EuroVolley 2025. In addition, they declared that they were also willing to take over the organisation of all the stages of the Women's Competition, in case there were no other organisers. While recognising the positive message that such a proposal gave out, Mr BORIČIĆ argued that the CEV preferred to continue with the concept of four host countries for the CEV EuroVolley. Therefore, for the moment, the CEV was expecting the final confirmation for the Turkish Federation just for the Finals.

Furthermore, Mr BORIČIĆ communicated the intention expressed from the French Federation for 2025, from the Finnish Federation for 2025 Women's Competition and for 2027 for Men's Competition and from the Austrian Federation for 2025. He noted that until the CEV received the official application documents, the CEV Board could not approve anything. Mr TANGUY said that they had an appointment with the Sports Minister on 30 November and that they could only confirm if they had a guarantee of support from their government. Mr LEITNER also shared that they had a Board meeting in the Austrian Federation on 30 November in order to discuss the layout for their long-term bidding strategy for Beach, Indoor and Youth activities. He admitted that the Austrian Federation focused a lot on the Beach Volleyball activities, so they intended to devise a long-term plan and be able to have a reply by the end of 2022.

The CEV President expressed his satisfaction about having many new candidates for this competition. In order to better promote the sport, he believed it was important to hold the CEV EuroVolley in more

countries. Another new candidate that had emerged was Sweden, since they had started having a successful course with their Women's team. Mr BORIČIĆ shared that he was very happy that the Swedish Federation President was very active, they had exchanged a lot of information and he was waiting for a final decision from their side.

For the Men's Competition, the CEV was waiting to receive a confirmation from the German Volleyball Federation. He was pleased that the government was willing to host international events and he believed that CEV EuroVolley 2025 would be a good moment for the development of Men's Volleyball in Germany.

Next, the CEV President referred to the change among the Ukrainian and the Israeli Federation for the organisation of one pool. He hoped that the Ukrainian Federation would be able, with the CEV's support, to host a pool either in 2025 or 2027.

### **CEV EuroVolley 2027**

Expression of interest from Spain, Latvia, the Netherlands, and Finland for organising parts of the CEV EuroVolley 2027 competitions. The CEV President acknowledged that the priority was to conclude with the organisers of the 2025 editions. However, he noted that as soon as the applications for the 2027 edition were sent, it was crucial that the CEV Board decide swiftly on the appointments, because it was very beneficial for the National Federations to have a the longest preparation period possible in order to feature in the country's strategic plan for hosting big events and to secure the adequate budget from the government funds. He also encouraged all CEV Board members to share any ideas for the next editions many years in advance.

### **CEV EuroBeachVolley 2022**

The CEV President observed that the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2022 had been a great success for the sport. After long negotiations, the CEV managed to secure a 1.2 million deal for that competition. After the successful delivery, the European Championships (ECM) wished to continue the cooperation and they increased the offer to 1.5 million for 2026 and 1.8 million for 2030. Beach Volleyball had managed to attract a lot of attention among all other sports during the multi-sport tournament. The matches were played in full capacity of the venues. Given that so many media representatives attended that event, Mr BORIČIĆ felt it was the perfect promotion for the European Championship of the discipline across many countries. He congratulated everyone and said that he saw it as a very knowledgeable decision to pursue that project. It would also serve as a proof that the CEV was able to achieve great results for the discipline within Europe, without the involvement of Volleyball World.

### **CEV EuroBeachVolley 2024**

The CEV President was happy to announce that the Dutch Federation had sent an application for hosting the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2024.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Volleyball Federation of the Netherlands as organiser of the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2024 according to the official bidding requirements.**



## **Beach Volleyball Olympic Qualification**

Mr Michel EVERAERT indicated that the Beach Volleyball Think Tank had been working on the terms and conditions of the Olympic Qualification, which was known as the CEV Beach Volleyball Continental Cup. He described that it was a complicated system from the event organising aspect: a team could qualify for the Olympics through the Olympic ranking of the FIVB, but the participation in the Continental Cup was reserved only for the teams that had not yet qualified through that ranking. He commented that for the promoters that system gave rise to many organisational problems. Weak teams would probably not qualify to the Olympics but they would still have to make a big investment for the participation. In other cases the ranking would be known only a few months before the Continental Cup and that was difficult to organise. In some cases teams found out that they had not been qualified through the ranking only one week before the Continental Cup. That was the situation in the previous Continental Cup organised in the Netherlands. While it had been a successful event, from the event organisation and preparation perspective, he noted that it was impossible to do it in a proper way, since promoters needed a long time planning period, etc.

Together with the CEV Beach Volleyball Department, they had started working on the concept as well as on the terms and conditions of the Olympic Qualification. Mr EVERAERT explained that for smaller countries it was important to have a way to be part of the Olympic Qualification system, since it could have a financial impact from their National Olympic Committee or their Ministry of Sports. They had lowered the prize money but also decided to set a participation fee, as it was the case with other events. They had also proposed that they pay for their own accommodation. They felt it was a realistic proposal which facilitated the organisation of the event, since the organiser, as in Junior Tournaments, would receive money from the participants to stay. Finally, he commented that he believed it was fair to ask the participants to contribute something for the organisation of the event. That was the base for the proposal for the Nations Cups.

Mr ENDRES added that since there would be a combination of the CEV Nations Cup 2023 and the CEV Nations Cup 2024 – Olympic Qualification, the only matter that remained open to discussion was whether the participation of the federations was mandatory for both years or whether federations would be allowed to register in the 2024 event, if they had not registered in the previous one. He explained that there were pro and con arguments for both options. If smaller federations were to stay for the longest period possible in the Olympic Qualification process in order to receive support from their National Olympic Committee, then they should be allowed to participate in both events. On the other hand, the federations should be free to decide themselves if they increased their chances to qualify to the final by participating already in 2023. If they only registered in 2024, they would only have one chance to do so. Therefore, that was a point that was still to define.

Mr EVERAERT replied that based on information from the CEV Beach Volleyball Department the aim was to give the opportunity to some countries to stay in the Olympic Qualification until very late in the process. Therefore, they should not be obliged to participate in the 2023, because that might cause a big problem for some small federations.

In order to create some balance, Mr BORIČIĆ suggested that all teams should participate in both tournaments with the exception of the teams that had qualified through the FIVB competitions. For those they could compile and waiting list and they could exceptionally only participate in the 2024 tournament.

Mr EVERAERT expressed his concerns about applying that system. He indicated that based on the system in place the strongest federations did not play in Qualification tournaments, so they went directly to the final tournament. Those were countries with a solid and well organised National Team programme for Beach Volleyball or at least good Beach Volleyball programmes. The main complexity was around smaller federations with starting programmes, referring to the examples of the Swedish, Norwegian and Dutch teams. He believed there was a valid reason to give incentives to federations to devise a well organised programme and to award them for that. On the other hand, given that it was



already almost the end of 2022, they had to decide for the qualification tournament in 2024, which some smaller federations might find challenging. He suggested that the CEV could propose changing the qualification system for the Olympics of 2028.

Mr BORIČIĆ argued that the Olympic Qualification process should be focused on the strongest teams and it should not be viewed as a project to develop young players. Mr EVERAERT fully agreed on that view, but he mentioned that the FIVB President, Dr Ary S Graça F<sup>o</sup>, repeated often the Continental Cup had inspired many countries to play more Beach Volleyball, therefore he did see a development aspect in that project. Mr BORIČIĆ welcomed the possibility to have many participating countries in the Qualification system, but he noted that they should start from the lowest level and proceed gradually. Nonetheless, in the end, that process should define the strongest teams and send the best teams in the Olympic Games.

### Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal for the CEV Beach Volleyball Olympic qualification process for Paris 2024 with mandatory participation of the teams in the two consecutive tournaments.**

### CEV Beach Volleyball Club Competition – Pilot Project

Mr LEITNER took the floor and talked about the future project of the CEV Beach Volleyball Club competition, which seemed to have a strong potential. There was a growing club scene in many countries which constituted interesting business models and were also the home of many top players. The Beach Volleyball Think Tank saw a bright future in that competition. They had worked on the eligibility criteria and the competition parameters. In terms of planning, the first test event would take place at the end of the season of 2023. Therefore, the National Federations would be advised to have a National Competition throughout 2023 in order to define a National Champion. That could either take the form of one event or of a tournament series for clubs, as it was the case with the Austrian Federation who sought to grow the product from bottom-up and result with a top product with the contribution of the CEV and the commitment displayed by the Beach Volleyball Think Tank.

### Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the first ever CEV Beach Volleyball Club Competition – European club Tournament as a pilot project in autumn 2023 with 8-12 teams.**

Mr ENDRES clarified that based on the pilot project, the CEV would subsequently develop the Regulatory Framework for the future, in order to establish step by step a high level club competition for Beach Volleyball.

The CEV President highlighted that all players should have a national licence. It was essential that they would be recognised by the National Federation in order to participate in the competition. He explained that he intended to grant power to the National Federations. Furthermore, the CEV should collect data on how many countries organised National Beach Volleyball Championships in order to see if there was a sufficient number of potential participating federations in order to form a competition. He also suggested that the CEV team could attend those National Championships in order to assess them. Lastly, he proposed to define some compensation for the players for the first two years that would gradually fade, in order to boost the start of that competition. He hoped that the small countries could recognise the potential in that competition, because it would be possible for them to participate in a high level club competition in Beach Volleyball, while it was much more difficult to achieve that with Indoor Volleyball.

## **CEV Beach Volleyball Age-group European Championships 2023**

Applications had been received from the French, Georgian, Polish and Turkish Federations, but they were not completed. Therefore, the decision was to appoint the following competitions to:

- Spanish Federation – CEV U18 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023 in Madrid
- Latvian Federation – CEV U20 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023 in Riga
- Romanian Federation – CEV U22 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023 in Timișoara

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Spanish Federation as organiser of the CEV U18 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023 in Madrid.**

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Latvian Federation as organiser of the CEV U20 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023 in Riga.**

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Romanian Federation as organiser of the CEV U22 Beach Volleyball European Championship 2023 in Timișoara.**

## **CEV Age-group Volleyball European Championships 2024**

The application from Ireland for co-hosting together with Scotland the CEV U20 Volleyball European Championships 2024 had been completed. The CEV President congratulated the Irish Federation for taking the initiative to organise an Age-group competition together with the Scottish Federation and wished them the best of luck.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Irish Federation as co-organiser of the CEV U20 Volleyball European Championships 2024.**

## **Situation of Russian players**

The CEV President described an issue with the Russian players in the European Competitions. The FIVB Board had recognised all Russian athletes as working people and respected their right to continue playing. A similar decision was made regarding all foreign athletes playing in Russia. However, there were instances in some teams and some countries that gave rise to concerns about potential issues. Mr BORIČIĆ emphasised that the CEV should protect all its accredited athletes and it was responsible to provide them with a solution to continue playing. He referred specifically to instances in Poland and Czechia, where the authorities were refusing to issue visas to Russian players. If those players had a Schengen visa, they could enter the Schengen area but not directly through those countries. Even though there were no problems reported until then, the CEV President cautioned that the situation should be closely monitored in order to prevent any last minute issues. In addition, in the case of a match of a Ukrainian team playing in Czechia, the safety of all participants should be guaranteed. The CEV had also consulted other sport federations on how they handled similar issues, but they had no problems to report.

## 7. Financial Matters

### **Internal Auditors Report**

Mr ADLER referred to the report from the Internal Auditors included in the working file distributed to all CEV Board members. He reminded everyone about the short Internal Audit performed during the summer to make sure that the CEV was complying with all the rules. Based on the report, no issues were raised. He added that in cashflow-wise the CEV's accounts were in a satisfactory level.

Concerning the CEV's financial investments, Mr ADLER reported that they had started working with the bank the CEV was going to cooperate. Mr ENDRES, the CEV Finance Department and Mr ADLER had held a meeting in the previous month, during which they explained their strategy and they declared that they were proceeding in a slow pace with the investment, since the market was very volatile. They had not yet invested the full amount. They had proceeded with short-term bonds, since the interest rate was interesting. Therefore, the largest part of that amount had been invested in short-term bonds and they had also started investing in equities whenever they saw a possibility. Based on the agreement made with the CEV, they would continue in a slow pace. Until then, no money had been lost, which was something positive, considering the global financial situation. Lastly, he informed everyone that as of June 2022 the negative interest rate in the CEV accounts had been stopped, therefore the CEV was not paying negative interest rates anymore.

### **Potential increase of contribution fee**

The CEV President suggested that for the following CEV Board meeting in February 2023, the CEV Commissions could consider submitting a proposal on a potential increase of contribution fee in the various CEV Competitions. The reason was that many organisers were faced with challenges during those tournaments due to the rising costs in accommodation. The intention was to send a message of support to the organisers, so that they would not be discouraged from taking the initiative to organise tournaments, while also respecting the needs of the participants.

### **Considering a mutual support towards the National Federation of Malta**

The CEV President informed that the National Federation of Malta had submitted a project and had requested support from the CEV and the FIVB. He noted that first he wished to coordinate with the FIVB President and then proceed to a final proposal and decision by the CEV Board in one of the next meetings.

## 8. Proposals from Board members

No points discussed.

## 9. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

### **Proposals to amend the CEV Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations**

Mr ENDRES referred the CEV Board members to the working file for the proposal submitted by the CEV Snow Volleyball Working Group to update the Snow Volleyball Regulations. Given the increasing experience in the discipline, the proposal was an enhancement of the Snow Volleyball Competition Regulations in order to upgrade them. It introduced the positions and defined the roles and duties of the Referee Manager, the Competitions Director, the Technical Manager and Court Manager.

### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the amended proposals to change the CEV Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations.**

## 10. Any other business

### **CEV 50th Anniversary**

The CEV President proposed not to define only one day for the celebration of the 50 year anniversary but to make it a year full of celebrations across all activities at every level. The CEV had started discussions with the city of Luxembourg in order to organise a celebratory event. He appreciated the hard work and effort put by the President of the Luxembourgish Federation, Mr Norma ZAMBON in order to organise a Beach Volleyball tournament in the main square of the city of Luxembourg in the framework of the 50th Anniversary of the CEV.

He added that he would like to extend the invitation to all federations to share ideas on how to celebrate the 50th Anniversary. He felt that it would be a good opportunity to have a unified approach in promoting the anniversary and the sport. He then mentioned various events throughout 2023 which could serve as an opportunity to celebrate the anniversary: Queen and King of the Court, European Cups DOL in Luxembourg (LUX) in July, the CEV General Assembly in Brussels (BEL), the 50th Anniversary Gala in Italy in the frame of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men finals. He encouraged all CEV Board members to share any potential ideas regarding the celebration of the anniversary as soon as possible.

## 11. Next meeting

The CEV President gave an overview of tentative dates for the CEV Board meetings during 2023:

- 24 February 2023
- 20-21 May 2023 – in the frame of the Super Finals
- 16 September 2023 – in the frame of Gala/EuroVolley Men Finals
- 08 December 2023

The final dates and the location of those meetings would be confirmed at a later stage.



## 12. Closing of the meeting

Closing the meeting, the CEV President thanked everyone for their contribution to fruitful discussions and to a productive meeting. He hoped that the CEV leadership would continue working as one unified team facing challenges and celebrating anniversaries together.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the Renaissance Hotel Mediterraneo, Naples (ITA)  
17 November 2022

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting held  
at the InterContinental Hotel  
in Ljubljana (SLO)

21 May 2022



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball

Place:   InterContinental Hotel, Ljubljana (SLO)

Date:     Saturday, 21 May 2022

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
FIVB Guests	Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº	FIVB President
	Mr Fabio AZEVEDO	FIVB General Director
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
Excused	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, greeted everyone and officially opened the meeting.

On behalf of the CEV Board of Administration, he expressed how happy he was for having the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº, and the FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO in the meeting. He said it was a good opportunity to see how the two institutions, the FIVB and the CEV, were working together and how to move forward and improve their cooperation in the future.

He also thanked the Slovenian Volleyball Federation and the city of Ljubljana for hosting the meeting and then gave the floor to Mr Metod ROPRET, President of the Slovenian Volleyball Federation and CEV Board of Administration member.

## **Speech by the Slovenian Volleyball Federation President**

Mr ROPRET gave a warm welcome to everyone. He started by mentioning that Slovenia was a country of a bit more than two million inhabitants and their capital city, Ljubljana, was also a small city with a population of 400,000 inhabitants. He affirmed that what Slovenia lacked in size it made up for passion. Ljubljana had ranked first among the best green capitals of Europe. Himself a Mayor of the Brezovica Municipality, he also praised the work of Ljubljana's Mayor, Mr Zoran JANKOVIĆ. Mr JANKOVIĆ focused a lot on the development and green policy. However, what was more important was his passion and support towards sports. It was after his insistence and perseverance that the venue hosting the CEV Super Finals for 2022 became a reality.

Mr ROPRET continued by stating that Slovenia, a country with the highest percentage of green space per inhabitant, was a quite sporty nation. The Alps mountains, the seaside and the thermal waters offered a rich terrain for developing tourism in general, and more specifically sports tourism (ski touring, trekking, biking, cycling, etc.). Then, he went on to praise Slovenia's successful athletes like Luka DONČIĆ (Basketball player in NBA), Tadej POGAČAR and Primož ROGLIČ (cycling) and many Olympic medallists. Volleyball was among the popular sports and the one the nation was the most proud of. With three silver medals in the last European Championships (ECHs), the Slovenian players were considered like heroes in Slovenia.

He also recounted that ten years before, when he had decided to take the chair of the Slovenian Federation, no one wanted to fill that position for nine months. On the one hand, the Federation had a lot of debt, but on the other hand, they had a passionate and intelligent national team, which was what had convinced him to take the position and invest in them. Mr ROPRET promised to provide the National Team with the best conditions and the best coaches. He kept his promise, bringing coaches like Andrea GIANI and Slobodan KOVAČ, Alberto GUILIANI, and currently Mark LEBEDEV. He claimed that the investment had paid off, judging from the results of the Slovenian National Team in the recent years.

In order to be able to achieve all of that, decisions had to be made to help the Slovenian Federation collect funds and invest further in its development. Therefore, they had agreed that the way to earn money was to organise events. He commented that even with small events it was a place to start. Little by little they started gaining attention from sponsors and then came the good results of the team. Afterwards, things started to get easier. Mr ROPRET expressed how grateful he was to the CEV and the FIVB Leadership, because they had granted them the organisation of the CEV Super Finals and the FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship 2022 (WCH). He admitted that they could never have imagined that they would be able to organise such major events.

Looking into the future, all those competitions had been an amazing success and a valuable experience, because they gradually attracted the interest of many young athletes. After EuroVolley 2019, for the first time in Slovenia, the halls, the schools, the clubs capacities were not big enough

anymore to receive all the boys and girls willing to play Volleyball. That was the effect of the National Team's results.

Mr ROPRET stated that they currently have a very talented and dedicated team of young girls, which would be the Federation's next chapter. They were willing to invest in them, bringing Mr Marco BONITTA as Head Coach (World Champion in Italy).

Concluding his speech, Mr ROPRET wished to thank everyone. He argued that it was because of some important decisions of the FIVB and the CEV Leadership to support Slovenia that they were able to achieve all that and he wished to take the opportunity to express his gratitude.

The CEV President thanked Mr ROPRET for his speech, highlighting the immense progress made by the Slovenian Federation in a quite small period. He personally thanked Mr ROPRET for his contribution to Volleyball in general.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

## 3. Approval of Minutes

### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 26 February 2022 in Antwerp, Belgium

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 26 February 2022 in Antwerp, Belgium.**

## 4. FIVB

### Address of the FIVB President

The FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup> started by congratulating everyone for their work and especially the CEV President, because his contribution had been very important in resolving some misunderstandings between the two institutions, bringing the cooperation to the right track.

### **A message for unity in Volleyball family**

Addressing everyone, he expressed how pleased he was to be attending that meeting, because he felt that there were some necessary clarifications to be made. He encouraged everyone to share openly any doubts they had regarding the ongoing discussions. He believed that it was always better to handle any uncertainties or scepticism directly than to leave them unaddressed, something which could lead to greater misunderstandings. He highlighted the necessity of unity within the Volleyball community as well as the concept of the Volleyball family. He commented that the micro politics within the institutions belonged to the past. It was a time to leave aside any disagreements and conflicts and understand the reasoning behind each action. He encouraged everyone to raise any questions they had and start

discussions, especially the CEV Board members that were part of the FIVB Board and had access to all the meetings and the knowledge. He felt that it was a very special opportunity to be able to speak directly to the CEV Board.

The FIVB President also made a point against any discrimination and prejudice, especially in terms of poor and rich countries. The mission was to be united as one and to share knowledge among the members of the Volleyball community, to teach members who wanted to take action but did not have the know-how. Given that Europe had a more advanced level of status and strategy, it could provide valuable lessons to other Confederations. Empowering other Confederations would strengthen the whole Volleyball community. He emphasised the importance of approaching Volleyball as a whole and without geographical distinctions. He was convinced that everyone of the CEV Board and the Volleyball community in general loved the game and was ready to fight for it and contribute to the mission to spread it around the world. The more popular Volleyball would become globally the more it would benefit each Confederation individually by raising the interest of sponsors, TV, etc. He explained that his core strategic plan was based on that approach. Having an excellent Volleyball scene in Asia would also stir the interest of sponsors and media in Europe. Having the whole world talking about Volleyball would increase its value in all continents.

### **Surviving two major crises**

The international Volleyball community had faced two major crises. The first one was the pandemic, during which the FIVB never stopped working. Despite the huge impact of the pandemic on individuals and on organisations, the FIVB competitions went on as much as possible. The FIVB President pointed out that despite the financial loss of about 10 million dollars, the FIVB delivered the Volleyball Nations League (VNL) competition in Rimini (ITA) in a secure bubble, putting forward the interest of professional athletes.

The second serious crisis was the situation with Ukraine and Russia, pointing out that it was a very sensitive matter, especially for Europe. He also recognised that the CEV had also never stopped delivering competitions during the pandemic, supporting the athletes to continue playing and earning their life. He stated that the main concern of the FIVB was Volleyball and the athletes and affirmed that they intended to continue fighting and working very hard.

### **Keeping promises**

He then outlined how the FIVB was fulfilling all the promises the FIVB President had made before his election. His focus points were innovation and opportunities. He referred to the challenge system, which had opened a whole new world within Volleyball. He stated that the outcome in major competitions, for which there had been big investments, could not only depend on referees. It should be handled in a professional way. After the introduction of the challenge system, those problems had greatly diminished.

Therefore, the FIVB had managed to immensely increase its value and some companies had expressed their interest for a collaboration. Himself a person with a financial oriented background, the FIVB President organised a two year preparation for the FIVB in order for it to reach a point where it could go out to the market and establish a commercial entity. He explained that there were several reasons for such a move. The first reason was the immediate increase of 100 million dollars in the FIVB's capital. In order to accumulate such an amount otherwise, they would need at least ten years. After that, the FIVB had reached a total capital of 220 million dollars, becoming the biggest international federation after FIFA. While other international federations had to rely on the IOC for financial support, it was not the case with the FIVB, since it relied on its reserves and was careful about the way they spent their funds.



## Partnership with CVC Capital Partners

The FIVB President affirmed that the partnership with the CVC Capital Partners had been very beneficial from the financial point of view. However, the actual goal was to have the freedom to attract and make contracts with the best professionals in the field. From a political point of view, the FIVB could never invest large amounts of money on experts as a commercial entity would be able to. In the end, he explained that they had agreed that the experts they had employed would only receive a bonus based on results.

It was a time to invest on the knowledge and expertise of professionals in order to get the best results. Strong organisations should not rely only on their President. As a good coach needed a team of good players, in the same way organisations needed a good team of experts. He was very glad about the team they had created in the FIVB. Those people had the responsibility to bring out the best possible version of the FIVB, take it to the top and guarantee some resources. This would allow for a continuous investment and development (through the Volleyball Empowerment programme), putting the sport as priority all the while.

On that path, they had achieved a 400% increase in their budget from what they had initially. They managed to spread Volleyball all around the world. In the beginning, the core plan was to sell Volleyball in only 30 countries. Currently, in the last WCH of Beach Volleyball they had managed to sell Beach Volleyball TV to 132 countries and to 105 for VNL. The results spoke for themselves.

## Two books on Volleyball

He then referred everyone to the book he had written *The Set Point*, in which he went through the latest innovations and developments in the FIVB and Volleyball. He invited everyone to read the book and to address him with any questions. In the next few months, he was also going to publish another book on the details of the partnership with CVC Capital Partners and the launch of Volleyball World, describing the creation of a company and then selling 33% of it in the aim of absolute transparency. He remarked that in that venture, there had not been any losses, because the FIVB remained in full command of everything. The CVC Capital Partners were only working for the 33% of the profits, they did not have the authority to change the rules or amend the FIVB Constitution. In the Board of Administration of Volleyball World, the people from the FIVB were the majority. He also mentioned that the people working for Volleyball World were professionals with an excellent background and were expected to deliver results and guidelines on further actions. They were able to advise in all cases, mentioning the example of handling the situation with Russia. Some of the best lawyers of Switzerland were part of the Board and everything was handled by the best professionals. He was convinced that the way to the future was to continue trusting the professionals and carry on with that mentality.

## Valuing credibility

He then made a point about credibility. Without it sponsors, governments and media would not get involved in the sport. He argued that the negotiation power and the access provided was very different if an organisation had credibility. He recognised that the present image of the CEV was completely different than in the past and stated that he personally trusted the CEV and the CEV President, recognising his big commitment and contribution to Volleyball with his work.

## Where did the FIVB invest the new funds?

Therefore, with all the extra budget accumulated through the new commercial partnership, the FIVB President spoke about how they intended to use it. They did not plan to leave all that money in the bank, but to use it for the development of Volleyball through the new FIVB project "Volleyball Empowerment".

He also stated that he considered the national teams as very important in developing Volleyball. He illustrated his point by bringing the example of the Slovenian men's National Team, who was the runner-up at the CEV European Championship (ECH) in 2015 and since then it had acquired the kind of credibility which was necessary to be trusted with the organisation of big events, like the CEV Super Finals. That was the aim of the Volleyball Empowerment project. He then also referred to the example of Tunisia, Egypt, Kenya, Cameroon, countries that did not have good coaches or the administrative mentality of how to run a national team and commented that the CEV, having the know-how and the expertise, should be the first one to contribute to such a project.

Since 2017, the FIVB had approved 521 projects from 222 National Federations from all five Continental Confederations, which had totalled an investment of more than 11 million CHF. Out of those 521 projects, 208 were coach support projects in 112 countries, 277 were Volleyball equipment projects for 125 countries and 36 were knowledge transfer programmes for 28 countries. Therefore, he showed how the money was distributed all over the world to those countries that needed support.

During the first, second and third windows of application for the 2021-2022 application-based support cycle, the FIVB had received 97 development project applications. Out of those, 89 projects had already been approved: 41 coach support projects, 46 Volleyball equipment projects and 2 knowledge transfer projects. Additionally, 9 countries from all five Continental Confederations were identified for the targeted support programme in the 2021-2022 cycle.

Since 2017, the FIVB had approved 110 projects for the 56 National Federations in Europe with a total investment of over 3 million CHF. The FIVB President confirmed that he had a similar way of thinking with the CEV President, trying to identify the needs of each Federation in order to provide them with support. All of that was in addition to supporting Zonal Associations. The FIVB had been aligned on these projects with the CEV President. Dr GRAÇA recognised once again the great progress and the great advances the European teams had made. The above mentioned projects had already delivered results, and he went on to present some recent examples.

### **Example of France**

The FIVB had created a project with the French Volleyball Federation to support the development of their Beach Volleyball National Teams ahead of the Olympic Games Paris 2024. The total annual cost of the project was 1.3 million USD. However, the FIVB contributed only 17%, 220,000 USD. The rest had come from a partnership with the National Federation, the National Olympic Committee, the Sports Ministry and the Government. He remarked that as a clear indication that the FIVB model of support was successful. With the International Federation on-board, they had managed to attract additional funds from other state stakeholders. He added that France needed support for Beach Volleyball in view of the Olympic Games of 2024, because the discipline was not as developed in that country. By developing the discipline they would also attract a lot of spectators during the games and also present a full stadium on TV.

### **Example of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Bosnia and Herzegovina was another interesting example. The FIVB had provided coaching support to the Women's National Team in 2021. Since then, the talented team had gone from strength to strength with Head Coach, Stevan LJUBIČIĆ, leading them to their first ever CEV Silver League title. Currently, the team had earned its promotion to the CEV Golden League 2022, which would start in the following few days with the round robin phase.

## **Example of Croatia**

The FIVB had sent to Croatia a floor in 2019. Following the earthquake at the end of 2020, the FIVB had provided the federation with another Gerflor floor, which had enabled them to host some CEV events as well as the upcoming Women's Volleyball Challenger Cup 2022. The FIVB was currently in ongoing discussions with the Croatian National Federation regarding some further development plans.

## **Importance of national teams**

The FIVB President wished to emphasise the importance of national teams. If a national federation did not have a competitive national team, they would not have a product to sell. Therefore, getting public or government support, or attracting sponsors would be more difficult. Consequently, it was crucial to invest in the national teams and increase the number and level of the teams participating in the main Volleyball events. That would increase the relevance of Volleyball worldwide and make it more popular than ever before.

## **Example of South America**

The FIVB President had served as President of the South American Volleyball Confederation (CSV). During his mandate they had invested a lot of money first in Beach Volleyball. His concept was that the countries in South America did not have the means to get big immediately, so it was better to start slowly with Beach Volleyball, which was a cheaper sport to organise. The proof of the success of that investment was the exquisite performance of the Men's Brazilian Beach Volleyball team taking the first place in the Volleyball World Beach Pro Tour Challenge in Itapema, on 14-17 April 2022. In addition, during the recent South American Beach Volleyball Championship the men's Chilean team had won silver medals in the match against Brazil with the overall score 2-1 and ranked 7th in the World Ranking. The CSV had become independent from the FIVB, because they had a product to sell. The Colombian team always qualified to the Olympics, the Argentinian women's team managed to go to the Olympics for the first time, and before that they never had a women's team. The Peruvian team was making a comeback. Uruguay in Beach Volleyball, Paraguay had the 5th place in the Youth Olympic Games.

As a result, by developing the sport and creating stronger Volleyball nations, the entire Volleyball Family would become stronger. Stronger national teams could provide inspiration to the new generations of players and fans to engage with Volleyball, creating idols that the children would want to follow.

He also added that the way to provide support from one country or continent to another varied greatly. Each place had its particularities. If someone could invest in schools in Serbia, the same thing could not happen in million schools in China, for example. Countries with big populations needed to have idols that children would look up to and be influenced to engage with the sport.

## **Support during the pandemic**

During the Covid-19 crisis, the FIVB had assisted athletes via the FIVB Athletes' Relief Support fund. In total, 80 players from a wide range of countries in Europe, Asia, Oceania and the Americas received financial support for basic needs.

The FIVB Board of Administration had approved that 10% of transfer fees would go to the athletes' fund aimed at supporting players all around the world. The FIVB Athletes' Commission had created a working group that was in charge of defining some eligibility criteria for the support.

## Developing and improving the FIVB events

The FIVB had launched the Volleyball World Beach Pro Tour, a new and cutting-edge annual tour. The FIVB President divulged that while initially he had himself some concerns about changing the format, he had realised that the new structure did work and people loved it. With 29 events in the calendar across Elite 16, Challenge and Future events, he was convinced that the Beach Pro Tour, with the highest level of TV production and sports presentation, would be a game-changer for Beach Volleyball. He saw a lot of potential in the innovative Beach Pro Tour and the new VNL format and believed that they would increase the value of the sport.

He also disclosed confidentially that in the following week the FIVB would announce a record-breaking multi-year contract between Volleyball World and Polsat. The contract would secure broadcasting rights in Poland for the world's most prestigious Volleyball events, including three men's and women's WCHs in 2022, 2026 and 2030. The ten-year agreement would run from 2022 to 2032, and it would represent more than 200% increase in the media rights value. He commented that the partnership with the CVC Capital Partners had helped a lot in that achievement. The value of that ten-year deal was even higher than the partnership with CVC. That was a clear sign of the popularity of the sport in Poland and of the growth of Volleyball globally. It signalled a new world, a new era for Volleyball.

The FIVB President stated that 2022, with three WCHs, would be a very exciting year for Volleyball. In June, the 2022 FIVB Beach Volleyball WCH would take place in Rome, Italy. In August-September-October, the two editions of the FIVB Volleyball WCH would take place with the women's edition in Poland and the Netherlands and the men's event in Poland and Slovenia.

In the FIVB, they had been positively surprised with the number of countries from different continents that had expressed their interest in hosting the men's event when it had been relocated from Russia. All that interest demonstrated the credibility of the FIVB and Volleyball, as well as the unity and solidarity among the National Federations. He disclosed that they had received many proposals not only for 2022 but also for the following years.

## Development of Snow Volleyball

Additionally, the FIVB continued working closely with the CEV on devising a strategic plan to further develop Snow Volleyball, with the goal of enhancing the awareness of Snow Volleyball at both promotional and recreational level, and of focusing on youth programmes to have dedicated players in Snow Volleyball. He expressed the wish to see more and more people have the opportunity to engage in that young, fun and winter version of Volleyball.

There were ongoing discussions with several cities to organise Snow Volleyball World Tour events, including hosts in Canada, Turkey, China, among others. They were also planning to work with Argentina and Morocco to explore Snow Volleyball opportunities in the southern hemisphere. Currently, 20 countries organised National Snow Volleyball Championships, or Snow Volleyball activities on a national level. The FIVB encouraged all Continental Confederations and National Federations to proactively be part of the sport.

Dr GRAÇA personally thanked the CEV President, who was also the President of the FIVB Snow Volleyball Commission, for all his efforts and for working together with the FIVB to build up momentum with events in Europe and around the world.

## Epilogue

Concluding, he asserted that Volleyball was on the right track and the greater sports community had noticed it. They would continue working on that direction and working closer together. Because together

people were worth much more than the sum of their parts. By working as one united family, they would build a lasting legacy for Volleyball. That way, they could ensure that the next chapter of Volleyball's history around the world and in Europe, would be the greatest chapter of all.

The CEV President thanked the FIVB President recognising the FIVB's immense size and importance, having 222 official member federations. He then gave the floor the FIVB General Manager, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO, to report about the latest FIVB Board proposals, the achievements and the plans for the future.

## **Update on FIVB Board of Administration decisions**

### **Decision surrounding the World Championship and the Calendar 2022**

Mr AZEVEDO started by referring to the FIVB Board decision to remove the WCH from Russia, due to the already known and explained situation. Subsequently, following the decision of the removal, the FIVB Board had declared the Russian athletes and the Russian teams non-eligible. He explained that the decision had been the result of a huge effort from the FIVB Board to address that point in a correct and legal framework. They had worked in very close collaboration with the CEV in order to move forward aligned. Afterwards, the big challenge had been to manage to organise a WCH in only six months.

Next, the FIVB Board had decided to change the system of competition of the Men's WCH, simplifying it and making it more affordable. Making it more affordable meant that they ran a short track bidding process and compiled a big list of countries from all over the world bidding for that event. From that list they had chosen Poland and Slovenia to host the WCH 2022.

### **Decisions on improving the FIVB Constitution and the FIVB Regulations.**

Those proposed changes would be circulated to all National Federations 90 days before the FIVB Congress, which would be held in the Netherlands during the Women's World Championship.

### **Decision related to the Future World Championships**

The next WCHs for men and women would have 32 participating teams instead of 24, increasing the number of participating countries. At the same time, the FIVB had simplified and defined far in advance the system of competition. In the past, the FIVB used to run the bidding process, choose the host countries and only then discuss and decide on the competition format. Therefore, the FIVB had decided to change that order. The system of competition would be 8 groups of 4, round robin, round of 16, round of 8, round of 4 and finals. Thus, all the countries that wished to bid for the next WCH would know far in advance the system of competition. He then explained that given the fact that the FIVB had been investing a lot in national teams of men and women in many countries around the world, increasing the number from 24 to 32 would provide all those countries the opportunity to play.

A previous decision of the FIVB Board was that for all of the FIVB main world events, such as the WCH and the Olympic Games, the FIVB would have to guarantee universality but at the same time have the best countries in the world play.

## **International Calendar discussion**

Mr AZEVEDO first wanted to clarify that the FIVB did not wish to proceed to any kind of short-track decision. They wished to listen to every single stakeholder involved in that calendar strategy. Currently they have been consulting the main club leagues in the world, the TV media right holders, in order to



gain a better understanding of their view on that. They had circulated that proposal first with the FIVB Executive Committee and then they would discuss it in the FIVB Volleyball Council, the National Federations and the FIVB Board in order to take the right decisions. They were determined to announce the International Calendar eight years in advance, because they believed that it would help the entire ecosystem.

Summarising the strategy, he wanted to note three key points. The first point was moving the WCH to odd years (e.g. organising the WCH in 2027 instead of 2026), thus avoiding having the event in the same year as the FIFA World Cup. Another reason was to eliminate the Olympic qualification tournaments and use the WCH as qualification to the Olympics. He then went on to illustrate the logic behind that strategy: Having the Continental Championships in 2026, qualify to WCH in 2027 and then have those qualify to the Olympic Games of 2028. They were open to discuss and listen to everyone's view on that proposal.

The second key point was to break the national team season in two parts instead of one. That meant having summer European time for the VNL competition and winter European time for the other events, such as Continental Championships and WCH.

He recognised that the proposal had both positive and negative aspects. Mainly for the preparation of the teams and for the fact that the clubs would have to pay the salary of the athletes for a longer period. However, he repeated that they would only proceed with that strategy if it made sense to the entire ecosystem.

The third point of the proposal was to hold the WCH biennially instead of every four years. He remarked that after running the short bidding process for the WCH and having received numerous applications from all over the world, with the majority of the applications being from outside of Europe, he believed that there were grounds for such a proposal. The FIVB saw such a proposal as a way to help the entire ecosystem moving forward, help in promoting Volleyball. In addition, for the countries with less financial capacity, which could not afford hosting the WCH before the Olympics, the proposal would give them the chance to hold the WCH after the Olympics.

### **Aligning the age limit of the WCH**

The proposal regarded the aligning of the age group categories for the WCH, and therefore have U21 and U19 for men and women. In view of that, Mr AZEVEDO noted that the CEV President had come up with a great idea to create a new WCH in order to allow National Federations more opportunities to start playing internationally at an early stage. The proposal was to introduce the U17 WCH. A Working Group of the FIVB Volleyball Council was in place, with Mr Lubomir GANEV and Mr Michel EVERAERT as members of that WG, where they were discussing the frequency of the age group WCHs. The first thought was to have U19 and U21 in one year and the U17 in the subsequent year. Then they were discussing about holding all three age group WCHs in the same year, but a final proposal was due to be made.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked Mr AZEVEDO for his presentation and wished to provide some comments. Regarding the technical part, he stated that there had been discussions by the CEV with the major European Leagues and National Federations, which had a strong participation in the Volleyball activities, and they were waiting for their feedback. He also argued that while the qualification process for the Olympics and the WCH regarded mainly the top teams, the continental qualification should be given more attention. The smaller federations needed to participate in official qualification competitions. He remarked that in Europe all governments wished to support official competitions like the ECH, WCH and the Olympics for any age category. He believed that they should make sure to support federations from all levels. He agreed with having more teams participate in the WCH, since it was also the case with the ECH and the progress had been phenomenal. To illustrate his point he brought the example of North Macedonia. In the past they had been promised a government support



of 14,000 EUR yearly and even that could not be guaranteed. Currently, after having qualified in major competitions and being appointed to host junior and senior championships, the government had to pay in fees 650,000 EUR to the CEV. That meant that as soon as a federation qualified for the WCH, the investment in Volleyball increased immediately. He explained that the reason behind that was that for many years some federations were close to being qualified but they had not managed, the interest had been lost and so was the investment.

From the political point of view, he wished to confirm how much Europe valued the concept of one Volleyball family. In contrast with the common notion that Europe was a rich continent with many activities that needed no support, the CEV President wished to clarify that Europe consisted of countries with varied financial capacities and support needs. As it was the case all over the world, continents had both rich and poor countries and so did Europe. He affirmed that Europe was willing to help other continents but also wished that the rest of the countries would show due respect to Europe's particularities. The CEV was already in cooperation with the Asian Volleyball Confederation for the School Project, which had also been supported by the European Union. In the future there could also be a cooperation with the African Confederation. The CEV was ready to support any progress project. In addition, the CEV had invested 11.5 million EUR to provide support to the national federations during the pandemic, which had been a substantial amount of money considering the capacity of the CEV.

Furthermore, he stated that for the period of 2018-2025 there had been 27 million EUR from government support, while it was zero in the past. He affirmed that those were great numbers for Europe and emphasised that the decisions made by the CEV Board reflected their commitment to the development of the sport. He once more thanked both FIVB representatives for their presence in the meeting and for the valuable information they had shared.

The FIVB President wished to add that in the following ten years, the projection of profit would reach at least 518 million dollars. He wished to express his agreement with the points mentioned by the CEV President, saying that he always relied on him for the technical point of view of any proposals. He also described how he viewed voicing opinions as a contribution and not as a disagreement.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### CEV Strategic Plan

Mr BORIČIĆ informed that the CEV had conducted several meetings with the CVC Capital Partners and the discussions were still ongoing. He pointed out that whatever the outcome of those discussions, the experience had been enlightening that far, because they had learned so many things. He believed it was a good investment of time to take meetings with well-known companies in the field and to involve professional experts. Those elements were crucial in order to change the perception of the sport worldwide and to achieve new heights.

Through that process they had realised that it was important to define the place of the CEV in the market and to explain what Volleyball was. On that note, the CEV President explained about the necessity of devising a strategic plan for the CEV for the future. The CEV Board members needed to provide their input on some key notions: the CEV vision, mission, values, goals and objectives. The CEV President encouraged everyone to provide their proposals on those points. He also proposed to form a working group for the Strategic Plan, with Mr Eric ADLER, Mr Geert De DOBBELEER and Mr Thorsten ENDRES. They would collect all the input submitted from the CEV Board members and prepare it to be discussed in the next Board meeting.

### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint Mr Eric ADLER, Mr Geert De DOBBELEER and Mr Thorsten ENDRES as Working Group members for the CEV Strategic Plan.**

## **Zonal Association Collaboration**

The CEV President described that there had been issues in certain zonal associations and some of them had been resolved. He alluded to the issues with the electoral General Assembly of the Middle European Volleyball Zonal Association (MEVZA), which had been interrupted and then had to be re-organised in Luxembourg, with the initiative of the CEV. Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his concerns about the old mentalities prevailing in some zonal associations, whereby candidates were putting a lot of effort in getting elected and then failed at making any contribution to the zonal association. Some Presidents were even holding their position for a very long time without having any substantial work to showcase during their mandate.

After having respected the selected candidates for the elections of MEVZA, the CEV would expect to see a change of attitude in the MEVZA leadership and was hoping for an open communication. All of the zonal associations were expected to demonstrate the sound financial management of the support allocated to them by the FIVB and the CEV.

He affirmed that the relations with the Balkan Volleyball Association (BVA) were in a very good state. He had held a very fruitful meeting with them in Istanbul (TUR) in the previous month.

As for the Eastern European Volleyball Zonal Association (EEVZA), Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI had raised the issue of the two member countries –Russia and Belarus– being suspended due to the situation in Ukraine. The CEV President commented that in case there were vacant leadership positions in EEVZA due to the suspension of the two member countries, they could organise an extraordinary electoral General Assembly in order to elect new candidates and fill those positions.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President, wished to transfer the concerns of the Polish Volleyball Federation, referring to the sensitive situation from the political point of view. Political authorities in Poland were putting pressure on eliminating from institutions any affiliation to Russia. The Polish Federation was even considering to join a different zonal association. The CEV President advised that the Polish Federation should officially inform the CEV about their concerns and the issues they were faced with and stated that the answer would be that the Russian and the Belarusian Volleyball Federations had been suspended. He argued that the focus should be on supporting the current members of the associations. They should avoid implicating the Polish Federation in a political game that exceeded the purpose of the zonal association and sport in general.

The CEV President assured Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI that he was determined to find the best possible solution for that situation and asked for an official written recount of the issue by the Polish Federation, in order to be able to handle it.

Mr BORIČIĆ continued by highlighting the importance of the zonal associations, given the Board decision to start the age group qualification process from the zonal level. The winning team would qualify directly, while the rest of the teams participating on that level would have the chance to qualify in the 2nd Round. With that decision the intention was to prompt the national federations to give more opportunities to the athletes in the age-group level to play and qualify to the ECH. In addition, the age-group competitions were very important, especially for the major federations, like POL, ITA, TUR, NED. However, he emphasised that it was also very crucial to have age-group ECHs in smaller size federations, like SCO, IRL, FAR, ISL, CYP, etc. so as to promote Volleyball in those countries.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal from the CEV Development and Zonal Association Working Group regarding the zonal associations to:**

- **Standardise the statutes of all zonal associations, including structure and election procedures**
- **Introduce a financial reporting form next to the report on sporting activities**
- **Require a 4-Year Strategic Plan from each zonal association**

- **Align the objectives of zonal associations by dedicating the CEV financial support to age-group activities**
- **Create more opportunities for meetings between the zonal associations' leaderships.**

## 6. Competition Matters

### **CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals**

The CEV President wished to thank the players, the clubs and the coaches for participating in that prestigious competition. He reported that during the competitions season there were almost 200 clubs in three European Cups. He also thanked the Mayor of Ljubljana, Mr Zoran JANKOVIĆ, for his support as well as the Slovenian Federation for hosting the whole event.

He divulged that the CEV investment for organising the CEV Super Finals amounted to 520,000 EUR and the investment for the prize money was 1.5 million EUR. The tickets sold were about 9,000 and the income amounted to 400,000 EUR until the moment of the meeting. He explained that in such events, it was not a question of earning money but of investing. He stated that if the CEV was able to organise and deliver a great event, the income would come later.

He expressed how satisfied and hopeful everyone was about the event taking place on the following day and was looking forward to enjoying a very good show. He also mentioned that the guest list for the games included many high rank executives from Football, Handball and Basketball, as well as elite athletes from Volleyball and other sports as well.

### **CEV European Cups season 2023**

Given that the Russian and the Belarusian teams had been deemed not eligible to register to the European Cups season 2023, a solution was needed in order to fill the vacant slots for the upcoming European Cups season.

The CEV Managing Director, Mr Thorsten ENDRES, addressed the CEV Board in order to present the potential solutions. He reported that the CEV Volleyball Department had examined the situation together with the CEV Legal team. The deadline registration of the upcoming season would start on 06 June 2022; more than 200 clubs were expected to register for the three different Cups. While there would be no issues for the CEV Cup and the CEV Challenge Cup, a system had to be established for the CEV Champions League Volley.

The proposal was to use the established and existing European Cups ranking list and to move up the next best ranked federations in the CEV European Cups Ranking. Consequently, the slot allocation would be formed as follows:

#### **MEN:**

- GER from 2 to 3 slots
- FRA from 1 to 2 slots
- SRB promoted from 1-3 round to 1 slot in the 4th Round.

#### **WOMEN:**

- POL from 2 to 3 slots
- ROU from 1 to 2 slots
- CZE promoted from 1-3 round to 1 slot in the 4th Round.

That system respected the existing ranking and gave a chance to the next ranked teams. However, given the fact that there was an ongoing legal procedure at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) and

the FIVB Appeal Panel, the CEV needed to prepare in case the claim from Russia would be accepted. Therefore, for the following season, the CEV would need to exceptionally increase the number in the 4th Round from 20 to 24 teams, in order to accommodate the three teams from Russia. That scenario would apply only in case the court ruled by 01 September 2022. The Drawing of Lots for the 4th Round of CEV Champions League was anticipated for 16 September 2022. Summarising, Mr ENDRES explained that for the registration to the European Cups the Russian teams would not be eligible and they would be replaced as proposed. In case there would be a court decision, for the following season the 4th Round teams would be exceptionally increased from 20 to 24.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to fill the vacant 4th Round CEV Champions League Volley 2023 slots from Russia by moving up the next best ranked federations in the CEV European Cups Ranking and by respecting the sportive merits according to the established ranking:**

#### **MEN:**

- **GER from 2 to 3 slots**
- **FRA from 1 to 2 slots**
- **SRB promoted from 1-3 round to 1 slot in the 4th Round.**

#### **WOMEN:**

- **POL from 2 to 3 slots**
- **ROU from 1 to 2 slots**
- **CZE promoted from 1-3 round to 1 slot in the 4th Round.**

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved, depending on the outcome of the ongoing legal procedure regarding the CEV decision to suspend the Russian teams, to exceptionally increase, if needed, the number of teams from 20 to 24 in the 4th Round of CEV Champions League Volley in the season 2022-2023.**

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed a total of 5,32 million EUR prize money for the European Cups season 2022-2023.**

### **CEV EuroVolley 2023**

The Senior Vice-President, Mr Renato ARENA, informed that the CEV Events Department had already started conducting the first inspection visits in some of the hosting countries. In addition, a first coordination meeting with the CEV EuroVolley 2023 organisers for Men and Women had been held on 05-06 May 2022 in Luxembourg. He had a quite positive impression about the whole cooperation.

Given that one of the Men's Preliminary Pools would be organised by the Ukrainian Federation, a final decision was pending, in order to see how the situation in Ukraine would unfold. Mr ARENA confirmed that they had anticipated for alternative solutions, in case the Ukrainian Federation would not be able to organise. However, for the moment, they did not wish to take any decision.

They were ready to send out the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Handbook in May. All preparations were on time and everybody had appreciated that. The qualifications would take place in September and the Drawing of Lots is scheduled to take place in autumn 2022.

He continued to talk about the overall event strategy of the EuroVolley events. After achieving the first goals of the technical setting and the sport presentation and the TV broadcasting, the following goal

they had set was to increase the level of ticketing. That aspect could form part of the future strategy of the CEV.

The CEV President described how the Ukrainian Federation had appreciated the fact that the CEV had not cancelled their possibility to be an organiser for CEV EuroVolley 2023. Therefore, while the final decision was expected in May, he suggested to postpone that deadline until September 2022. Recognising that they might have difficulties in hosting the Pool competition in 2023, the Ukrainian Federation wished to be considered as an organiser for 2025 among other candidates.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved to postpone the final decision regarding the appointment of the Ukrainian Federation as co-host of the EuroVolley 2023 until 15 September 2022.**

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed a total of 2 million EUR prize money for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 events.**

### CEV Volleyball Age-group competitions

Following the decision of the FIVB Board to align the age-group categories and to introduce a new age-group, Mr ENDRES reported that there had been an internal CEV Working Group with the European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC), in order to estimate the impact the FIVB decision would have on the European competitions.

Therefore, while waiting for the final outcome from the FIVB WG for the matter, there was already a proposal to the CEV Board to change the age-group competitions for both genders according to the FIVB decision:

- U16 W / U17 M to become U17 or U16 (depending on final decision by the FIVB)
- U17 W / U18 M to become U18
- U19 W / U20 M to become U20
- U21 W / U22 M to become U22

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to adapt the European age-group categories in alignment with the FIVB Board decision and to amend the CEV Regulatory Framework accordingly:**

- **U16 W / U17 M to become U17 or U16 (depending on final decision by the FIVB)**
- **U17 W / U18 M to become U18**
- **U19 W / U20 M to become U20**
- **U21 W / U22 M to become U22**

### EuroBeachVolley 2026 & 2030

The CEV President gave a brief recount of the negotiation process with the management team of the multi-sport event of European Championships (ECM), in the frame of which the EuroBeachVolley 2022 would take place. He described how the ECM first claimed media and marketing rights, without offering any fee and how the CEV team, led by Mr ENDRES, managed, after extensive negotiations and meetings, to achieve a fee of 1,2 million EUR for 2022. There was a proposal to extend the partnership for the following two quadrennial events of 2026 (for 1,5 million EUR) and of 2030 (for 1,8 EUR). He also



informed that in case the CEV decided to cancel its participation there would be a penalty. He also announced that for the EuroBeachVolley 2022 the tickets had been already sold out.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the extension of the partnership with ECM and the presented offer to integrate the CEV EuroBeachVolley events into the multi-sport events of the European Championships 2026 and 2030.**

### European Olympic Committee

The CEV President also referred to the unfortunate turn of the CEV's relations with the European Olympic Committee (EOC). When it came to organising events under the auspices of the EOC, the CEV did not wish to negotiate the inclusion of Volleyball with the host cities or the representatives of national authorities. That was the reason that the CEV had requested from the EOC to recognise Volleyball as one of the five basic sports, in order to secure its inclusion in all multi-sport EOC events. However, he informed that the EOC did not make a definite decision and let it to the discretion of the organisers. For example, in the case of the European Youth Olympic Festival (EYOF) taking place in Slovakia, the organisers did not wish to include Volleyball. In the Games of Small States of Europe (GSSE) they intended to eliminate Beach Volleyball. For the European Games 2023 that would take place in Kraków and the regions of Małopolska and Śląsk in Poland, while the host city and the Polish Volleyball Federation had shown interest to cooperate and include Indoor Volleyball, the Polish Olympic Committee was not as favourable. He explained that his intention was not to accuse the Polish Olympic Committee and stated that the main responsibility and the final decision laid with the EOC. However, those requests were not met and therefore the CEV was compelled to cease discussions with the EOC. The CEV could not accept that Volleyball would be randomly included and excluded from such events under the auspices of the EOC.

### CEV U22 Volleyball European Championships Women 2024

Mr ENDRES informed that the Italian Volleyball Federation had submitted an application to host the CEV U22 Volleyball European Championships Women 2024. He pointed out that it would be the last available age-group ECH until 2025.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Italian Federation to host the CEV U22 Volleyball European Championships Women 2024.**

## 7. Financial Matters

### Accounts 2021

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, referred everyone to the documents received for reviewing by the CEV Office, namely the Accounts 2021, the External Auditors report and the Internal Auditors report. He informed that there had been a meeting of the European Financial Commission (EFC) on 18 May 2022, during which they had reviewed and approved the accounts to be submitted to the CEV Board.

The final result was about 430,000 better than what had been budgeted, with a final amount of about -3.35 million EUR. There had been many changes through the year both in expenditures and revenues. He wished to highlight a change on the income side. He referred to the agreement established with Infront in 2020, with which a significantly larger amount had been agreed. Once the numbers went



above the expected turnover, there was a revenue bonus to be shared with Infront. Therefore, for 2021 there was a bonus of 640,000 EUR based on the first cycle ending on 01 June 2022.

As stated in the past, it would be more logical to consider the two years of the pandemic, 2020 and 2021, as one. He added that he was very satisfied that during the difficult period of the pandemic the CEV had managed to keep all activities going, keeping the prize money and at the same time investing in supporting the national federations in their development, ensuring that both the clubs and the federations would come out of the pandemic in a sound state. Therefore, he was convinced that all that money was well invested.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Accounts 2021, which would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final consideration.**

## Updated Budget 2022

The Budget 2022 was at -600,000 EUR until then. The expectation was to finish the year with almost 1 million EUR. In the spirit of transparency, he wished to clarify that most of the changes were due to the payments of organisers' fees for 2023. He explained that while compiling the budget they tried to have an understanding of when those fees would be paid. However, the payment schedule depends on the government budget discretion, while the federation transfer the money to the CEV as soon as they received the support from their government. Therefore, that shift in the numbers was more of a technical one.

On the expenditure side, there were some other investments, e.g. salary indexation due to inflation (the inflation was about 7% at the moment in Europe), new recruitments, additional IT hardware, CEV Super Finals. Lastly, he mentioned that based on the previous CEV Board meeting, they had decided to put aside 100,000 EUR in support of the Ukrainian Volleyball Federation.

On the revenue side, he referred to a 400,000 EUR bonus from Infront (the second part of the two-year cycle, reaching a total of 1 million EUR) on top of the regular agreement with them. In addition, there was the revenue from the CEV Super Finals Ticketing and 2.4 million EUR from the EuroVolley Organiser fees. He noted that the income was reduced by about 280,000 EUR due to the situation with Russia and with withdrawals of teams.

He cautioned that despite the positive result of the Budget 2022, it would be wise to consider the years 2022 and 2023 together, because they were very interconnected, especially on the revenue side.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Vice-President, asked about the rationale regarding the budgeting of the organisers fee, and whether it would be better to spread it evenly over a two year period. Mr ADLER agreed with the proposal and mentioned that the issue had been addressed also during the EFC Meeting. Given that the budget was drawn up quite early in the year, Mr ADLER explained that they tried to anticipate the period when the organiser fees would come in after having talked with the various federations. However, due to Luxembourgish laws, it was not possible to proceed in that direction.

Mr ENDRES added that they were aiming to budget the organiser fees exactly as Mr EVERAERT had suggested. However, the reality was that the payment schedule was done in the Organiser Agreement according to the money received from the governments. He referred to the case of the Belgian Federation as an example, since the Belgian Government would pay the organiser fee for hosting the CEV EuroVolley 2023 in Belgium. He informed that they had adjusted the payment schedule based on the government's payments. That was the reason that it was not always feasible to anticipate two years in advance when and how the money would be paid. The Accounts and the Budget had been

drawn up based on the agreements that had been signed in the meantime, in comparison to the initial plan.

Mr BORIČIĆ also added that the CEV needed to respect the national federations and take into account the fact that a lot of them did not have large budgets. In some cases the fee could be paid right away, while other federations needed several years to pay it off. He was convinced that the only reason to securely increase the CEV's income was by investing in and supporting the federations.

The FIVB President shared that they also faced the same issue with budgeting. He explained that what a common misconception was confusing cash flow with the balance sheet. Those were finance terms and they were completely different elements of the budget. That being said, he argued that while an organisation could present a negative balance in the budget, in reality and from a political point of view it was a very good sign of investing in the future of the organisation. He stated that keeping the money in the bank was not a good strategy of a sound organisation. He also commented that in the past all the money was kept in the bank, while many small scale federations did not have any support to develop and appear in international competitions, recognising and praising the difference in the approach and governance of the CEV during the mandate of Mr BORIČIĆ.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked the FIVB President for sharing his view on the matter and went on to illustrate that it was after the CEV leadership had decided to invest in the CEV Events, that they were able to sign big contracts, like the one with Infront for 100 million EUR. In the past, the same company only paid 1 million yearly. Concluding, he stated that the money should always follow the path of investment.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS, CEV Board of Administration member, asked whether that was a pattern in the budget that would continue. Mr ADLER shared that the EFC had also addressed that question and that the conclusion was that probably also in the future they would have to consider the budget in two-year cycles with the European Championships, due to the government funding.

Mr ENDRES wished to add that in the next few years, there might be some changes, depending mainly on the outcome of the discussions about the international calendar –regarding which year (even or odd year) the Continental Championships would take place. They had made an anticipation until the year 2027, but that was an internal document and it depended heavily on the future calendar.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Updated Budget 2022, which would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final consideration.**

## Budget Proposal 2023

Mr ADLER explained that, as in the past, the budget was based on the existing agreements, on both given and received commitments, as well as any Board of Administration decisions made and anticipated future events and activities. Then, he wished to highlight some points on the expenditure side: The amount of 140,000 EUR had been budgeted for the 50th Anniversary of the CEV. For the European Cups 2023 Prize money, the same amounts from the past year were going to be maintained, taking into account also the new playoff phase that had been introduced. For the delivery of CEV EuroVolley 2023, the amount of 650,000 EUR had been budgeted and 1 million EUR payback to co-organising federations. The budget also included support to hosting and travelling teams in the 1st Rounds for U16/U17 ECH. Lastly, the budget included the investment for the new Beach Volleyball activities introduced with the previous CEV Board decisions.

He noted that there were no dedicated expenses for the data project, because there was a study going on at the moment. After the outcome of the study and the tendering process, there would be

more information on that project. The final confirmation for the Erasmus+ application was still pending, that was why it did not appear in the budget either.

On the revenue side, he pointed out the participation fee for the CEV Champions League Volley with the playoff phase, including also the semifinals and the finals. Previously, the participation fee stopped at the quarterfinals and there was no participation fee for the semifinals and finals. Another 1 million EUR from the Italian Federation for the CEV Super Finals 2023. The CEV EuroVolley 2023 organiser fee had been budgeted at 3.3 million EUR. In addition, 2 million of anticipated organiser fees for 2025. The budget level was expected to reach 20 million EUR, marking a record for the CEV. However, he noted that the expected result was -862,000 EUR, repeating that if the years 2022 and 2023 were considered together, there would be a more realistic picture of the situation.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Budget Proposal 2023, which would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final consideration.**

Closing the financial matters point of the Agenda, the CEV President wished to express his satisfaction regarding the overall results of the accounts and the budgets, especially after having faced the pandemic and the situation in Ukraine. The CEV had persevered and managed to organise many Volleyball activities in senior and junior level.

Having said that, he wished to take the opportunity to thank Mr ENDRES and all the professional team at the CEV Office in Luxembourg, stating that the CEV was following the same approach as the one mentioned by the FIVB President: assigning more power and responsibilities to professionals and experts. The CEV President specifically praised the Volleyball Department for conducting countless meetings with the clubs and the federations. They faced and successfully resolved numerous challenges and last minute changes. He commended them for their commitment and for their very hard work day and night. They had to face instances of problems emerging in the middle of the night, with flight cancellations, visa refusals, travel problems, and they managed to stay close and provide support to all of the stakeholders.

Furthermore, he praised the work of the EFC, their cooperation with the Internal and External Auditors and for safeguarding the CEV investments. He explained that some federations might be facing financial problems, despite the fact that they belonged to very rich countries. For that reason, he stated that it was crucial to focus on respecting all federations and on finding solutions, not sticking to problems.

## 8. Proposals from Board members

No points discussed.

## 9. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

### Proposals to change the CEV Statutes

Mr ENDRES referred everyone to the working file including the information on the changes to the CEV Statutes proposed by the European Legal Commission (ELC). Following the CEV Board approval, those changes would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for a final ratification. He described how the

proposed changes were aiming to provide equal conditions for the electoral Congress for the standing Board members and the potential new candidates. The ELC had also proposed the possibility to hold a General Assembly as a video conference or by any other digital means, if necessary, something which did not feature in the CEV Statutes in the past. In addition, based on the experiences in the last General Assembly, they had proposed to hold a separate voting for the gender in minority to the FIVB Board of Administration.

Then, he referred to the proposed change No. 3 made by the ELC, regarding Section 3, Art. 3.4 §3 point b) on the delegation of the powers and duties of the standing CEV President to another CEV Board member two months prior to the electoral CEV General Assembly, in case there was an opponent candidate. Based on the experience of the previous pre-election period, when the CEV President had to step down from his involvement, Mr ENDRES explained how it created quite an unequal situation for the standing President in comparison to the other candidate, given that the limitations were valid only for the standing President and not for the candidate. That was the reason that the ELC had proposed a different wording of point b) to be approved by the CEV Board.

The CEV President admitted that the initial proposal to delegate the powers and duties of the standing President during the pre-election period had been made in the spirit of a more fair election campaign, but it did not turn out like that. Therefore, while the ELC had suggested a different wording of point b), he supported that it would be better to approve the complete elimination of that point from the CEV Statutes, explaining that an elected President should serve his/her position until the last day of their mandate.

### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the amended proposals to change the CEV Statutes, which would be presented to the CEV General Assembly for final consideration.**

### **Change control list CEV General Regulations**

Mr ENDRES then proceeded to discuss the proposed changes in the CEV General Regulations. He explained that change No. 1 had been proposed in order to hold reliable even persons who were candidates for a CEV body or for any position under the definition of "Official". The rest of the proposed changes were aiming to eliminate administrative burden for the official forms when a national federation had to assign delegates to attend the CEV General Assembly. Furthermore, the new Working Group "Development & Cooperation with Zonal Associations" was added to the list of working groups and, lastly, there was a provision for a separate vote for the election of the candidate for the gender in minority to the FIVB Board of Administration.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes in the CEV General Regulations.**

### **Change control list Disciplinary Regulations**

The ELC had mainly proposed updates following the respective FIVB decision so as to have the CEV Disciplinary Regulations in line. Mr ENDRES added that there was also a paragraph where the Snow Volleyball Rules had to be included.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes in the CEV Disciplinary Regulations.**



## **Change control list CEV Competitions Regulations**

Mr ENDRES outlined the various minor changes to be approved. The proposals regarded adaptations for the CEV U21/U22 ECH, an increased clarity in terms of production standards for the various competitions, adaptations for the match times and some wording corrections, in order to improve the Regulations.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes in the CEV Volleyball Competition Regulations.**

## **10. Any other business**

### **CEV Gala and DOL for Champions League 4th Round**

The CEV President announced the plan to hold the CEV Volleyball Gala 2022 and DOL for the CEV Champions League Volley 2023 4th Round on 16 September 2022.

He also noted how important it was for all the CEV Board members to attend the meeting and the official CEV events that had been announced months in advance.

## **11. Next meeting**

The CEV President stated that the next CEV Board meeting would be scheduled in November 2022.

## **12. Closing of the Meeting**

Closing the meeting, the CEV President wished to take the opportunity to thank the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA Fº, and the FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO for attending the CEV Board meeting and for sharing valuable information and insights. He also thanked all the members of the CEV Board of Administration for their contribution. He expressed the hope that the decisions made would have a positive impact in Volleyball for the junior level, for the Zonal Associations and in general for the promotion of Volleyball across Europe.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the InterContinental Hotel in Ljubljana (SLO)  
21 May 2022

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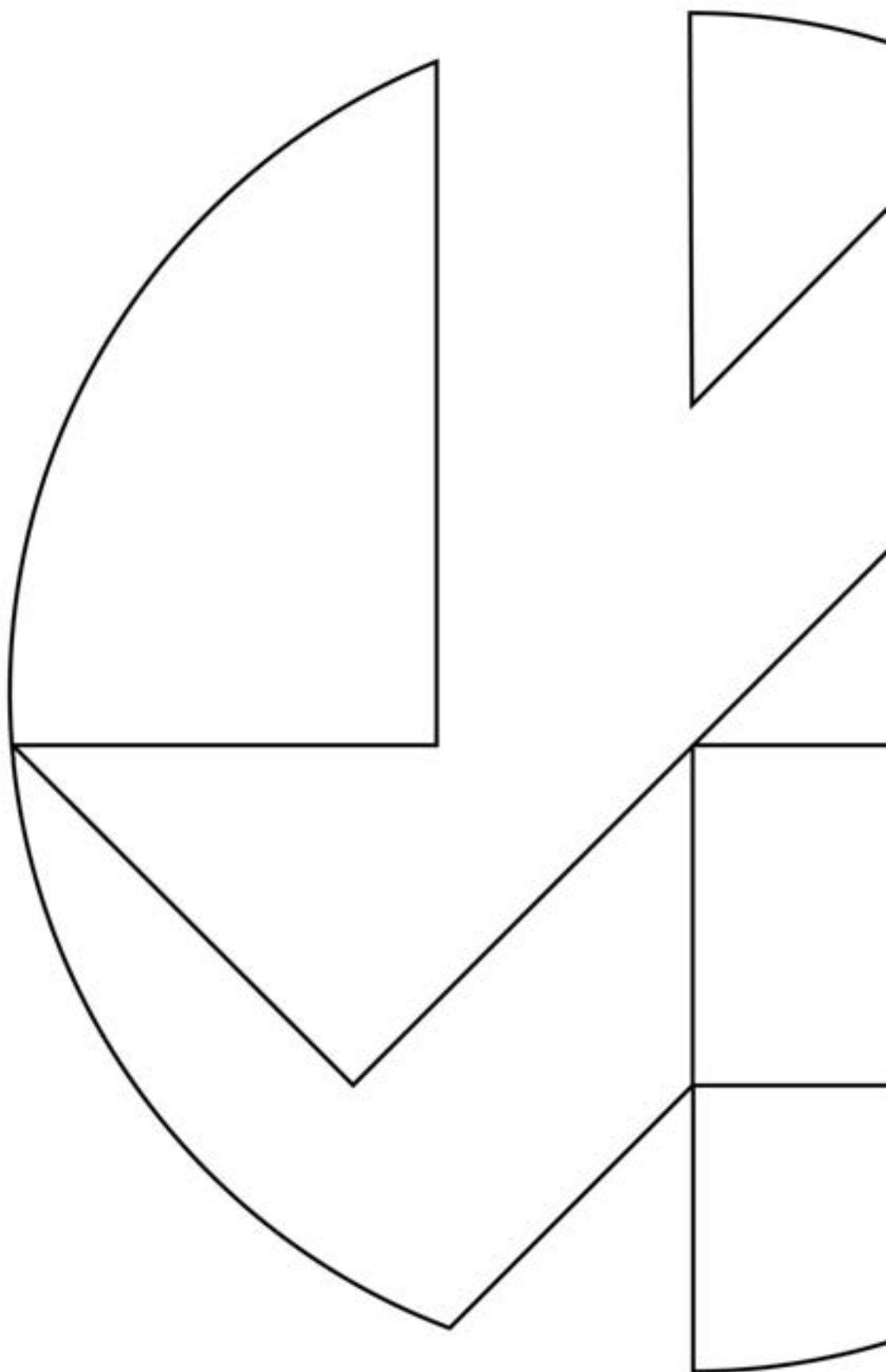
RCS Luxembourg F1135 · 488, route de Longwy, L-1940 Luxembourg

Phone: +352 25 46 461 · Fax +352 25 46 46 40

info@ceve.eu · ceve.eu



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**





# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting  
held at the Hilton Hotel  
in Antwerp (BEL)

26 February 2022



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



Place: Hilton Hotel, Antwerp (BEL)

Date: Saturday, 26 February 2022

<b>Attendees</b>	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	<i>online</i> Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	<i>online</i> Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	<i>online</i> Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
<b>CEV Office</b>	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director

<b>Excused</b>	Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO	Vice-President
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## 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, greeted everyone, officially opened the meeting, and thanked the Belgian Volleyball Federation for inviting the CEV Board in Antwerp, in the framework of the Belgian Cup Final 2022. He then gave the floor to the Belgian Volleyball Federation President, Mr Guy JUWET.

## 2. Presentation by the Belgian Volleyball Federation President

Mr JUWET welcomed everyone to the city of Antwerp saying that it was an honour for them to welcome the Board of the CEV. He noted that it was the first CEV Board Meeting taking place in Belgian soil.

Mr JUWET started with a few words about the hosting city, Antwerp. Belgium's second largest city and internationally known for two reasons: its important activity around the port of Antwerp, the biggest economic centre in Belgium, as well as for the Antwerp World Diamond centre.

He then went on to talk about the structure of the Belgian Federation, commenting that Belgium, despite its small size as a country, had a quite complex political organisation. In the south of Belgium they have the French speaking part, in the east they have the German speaking part and in the north they have the Dutch speaking part. Brussels, the capital of Belgium, was in the heart of the country. A city well known for the EU Institutions and NATO, which were located in the city. The political structure he described reflected also the organisation of institutions in Belgium. He described that most of Belgian organisations had two pillars, as it was the case of the Belgian Federation. Volley Vlaanderen was the bigger one, with 317 clubs and around 52,000 members. The second pillar was the Fédération Volley Wallonie Bruxelles (FVWB), with 162 clubs and almost 15,000 members. Therefore, he analysed that the Belgian Volleyball Federation –Volley Belgium– consisted of two separated, independent and autonomous bodies, headed by Volley Belgium, which was the link to the CEV and to the FIVB.

Moving on, Mr JUWET wished to present the mind map of the Federation's plan, stating that everything was focused on the fan experience, which he deemed as an absolutely necessary factor in order to put Volleyball in the spotlight. He argued that while they intended to promote Volleyball in their country, the pandemic had greatly limited the spectators in the previous two years. They admitted it would be difficult to bring back the habit of spectators watching sports in the sports halls, after the long hiatus. The Belgian Federation's ambition was to become the model federation by 2024 by growing the popularity of and commitment to Volleyball as a diverse and target-oriented team sport in a sustainable way. They have been working towards that ambition for many years. In fact, they already featured as a model federation and organisation for other sports, mostly thanks to the investments and the work performed by Volley Vlaanderen. They wished to evolve from a representative organisation, where local club people were always going up and building the federation to a kind of organisation in which they could add external competences and experience. He recognised that such a thing might not always be possible, but he noted that given their complex structure, bringing fresh ideas in the federation was necessary in order to become a model organisation.



He also spoke about his federation's five strategic pillars, commenting that they were working on all five pillars, and not necessarily in that order:

- 1) extending and deepening the range in the clubs;
  - The Belgian Federation was cooperating with the Belgian Volleyball clubs (almost 600) to help them become bigger and more professional.
- 2) promoting Volleyball through a targeted marketing and communication strategy;
- 3) professionalization of the operation of the clubs;
- 4) optimisation of the current structures;
- 5) the federation as facilitator of fun, inspiration and engagement.

Mr JUWET then referred to the European Championship, as Belgium was one of the four countries to host the CEV EuroVolley 2019 – Men. In the future, they were looking forward to hosting the CEV EuroVolley 2023 – Women Finals, for which they were already working very hard.

The CEV President thanked Mr JUWET for his presentation and for informing everyone about the current situation of the Belgian Federation, as well as about the direction they wished to go in the future, and especially in regards to the CEV EuroVolley 2023 competition. He also recognised the great change the Belgian Federation went through, because they had been very active. He expressed the hope that 2023 would be a new step in the development of the federation and in making Volleyball a stronger sport across the whole country. He also recognised that one of the main ambitions of the Belgian Federation was to qualify for the Olympic Games. While he admitted that it was a difficult path, he stated that with the contribution of the CEV towards the FIVB, the strong teams could have a better access to the Olympic Games.

He thanked the Belgian Federation for the hospitality and said that he was looking forward to watching the Volleyball games on the next day.

### 3. Approval of Agenda

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.

### 4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 18 December 2021 in Budapest, Hungary

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 18 December 2021 in Budapest, Hungary.

## 5. FIVB

### Cooperation with the FIVB

#### Request for a brief report after meetings in FIVB bodies

The CEV President asked all the CEV Board members also holding positions in FIVB bodies to prepare a report after each meeting of those bodies and to send them to the CEV Office in Luxembourg. The idea was to handle the communication gaps with the FIVB. The CEV President elaborated on the fact that there were several FIVB decisions for which the CEV had never received a written communication. The CEV leadership needed to have access to the Minutes of every FIVB body meeting, in order to have a written confirmation on the decisions made during those meetings. He referred to the fact that some decisions had been made three years before and had not been implemented, despite the fact that they had been approved by the FIVB Board. In other instances, decisions had been approved by the FIVB Board but were changed afterwards. The CEV Board needed to be informed about those changes in order to be able to be properly updated. He also referred to the most recent example, that during the FIVB Rules of the game and Refereeing Commission they had discussed about the uniforms, but that information had not been disseminated to the confederations.

Mr BORIČIĆ affirmed that the intention of the CEV was to always cooperate with the FIVB. From the CEV side, information for every important meeting was transparently shared and published. Therefore, given that the CEV had no other way of receiving information about the FIVB meetings, the CEV President asked the CEV Board members who participated in meetings of the FIVB bodies to send a brief report about those meetings to the CEV Office, summarising the proposals and decisions discussed. He emphasised how important it was that everyone have access to the same information. Any good proposal submitted by any continent could be valuable information.

He also referred to the changes caused after the emergence of Volleyball World. While there were discussions about the fact the FIVB retained all the rights regarding the competitions, Mr BORIČIĆ acknowledged how difficult it was to keep those two entities separate. He opined that the example of Volleyball World and the FIVB would be useful in order for the CEV to protect the sport's interests in the future, when considering to engage in a similar partnership. He also argued that when entering such a partnership both parties should protect their interests but also retain pragmatic expectations.

#### Briefing for FIVB Sports Events/Volleyball Council and FIVB Snow Volleyball Commission

The CEV President himself had attended the FIVB Sports Events/Volleyball Council and the FIVB Snow Volleyball Commission. For the latter he praised the fact that the FIVB had started a more committed approach towards that discipline by devising a strategic plan for the future.

Regarding the FIVB Sports Events/Volleyball Council he wished to share several points that had been addressed in that meeting, in the hope of stirring a discussion also within the CEV Board. Speaking of the age group competitions, he started by stating that he considered the planning of the future of Volleyball of the utmost importance.

He mentioned a discussion regarding the standardising age group competitions across both genders with the proposal to have a unified age for each competition. He criticised the fact that the discussion had started with no prior information to the participants on the matter or the involvement of the National Federations. Informing the participants and allowing them some time to prepare beforehand would have resulted to more productive discussions and would have facilitated the decision making.

An ad hoc working group had been created on that matter in view of the FIVB ExCom and the FIVB Board meeting in March 2022. The CEV President had advised on being cautious on when to apply changes on age categories, because it could mean the automatic elimination of some generations of young athletes from the CEV age group competitions. His suggestion had been met with acceptance.



Then he outlined why he considered the introduction of the U17 World Championship as important. Firstly, he believed that young athletes should be given the opportunity to compete in a World Championship in junior level much earlier than the age of 19. Then, he described that with the addition of U17 World Championship, young athletes, from the age of 15 onwards, would have the chance to compete with the top athletes of their category every year in an international competition at Zonal, Continental and World level. He was convinced that such an opportunity to the young athletes would be very beneficial especially in Europe, with many young players coming from national teams in age group categories. The CEV President's proposal to the relevant working group regarding the age groups comprised the ages of 17, 19, 20. Mr Lubomir GANEV, CEV Board of Administration member, was also a member of that working group and he was encouraged to transmit the CEV Board proposal. The CEV President opened the floor to the rest of the CEV Board for what he considered a very important matter for the future of Volleyball.

Mr GANEV addressed the Board and informed everyone that the aforementioned working group consisted of five people, four members and one expert. There were two people representing the CEV in that working group, Mr Wojciech CZAYKA and himself. He would liaise with Mr CZAYKA in order for them to have a common approach. He was also convinced that even if the FIVB would insist in unifying the age category for Women and Men, there was a need for an additional age category, namely U17, for the World Championship. They would raise that subject in the working group, in the first meeting that would take place on 01 March 2022.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President, asked for a clarification on the proposal and Mr BORIČIĆ explained that the young athletes would start from the lowest international level through the Zonal Associations with the U15 category, continue with the Continental Championship with the U16 category and then with the U17 World Championship. That way, the same generation would have the chance to participate in international competitions at Zonal, Continental and World level.

Mr GANEV wished to specify that while initially there were different age categories for men and women, namely U18 and U20 for women and for men U19 and U21, the FIVB proposal aimed at establishing one age category for both genders, i.e. U19 and U21 for both men and women. Such a change would mean that women would miss one year of participation.

Mr ADLER, CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, expressed his agreement with the proposal and asked what was the thinking behind the FIVB proposal.

The CEV President explained that for the people outside the Volleyball community it was not clear which were the actual top events in Volleyball at world level. Therefore, the FIVB proposal was an attempt to have a more simple and marketable competition structure. As for the U23 category, they realised that there were not so many teams at world level. However, Mr BORIČIĆ argued that the main aim of the age group competitions was to invest in the young generations, to develop the professional athletes of the future and not necessarily to make profit out of the competitions.

Mr EVERAERT also opined that there had not been any strong argumentation to support that proposal.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS, CEV Board of Administration member, recognised that the introduction of the U17 Word Championship would be a good proposal, but he raised concerns that for the Scandinavian countries it might be too early to start with the U15 category at Zonal level. He asked to include in the discussions of the working group possibilities for different age categories at that level for Zonal Associations not able to have a championship at the U15 category.

## Decision

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the introduction of the U17 Volleyball World Championship.

## Qualification for the Olympic Games

Continuing the briefing from the FIVB Sports Events/Volleyball Council, Mr BORIČIĆ informed everyone that a new system had been confirmed for the Olympic Games Qualification, with 24 teams in three tournaments of eight teams. From those three tournaments, the best two teams from each tournament would qualify directly to the Olympic Games, plus the team of France, who would qualify as hosts, resulting to seven teams. In addition, the five best teams according to the FIVB Ranking after the VNL 2024 competition would also qualify. That meant that the last match in VNL could be the decisive one for the Olympic Qualification.

He commented that having a qualification competition so late would surely be challenging, but he was pleased about the fact that the system would guarantee that only the best teams would qualify for the Olympic Games. He also believed that the system would be very beneficial for the European teams, allowing them sufficient time to collect points.

## FIVB World Championship

The CEV President expressed his satisfaction that the two hosts of the FIVB World Women's Championship 2022, The Netherlands and Poland, were able to establish a good communication with the FIVB.

Regarding the Drawing of Lots (DOL) for that competition, Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President wished to inform that it had been planned to take place on 28 February 2022 in Poland. However, due to the latest developments in Ukraine, they asked the FIVB if they could hold the DOL in Lausanne (SUI). Consequently, the FIVB had announced that the DOL would be postponed for one week.

Mr EVERAERT also agreed that it was not the right moment to conduct the DOL, as long as there was no final decision regarding the Russian teams until then. He admitted that there were sensitive inquiries to be handled by the Dutch Volleyball Federation.

## European League winners from 2021 and 2022 to participate in Challenger Cup

The CEV President was very pleased about the meeting he had had with the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F°. The FIVB President had accepted the CEV proposal that the winner of the CEV Volleyball European League 2021 would be one of the two participants of the FIVB Volleyball Challenger Cup in 2022.

## FIVB Calendar

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the issues with the FIVB calendar and constant changes, even after written confirmations about its status. However, he was glad that they managed to reach a solution for the EuroVolley 2023.

## FIVB Volleyball Club World Championship

He expressed serious concerns on how the situation with the wild cards was handled. He argued that for any top competition to have a real value it was really crucial to have strong clubs compete on the court. President GRAÇA had acknowledged that situation. It was important that big competitions would be recognised and followed even by people outside of the Volleyball community.

The CEV had proposed to organise for the FIVB Volleyball Club World Championship an event similar to the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals, which had been accepted by the FIVB Board, however that decision was changed afterwards. Fortunately, he reported that in the end, the CEO of Volleyball World CEV, Mr Finn TAYLOR had agreed about the importance of bringing the best and strongest clubs to compete. However, a concrete format for the future was not yet communicated.

Further points discussed during the FIVB Sports Events/Volleyball Council

Mr EVERAERT wished to mention two more points discussed during the FIVB Volleyball Council. The first point regarded some Volleyball technical tests that had been conducted during the FIVB Volleyball Club World Championships 2021.

The first test regarded the 15 seconds service timer, namely the 15 second period between the end of the rally and the player completing the service. More specifically, a server was allocated seven seconds to be ready to serve and eight seconds to complete the service.

The second test regarded the Field of Play orientation in the presentation and image to the fans. Among other changes, the First Referee chair would be placed at the team bench side.

Mr EVERAERT also referred to a proposal from France regarding the format of the Olympic Games. Nothing had been confirmed at that point, but he informed that the concept of two pools of six teams might change. The CEV President also mentioned that proposal, by explaining that they wished to have three pools of four teams, so as to reduce the number of matches and avoid holding six matches per day, which was quite challenging for the media and for everyone involved.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI confirmed that the information regarding the timer and field of play tests would already be implemented in the VNL competitions. The CEV President added that the CEV should protect Volleyball clubs, given that those measures could not be easily implemented in some cases where the clubs were playing matches in small halls. He mentioned that some clubs were unable to play home matches and had to transfer to another city, which caused considerable inconvenience for the teams. He also cautioned that issues could emerge for Federations having to organise FIVB and CEV tournaments with different layouts, causing a nightmare to organisers.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI stated that the change in the layout caused problems in finding an appropriate hall for the matches. Mr BORIČIĆ suggested that it would be beneficial to have a unified approach to avoid such hurdles. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI continued by saying that the contact between the Second Referee and the coaches used to be closer and more direct. Especially in cases of a challenge, they could give some explanations. With the introduced changes, the coaches were closer to the Main Referee and the Second Referee was put on the opposite side, quite far from the others.

Mr ARENA wished to point out that in many previous FIVB Board of Administration meetings they had approved changes in the Regulations, however those Regulations had not been changed. Therefore, he questioned how those decisions were to be implemented.

The CEV President referred to the decision made three years before by the FIVB Board regarding the ITCs belonging to the players and the clubs. He explained that the reason behind that proposal was to keep the money within the Volleyball community and not let it in the hands of agents every six months. He added that such a decision would align with other big sports, like football.

Even though the decision had been accepted during the FIVB Board, it had not been implemented till then. He intended to insist in the implementation of that decision in the following FIVB Board and encouraged the CEV Board members that also participated in the FIVB Board to discuss their proposal so as to come up with a potential common European approach to benefit Volleyball as a whole.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI inquired whether that proposition should also include the rest of the FIVB bodies. Mr BORIČIĆ suggested that it would be important to start with the coordination of the European FIVB Board members, since they were in a position to vote for decisions. Subsequently, he deemed it important to share the information exchanged during meetings of the FIVB bodies, in order to have a better understanding of the rationale of the discussions and potential future decisions.

### Decision

The CEV Board of Administration members unanimously approved the proposal to perform further tests on the new court layout before considering an implementation for European competitions, based on solid arguments.

### Decision

The CEV Board of Administration members unanimously approved the proposal that all European representatives in FIVB bodies were required to share written feedback with the CEV Office on the respective meetings at the FIVB.

## 6. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial Partnership

Mr BORIČIĆ informed that the CVC Capital Partners, the private equity firm that had created Volleyball World, wanted to have a meeting with the CEV, in order to establish a similar collaboration. The meeting with the CVC Managing Partner, Mr Nick CLARRY, Managing Director, Ms Gemma WRIGHT and Volleyball World CEO, Mr Finn TAYLOR, was held in Luxembourg with Mr BORIČIĆ, Mr ARENA, Mr ADLER and Mr ENDRES from the CEV side. Mr BORIČIĆ wished to make clear that in any potential partnership the CEV would remain owner of its own products and activities and would retain the right to make its own decisions for European Volleyball. He recounted that during the meeting he had repeated several times that the CEV was a sport institution and Mr CLARRY affirmed that they were only interested in the commercial part of the partnership and not in making sports decisions.

Mr BORIČIĆ commented that it had been a good first meeting to recognise who was who. The company continued asking more information about European Volleyball and stated that they could hold another meeting in order to explore the possibilities of a potential cooperation.

He wished to share the proposals made during the meeting. First of all, he insisted on the fact that the CEV, as a sport institution, was interested in developing Volleyball and in organising top Volleyball competitions in all 56 member federations. He also recognised that it was very clear that the firm had commercial purposes and cared mainly for the business part of the partnership, while the CEV made a point of developing Volleyball even in small or poor countries, where there was no existing market for the sport. In any potential collaboration, the CEV would have to stay independent in shaping the format of its competitions. He admitted that it was not an easy task to draw boundaries on what the CEV had in hand and on what the CVC would like to buy. However, he felt it would be beneficial to continue the discussion and to explore the idea of the partnership. He noted that there was a drift of such companies, wishing to enter the sports market and he opined that the CEV should not be excluded from that.

Mr ADLER, agreed that although they saw an opportunity in such a venture, they also understood the responsibility they had towards European Volleyball. While the CVC was a very important commercial entity working in the sports world, he noted that the CEV leadership should make sure to represent all of the member federations and always put the sport first. He agreed with the point that joining such entities was the tendency in the sports world, since the CEV had been approached by other commercial partners earlier. They saw sport as the next profitable possibility. Nevertheless, speaking in the function of the Treasurer, given the financial situation of the institution, he opined that there was no pressure to take a deal that would not fully comply with the vision of the CEV. Therefore, they did have a freedom to be able to react and make the right decisions for European Volleyball.

The CEV President emphasised the fact that the CEV was a non-profit organisation, a sport institution, and its main aim were the sport activities. At the same time, the CEV needed funds in order to invest in the sport's progress and in the future. He stated that the CEV needed more income in order to be able to better support its stakeholders.

Mr ENDRES, CEV Managing Director, wished to add two more points. First of all, he wished to remind everyone of the confidentiality agreement they had signed as CEV Board members not to disclose confidential information. In the same way, the CEV were signing a non-disclosure agreement with the CVC, in order to keep the information exchange and the discussions confidential. Therefore, he advised that everything beyond the fact that the CEV was negotiating with the CVC should not be shared with third parties. He also mentioned that they were in close coordination with the existing commercial partners, i.e. Infront and AML, and they kept them informed about the negotiations, in order to have everyone aligned and on the same page.

On that note, the CEV President remarked that the CEV leadership consulted the CEV European Legal Commission in every step of the way to make sure they would follow the right path. Furthermore, he also asked all the members to respect the confidentiality of the discussions and urged them to share any ideas or proposals they wished to bring forward. Referring to past incidents, he explained how sensitive the information was and if it would be shared in the public in the wrong way, it could cause serious damage for the CEV in the future. He stated that Volleyball was upgrading to the next level, dealing with big professional companies in a field where even the smallest legal mistake could lead to a serious lawsuit that would cause a huge financial damage. He affirmed that he was very happy with the current composition of the CEV Board and he was sure that everyone would respect their obligations.

## Decision

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to continue the exchange of information with the CVC Capital Partners, in order to further elaborate a potential business model for European Volleyball, by maintaining the sport as priority number one and keeping full power and ownership on all sport decisions.

## CEV Data strategy / Business plan

The CEV President thanked Mr Peter SPRENGER, member of the CEV Marketing Working Group, as well as Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI, President of the CEV Marketing Working Group, for all the work they had done on the data project, and gave the floor to Mr SPRENGER to present the latest updates on the CEV Data strategy and Business plan.

Mr SPRENGER started by saying that the discussion regarding the data strategy was going on already for two years, pointing out that it was not a problem to be solved, but an opportunity, to see what kind of future the CEV could have when looking into the field of digital and data. It was admittedly a difficult subject to approach for the people who were not part of that industry and it had to be examined with a general management scope. The report of Professor WESTERBEEK had brought that project one step further, providing an understanding on how to act and make decisions for the future. Looking at the matter as the President of the Dutch Volleyball Federation, in terms of what he would expect from his cooperation with the CEV and as a member of the CEV Marketing Working Group, he could grasp the importance of such a project, it being part of the CEV's future. Himself being in that industry for 30 years, he could confirm how much development there had been in the last six years. Every brand that wished to grow depended on data insights. In a society where almost everything is going digital, it would be impossible to stir any kind of activity without that data. Every medium of communication was personalised; if a company wants to have an impact in its sales and strategy, they need to know who their fans and customers are and what they want.

The data strategy was not a solo project, it would have to be a strategy implemented on the European level, possibly in different speeds, taking into consideration the different capacities of each federation: some were on the eve of execution, some were in an orientation phase and others just wanted to learn. He pointed out that those differences should be respected, it would be impossible to have everyone at the same level at the same time. He believed that for such a project the way to go was a joint approach, where every federation could feel involved. The point was to create a strategy that would be beneficial for everyone. It was about helping each other, developing the sport and not having one entity in control of everything. He was also convinced that the possibilities of the project should be discussed openly, in order to be clear about the potential risks and benefits, so that the stakeholders would join are fully



aware of the situation. He added that it was important to grasp the opportunity of the potential the data could offer and at the same time to limit the risk of the path they would go through.

### **Professor Westerbeek's report**

Regarding the report of Professor WESTERBEEK, he considered it an important part of the strategic move, offering some valuable insights on the necessary technical process steps to be taken when moving further in that direction. He remarked that the report was less focused on a detailed monetisation strategy. He believed that they had to exanimate further into the specific business case for the CEV from the monetisation point of view. He believed that after a few meetings they could have a clear picture of what the monetisation could be for the CEV and for Volleyball as a whole.

He admitted that data was a complex subject. He clarified that there were different data formats. One could think of data when looking into the betting industry. It was a billion euro/dollar industry; without data one could not place a bet. It was important to realise that data and betting were closely linked together.

Another aspect of data was the gamification, the engagement of fans, the data enrichment. He opined that the more they could do with a gamification activity with fans, the more data they could capture and the more the database could grow and provide insights in the preferences of the fans.

Furthermore, as pointed out by Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI, data could enrich the experience of media viewers. While watching a live stream or a broadcast, when one got some extra data, they could be more involved.

The report was more focused on the value of data in marketing and sales. On increasing convergence, on promoting products, engaging fans. Personalising the messages would lead to a grown fan-base and direct access to the fans.

In the previous years, access to the fans was given through mass media. In the current days, digital media also offered access to the fans. He argued that knowing the data records of the fans, their digital identity, their emails, their social media identity, represented a value. One could be easily reach millions with the push of one button.

### **Some general thoughts**

He was convinced that the data strategy and ownership of data were important strategic assets in the development of European Volleyball. He saw a future in that direction and believed that the CEV should not miss out on that opportunity to enhance and expand what it was already doing with its products and with Volleyball fans and marketing actions. He added that in a digital society data ownership and insights represented an efficient way to continuously engage with people, reach out to Volleyball fans and grow the fanbase. Engaging people would go beyond the matches. It could happen through interesting information, with gamification around the sport, by bringing ideas and products to them, polls, quizzes, etc. Taking the example of other stronger sports like football, one could see the future ahead, in terms of the fans preferences, especially the newer generation of fans.

He noted that such a project would be a joint interest attempt, benefitting clubs, federations and the CEV. As for sponsors/partners, he claimed that they would be interested in being part of such an ecosystem and while they might not wish to shift their involvement into a data sponsorship, they would certainly welcome the possibility of adding data assets and reaching through Volleyball interesting groups of customers.

### **Involvement of stakeholders**

He outlined that when starting such a project one should realise that federations had different speeds in endorsing the digital innovations, the new systems and products. It was something to be respected. However, sharing the knowledge on that subject and creating the right benchmarks would be beneficial for federations of any size. In case a federation would not be ready to join the data project, some efforts



could be made to educate them, to organise workshops for them. Making even the smallest federations better in such a field would be valuable to everyone.

He then made a point that there should be no fight about “who owns exactly which data”. In such a joint effort all positions of stakeholders should be equal and beneficial for all involved parties.

### **How to organise the stakeholders’ perspectives**

Mr SPRENGER suggested the creation of a two year pilot for a data sharing partnership with about three or four big federations willing to invest and develop that area. That way, an educational environment for the rest of the stakeholders could be established, so as to follow the process and understand the opportunities. He also noted that the long term goals and the benefits for all the stakeholders should be clear. He illustrated his point by presenting an example:

If the Dutch Federation had access to 900,000 Volleyball fans in their database, those fans could receive a well organised offer for a CEV OTT subscription or for an international match or European event in Germany. At the same time, if in the future the CEV would have access to 300,000 fans in the region of the Netherlands and surrounding regions, the Dutch Federation could potentially use that access for the promotion of an international event or of a match in the Netherlands. By broadening the scope, they could broaden their marketing impact. He concluded that everyone would be willing to share something if there would be a return. He then presented a potential structure of an agreement among the CEV, the federations and the clubs. He confirmed that the legal perspective of such an agreement would not be complicated, since everybody would represent the same sport and institutions. Establishing a legal framework would not be so difficult, since such agreements were already employed in other entities and other sports in other parts of the world.

### **Summary of benefits of the stakeholders’ cooperation**

Mr SPRENGER started by stating that it was important that all the stakeholders have a clear picture of what the benefits of that project would be. For the federations, it would involve capturing new names for promoting activities and products, expanding the volume of the fanbase. It would help them improve and work on next level marketing skills. For the CEV, the benefit would mean centralising insights of fans on an European scale, as a representative of 56 countries and it could influence the quality of local campaigns around events. In addition, it would grant the CEV access to a larger audience for the CEV products. Lastly, he pointed out that a good database would serve as a valuable asset in sponsor partnerships and negotiations. For the clubs, the benefit would translate as access to a bigger audience for promoting matches and events, as growth of the club’s fanbase, scaling up of the merchandising opportunities and improvement of local campaigns.

#### **Scope of potential investment**

Mr SPRENGER specified the minimum needed for the CEV to be able to deliver and cooperate with the stakeholders on that project:

1. Centralised data storage system on CEV level
2. Sustainable connections to current relevant data sources (ticketing, OTT, web/app)
3. Scalable environment for outgoing communication/campaigns
4. Internal project management resources/temporary external expertise

In terms of numbers, in comparison to the prospects reflected in the report, he had estimated that it would be possible to reduce them to 250,000 for the first year, to 150,000 for the second year and 125,000 for the third year. He believed that the estimation of the dashboarding part in Professor WESTERBEEK’s report was relatively expensive and it was not the most important thing to bring to execution for the moment. The investment could also be spread out in time, so as to make smaller steps.

## Last thoughts

Mr SPRENGER suggested to have close look in the ROI time/business case with a small project group. Another great step would be to elaborate an execution plan for the cooperation between the CEV and the Federations, especially from the legal perspective (including also the clubs). Subsequently, he proposed to develop a “digital education programme”, where federations and major clubs could participate. Lastly, it was important to determine an intended timeline for budget planning/decision.

Concluding his presentation, he said he was very positive about that project and expressed his conviction that they could take some small but sustainable steps with limited risks. He believed that such a strategy could make Volleyball a more competitive market presence.

## Open floor for comments and questions

Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, CEV Board of Administration member, thanked Mr SPRENGER and the whole Marketing Working Group. He found all that information very interesting and was convinced that the CEV would have to step into that area of data strategy. He inquired what would be the range that should be invested on the CEV level.

Mr SPRENGER replied that the first year’s budget would reach 250,000 EUR which he considered crucial for designing the right sustainable system. The second year of the project would be about running processes. Therefore, the total investment would be lower and amount to 150,000 EUR. On the third year, the processes would have to continue, the budget was estimated to around 125,000 EUR, but according to the business case, there would also be some revenue. In total, it would be an investment of 525,000 EUR in a three year period.

Mr ARENA also appreciated the presentation and referred to the suggested cooperation with some top federations and major clubs with the CEV. He asked how they could combine these, given that there were different markets for each entity. He referred to the example of some top Italian Volleyball clubs which belonged to the National League and formed part of another institution. He was also wondering how they could communicate the potential benefit and return of investment for the various entities they wished to involve in the data project.

Mr EVERAERT wished to share his experience from the Dutch Federation, since they had been organising many events over the years and gaining a lot of experience. He shared an example where they used their database in order to fill up the hall of some friendly match, and they managed to sold out all the tickets in a very short time. He divulged that ever since they started using that database, they had been selling many more tickets, because they could reach the right people. He saw a big opportunity in that project for increasing the ticket sales. As hosts of the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Women’s World Championship, the Dutch Federation wished to reach out to Belgian and German Volleyball fans, so as to be able to sell as much as 10,000 tickets more, leading to extra income and increased value. He also believed that the sales of the SuperFinals tickets could also benefit greatly by such an approach.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI thanked Mr SPRENGER about his presentation. He shared that he was really excited about working on that project for the last two years and he was very convinced about its potential. He realised that each country, based on its size and special context, would have different needs from such a project. He was sure that everyone could benefit. Admittedly, it was a major multifaceted project, and wished to mention two of its aspects as an example of a more practical implementation: the use of data by the betting companies and the use of fan related data by the sponsors.

He then added that it was important, even in the context of negotiations with the CVC Capital Partners, to identify the products and the rights that each stakeholder (the CEV, each federation, each club) had. It should be clear who had the rights for what. After having made the inventory of the rights, it would be possible to define how each stakeholder would be able to have a benefit from that venture.

He stated that by using the data they could offer something useful to the betting companies and obtain more profit and consequently give more money also to the CEV. He felt it was a necessary connection

to be made, since the CEV could provide the knowledge about Volleyball and the betting companies could use that knowledge profitably.

He divulged that he had encouraged the Polish League to use those two aspects. He informed that they had proceeded to make that investment and he promised to show to the CEV the results when the app they had created would be fully ready and functional. He reported that the interest from digital companies had been significant.

Lastly, he firmly believed that in order to raise awareness for such a project, it was important to show a concrete practical example of its implementation and benefits to the interested parties.

Mr Gernot LEITNER, CEV Board of Administration member, also appreciated the deep knowledge on the subject by Mr SPRENGER. He wished to inform everyone that the Austrian Volleyball Federation had organised a tender in the previous year and for the previous four months they had been negotiating with the two top bidders and they were very close to signing a contract. They had tendered their data, their media and marketing rights. He commented that it had been a process that gave them a lot of valuable knowledge. He was willing to share more on that project in the following CEV Board Meeting, since many parts were still confidential. He could present the case of the Austrian federation as a concrete practical example of a medium size country. They had tendered four products as a package and then sub-negotiated with their rights holders of the four products. He felt that data represented the bright future and he only had a positive outcome to report. He suggested that they could set up a strategy about which countries could enter that process at which stage and proceed forward.

In order to get a better understanding on that project, Mr ADLER had approached Mr SPRENGER to discuss about it and wished to share a few points. He saw the project as a growth for Volleyball in many different ways. He wished to point out that he believed it was important to get the foundation right and be able to go in different directions in the future. Speaking in the function of the CEV Treasurer, he could accept that the CEV would not have an immediate profit from an investment. Seeing that such a project could grow Volleyball's fanbase and provide help to federations, he was willing to agree to make the investment. He clarified that the aim was not to only see a return on investment (ROI) specifically for the CEV, but to see a ROI for Volleyball as a whole. He was very positive about the project and about the plan outlined and supported going ahead with it. While realising that such a decision by the Board would mean an increase of the accounts deficit, he suggested that it would be something to accept, because he considered the prospects of the project very important. He added that the investment could be made gradually, and not spending the 250,000 EUR at once.

Mr BORIČIĆ argued that it was important that Volleyball show its real value to the world and send the message that it was trying to boost its dynamic and collect data. He analysed that Volleyball had gained a lot of value in the last years and it was time to seek the help of experts not only for advising but also for working with the CEV people, in order to prepare the project. He also commented on how various federations or clubs would be unwilling to share their numbers data, while in football and basketball all the numbers were out in the open and everything was clean.

He continued by cautioning that while Volleyball had become stronger in the recent years, the CEV should not venture out alone investing in many projects with uncertain outcome. He reiterated his suggestion about involving three or four strong federations in the investment. They could create a common budget for the investment and then share the income.

Mr BORIČIĆ then spoke about Berlin, where the first international event under the CEV umbrella was held. More than 60% of foreign people had attended that event. Referring to some past events in Turkey, Serbia and Poland, he remarked that the spectators were mainly citizens of the host country, which gave them a local feel. Therefore, when negotiating with international sponsor, the appeal of the event should also be international and not limited to a local, national level.

He also analysed that in order to attract more fans to the sport, Volleyball needed to establish recognisable icons; Volleyball stars, explaining that the label of the CEV did not really mean anything to the average fan. With the online media it would be much easier to promote players on a global level. He also noted that when speaking about investing in the future of the sport, they should also have a

dedicated budget to promote Volleyball athletes and create the stars of the future. Top Volleyball players could be very well known within the Volleyball community, but they did not have much recognition on a wider audience level.

In the past, the CEV was not very active in developing and investing in the sport, but that would not justify moving too quickly at the current moment.

Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, CEV Board of Administration member, asked what would happen with organisations not connecting with the data strategy in the future, to which Mr SPRENGER answered that he believed that organisations with no digital maturity would not be competitive in the future and they would fade out. The impact of the pandemic had made clear the necessity of digitalisation. Many investments toward that direction had been made in the last two years.

Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON, CEV Board of Administration member, wished to express his support for the data project and pointed out that it would be important to educate the smaller federations towards that direction.

### Decision

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the next steps on the future data strategy and business plan:

- Create a centralised data storage system;
- Involve Federations and clubs and create joint benefit;
- Consider an educational system for stakeholders to inform and share aim of project;
- Introduce a project group (3-4 persons) to define ROI and business plan.

### CEV Strategic Plan

The CEV President mentioned that at the XLII CEV General Assembly he had invited all the National Federations (and especially the Federations of category 1 and 2, during individual meetings) to submit a strategic plan for the following four to six years. This would facilitate the cooperation with the FIVB and the development of Volleyball in their own country. At the same time, the CEV should also devise a strategic plan for the future and involve the stronger federations in order to cooperate.

Therefore, he invited all the CEV Board members to prepare, by the end of April 2022 at the latest, proposals and insights for the future of Volleyball: how it could move to the next level, which kind of tools it could use, what kind of cooperation and alliances it should seek, how to increase its budget, how it could use media to promote the sport, the federations, the clubs, the Volleyball stars. He encouraged the CEV Board members to also look into success stories in other sports, that were more visible in the market. Regarding potential commercial partnerships, he prompted them to reflect on what the CEV could offer in such ventures, on their strengths and their limits, which parts should be kept and which ones could be offered to a potential partner. In case anyone had proposals earlier than the set deadline, they were invited to already submit them, so that the CEV leadership could start working on them.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal that all CEV Board members should provide their input and proposals on the CEV Strategic Plan by the end of April 2022.

### Communication project – promotion of Volleyball players

The CEV President proposed to organise a communication project in order to select the best athletes at the Zonal Associations level. He also suggested that the fans could also be involved in that activity in order to vote for the best athletes. It would be a good opportunity to promote Volleyball players in

relation with the fans and not only on institutional level, as is the case with the CEV European Volleyball Gala awards. Mr BORIČIĆ saw that project as way to motivate the Zonal Associations to become more active.

## Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Zonal Association communication project for the promotion of players.

# 7. Competition Matters

## Discussion on the statement regarding the situation in Ukraine

The CEV President referred to the latest developments in Ukraine and informed the rest of the CEV Board that they had been in contact with the CEV European Legal Commission (ELC) in order to publish a suitable statement as a sports institution. He specified that the discussion within that context should focus on Volleyball. The CEV leadership had been observing the reactions of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the CEV had been in close contact with the members of the European Team Sports Association, in an attempt align the CEV as part of the European sport community. He then referred to a letter he had received from the Polish Sports Minister, with the recommendation to suspend the games with Russian teams in the territory of Russia. Similarly, the proposal for the CEV reaction was that no Volleyball events were to be held on the territory of Russia or Ukraine and the home matches of Russian teams should be moved in neutral countries.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI wished to share a message that he had just received from Poland, regarding the latest decision from the Polish government and Sports Ministry. Based on that decision, the Polish teams were not going to play with Russian teams in any territory, in any sport.

Mr BORIČIĆ admitted that in that context the situation and the relevant decisions could change at any moment. He continued saying that at that moment it was important to be at the same page with the rest of the sports institutions. While he realised that there should be some consequences for the Russian teams, he noted that they were not responsible for making the political decisions. Therefore they should not be completely excluded by the European Volleyball. He argued sports institutions should not entirely cut the bonds with the members of their community. However, he also confirmed that those decisions were subject to change at any moment. He expressed the hope that the situation would be resolved as soon as possible.

Mr ADLER mentioned that according to the UEFA decision on that matter, the neutral territory where the games were to be moved would still have to be approved, in order to avoid situations where the Russian teams would choose to hold a match in Belarus. The CEV President agreed with that statement, noting that the decisions regarding the date and the neutral venue should only be made by the CEV.

He then analysed that, as with the pandemic, in difficult situations, each country would make a different decision about the matter. He also reported that even before the crisis broke, some countries would refuse to provide visas to Russian people. He admitted that it was difficult for a sports institution to be involved in political situations and recognised that it was a quite sensitive moment, which should be handled carefully.

In case the CEV would go forward with the plan of hosting matches in neutral territories, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI asked who would take responsibility in case something happened. The CEV President mentioned that the insurance companies had a clause that they would not cover anything in a war territory. Therefore, matches could certainly not be organised in Russia or Ukraine. As for moving a match into a neutral territory, he specified that there should first be a discussion with the federations and the organisers and see who could guarantee the security for both teams. He highlighted the need to protect all of the athletes. If there would be no guarantees, it would not be possible to organise any matches.



Furthermore, he stated that any future decision on the matter would be taken together with the CEV Board. He explained that the first statement regarding the situation would have a more general character; the details would be defined in subsequent statements.

Mr ENDRES clarified that the press statement would also be shared in the social media platforms. At the same time a letter had been prepared to be addressed to all National Federations and participating clubs, as well as the CEV Commissions Presidents, as a personal note to the Volleyball family from the CEV President after the CEV Board Meeting.

Mr BORIČIĆ added that during the pandemic, the CEV had respected any state decision regarding restrictions. Similarly, since the Polish Minister had addressed an official statement, Mr BORIČIĆ felt it should be important that the reply should come from the whole CEV Board.

Mr ADLER proposed a change in the wording of the press statement, in order to cover a longer period of validity for the decision.

Ms FLEMING inquired whether the letters sent by various federations asking to eliminate Russian teams from everything would be taken into consideration. Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his full sympathy and understanding for the situation and stated that, in such moments, the CEV should make sure not to cut bridges among the members of the Volleyball community. Sports, like culture and art, should inspire friendship among the people. Referring also to other instances of tension between countries, he stated that in the context of Volleyball, political differences should be kept aside. He was convinced that the right path would be to make a decision taking into consideration also the future relations. In addition, as the situation would evolve, the CEV Board should be ready at any moment to decide together again on the matter.

Mr LEITNER also felt that it was a difficult time for everyone. He expressed his agreement for the draft of the letter to be addressed to the National Federations, saying that it was in line with the IOC statement that had been released on the previous day. As for the World Championship, it would be the FIVB to make a decision about it. He remarked that there would surely be immediate automatic measures taken when a country proactively attacked another one, and they would not depend on the individual countries or the individual federations. He noted that what everyone experienced was one of the biggest breaches of human rights. He affirmed that everyone wanted to protect athletes and himself had no intention to punish any athlete. At the same time, a huge part of the population in Russia that did not support the conflict would be punished for the following 10-20 years, by being isolated and sanctioned and embarrassed by the actions of their government. He also expressed his agreement that the CEV should move based on the development of the events in the coming period and hoped that there would be an end and some solutions soon.

Referring also to the IOC statement regarding the situation, the CEV President specified that in the said statement it was mentioned that Russian and Belarusian athletes could not compete using their flags and national symbols. That action was also beyond the CEV's competence and it should be the FIVB initiating that action. He was fully aware of how critical and sensitive was the situation at the moment and reiterated the importance of keeping the CEV approach in line with the rest of the European sports community and respecting the decisions of each country, always making sure to also receive a written guarantee for the safety of the athletes and officials.

Mr NEOVIUS also expressed his support for the letter. He reported that he had spoken with the President of the Swedish Sports Confederation who informed him that athletes from all Scandinavian countries should avoid going to Russia for competitions but that they would also refrain from punishing the athletes, so they would be able to play in other countries. The Swedish Sports Confederation President also raised that as long as the European Union or the United Nations did not impose any sanctions they would not impose either. He had also spoken with the President of the Swedish Football Association and UEFA Vice-President, Mr Karl-Erik NILSSON, who had also emphasised the security issue, since there were already threats against Russian athletes in various countries. Mr NEOVIUS noted that the federations and the clubs should be aware of the dangers, not only in case of a Russian team playing, but also about individual Russian athletes playing in European leagues.



Ms Emma LABRADOR agreed that stopping Volleyball activities was not going to be the answer to any problem. She believed that a point should be included in the statement, that the CEV wished to protect the players but also continue with the activities. She informed that in the news it was mentioned that Volleyball was one of the sports that had not come out with any statement. Therefore, she cautioned that the CEV statement should not come across as weak either but to make the right decision. As for preventing Russian athletes to participate with their flag in the competition, she admitted it was a very sensitive issue and it recognised that it was difficult for the CEV to decide whether it should use its power to try and put any political pressure or not.

Concluding the discussion, Mr BORIČIĆ shared that it would not be fair to initiate any elimination for the younger Russian athletes and to only resort to elimination if it was dictated by higher authorities. He once again repeated that the CEV Board would be consulted again, in case a different decision or statement had to be made in the following days.

## Decision

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal that no Volleyball, Beach Volleyball and Snow Volleyball events or competitions organised under the CEV umbrella would be taking place in Russia and Ukraine until further notice. In addition, for the remainder of the 2022 European Cups season, clubs from Russia and Ukraine would be playing their respective home matches on neutral ground. Any other European events originally due to take place in Russia and Ukraine in the coming period would be moved to other countries. The CEV would continue to monitor the situation and any updates to the above-mentioned decisions would follow in due course.

### Postponed or moved events from Ukraine

The CEV President also referred to the discussion with the Ukrainian Federation regarding their organisation of EuroVolley 2023, and the mutual conclusion to not change anything for the moment. They would try to potentially find a solution to help them. He felt that it would be too early to proceed to any changes. He recognised that the sports infrastructure would be destroyed and the sports investment would also be affected.

Moreover, he informed that it had been decided that the Snow Volleyball European Tour event due to take place in Truskavets, Ukraine would be postponed. In addition, the CEV Volleyball European League Final 2022 that was initially going to be organised by the Ukrainian Federation would also have to be moved to another country.

### Super Finals 2022

The CEV President informed that despite the willingness from the Bulgarian Federation to host the Super Finals of the CEV Champions League Volley 2022 in Sofia, the new government in Bulgaria could not allocate the appropriate budget for such an organisation. There had been discussions about the Italian Federation being the host of that event and they were expecting more concrete information by the following week. In case that scenario would not work out, the proposal was to play home and away matches until the end.

Mr ARENA confirmed that the Italian Federation was working on that project and was exploring the choices among various cities. However, the problem was that the big sports halls had already been booked by other events. Torino was among the potential host cities, however the big sports hall was not available there. They were still waiting for some information regarding sports halls availability for the city of Milano. Mr ARENA agreed that unless they were able to secure a big sports hall for the Super Finals, it would be better to conduct them in home and away matches.

## CEV EuroVolley 2023

The CEV President reported that almost all organisers had been arranged. For the Men's competitions, the organisers were going to be Italy, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Ukraine. For the Women's competitions, the organisers were going to be Belgium, Italy, Germany and Estonia. Regarding Germany, things had not been fully finalised, because they needed one more week to conduct the last meeting with the local government and the city, in order to get a written confirmation. Therefore, there could not be any official announcement yet.

Mr René HECHT, CEV Board of Administration member, reported that they would hold a final negotiations meeting on 04 March 2022 with the government of the North Rhine-Westphalia state and the city of Düsseldorf and they would sign the contract. For the moment it remained confidential for the German Volleyball Federation, because some final points were still under negotiation.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI stated that, first of all, they were willing to assist Ukraine to be able to go through with the organisation. In case the Ukrainian Federation would not manage to host EuroVolley 2023, he was quite confident that the Polish Federation would be willing to step in as host.

The CEV President thanked Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI as well as the Polish Federation and hoped that it would be possible to find a solution.

## EuroBeachVolley 2023

The CEV President reported that he had been in Vienna on the previous day for the Press Conference to announce the first edition of the CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup. He had fruitful discussions with the ACTS founder and CEO, Mr Hannes JAGERHOFER. They applied to organise CEV EuroBeachVolley 2023. Nevertheless, and while the CEV had been very satisfied with the cooperation on major Beach Volleyball events until then, Mr BORIČIĆ emphasised the importance of developing the sport and inspiring young generation athletes.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the organisation of the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2023 to ACTS Group and the Austrian Volleyball Federation.

## CEV European Queen & King of the Court Final 2022

Mr EVERAERT started by giving a small recount of the background of that competition. In 2013, the Dutch TV had bought the rights for the World Tour Beach Volleyball along with the rights for short-track speed skating. During the winter of 2013, a lot of short-track speed skating was shown on TV on Sunday afternoons, which was a good sign for what would come for Beach Volleyball. In the summer of 2014, despite the remarkable performance of the Netherlands in Beach Volleyball, the sport was not featured so much on TV, apart from some highlights in the evening programme. When asking the reason for that, Mr EVERAERT got the reply that since there was no guarantee that the Dutch team would be in the final, they were not willing to take the risk and broadcasting. In short-track speed skating, on the other hand, there were many races, many speed skaters, so there was always someone from the Netherlands. While reflecting on how they could have a similar effect on Beach Volleyball, Mr EVERAERT thought of the King of the court game played during practice.

Therefore, he had approached Mr Wilco NIJLAND, the owner of Sportworx, with that idea and they started to develop it. Just before the first tournament in 2017, an investor had approached Mr EVERAERT requesting all rights of Beach Volleyball in the Netherlands. Mr EVERAERT replied that they belonged to various entities and ultimately to the CEV. Instead he offered him the chance to invest in the King of the Court event. In the following year, with the help of that investor, four tournaments were organised: in Utrecht (NED), in Antwerp (BEL), in Hawaii (USA) and in Huntington Beach (USA).

In 2020, with the pandemic, in order to manage all the restrictions, Mr NIJLAND decided to build a Covid-proof stadium with skyboxes, with one direction walking, etc. That experiment had been a huge success, and a similar concept had also been used for the EuroBeachVolley in Vienna in 2021. Mr EVERAERT had initially some concerns about the atmosphere in the stadium, since there was a limited amount of spectators, but he reported that it had been an amazing experience. He opined that there were two elements making the difference. The first element was the stadium. The second element was the format. There was a serve every six seconds, something which offered a really speedy and dynamic game. The ratings on TV had also been a great success, much better than regular Beach Volleyball events.

Mr NIJLAND had an agreement with the FIVB for World Tour events until 2024. They had the idea to approach the CEV, in order to organise a European King and Queen of the Court Finals. After the experience of organising the CEV Beach Volleyball Continental Cup Finals in the Netherlands with the help of Sportworx, Mr EVERAERT was convinced about the potential of that product and he believed that Mr NIJLAND would be able to offer another successful Beach Volleyball event.

An additional benefit during the difficult times of the pandemic would be to have one more opportunity for the Beach Volleyball players to win prize money through that event. Finally, he reported that they were on the way to reach an official agreement.

Mr ENDRES wished to add that, based on the CEV Board decision in December, when the Queen and King of the Court event had been approved to be part of the Beach Volleyball portfolio, after the proposal of the Beach Volleyball think tank, the Dutch Volleyball Federation together with Sportworx were applying to host the first Queen and King of the Court European Final in Utrecht, in the Netherlands, in the beginning of September 2022, under similar conditions as for the CEV EuroBeachVolley. They would cover the prize money of 200,000 EUR and they were organising conditions, marketing rights, etc. He agreed that such an event represented a remarkable opportunity for the CEV to organise in one month –starting with CEV BeachVolley Nations Cup in Vienna, the EuroBeachVolley in Munich, and the Queen and King of the Court in September– three big tournaments and a total of 600,000 EUR prize money.

The CEV President accepted that it was a big opportunity for Beach Volleyball players to compete for 600,000 EUR prize money in one month. However, he observed that the World Champion in FIVB would receive a 200,000 dollars prize money, which was less than the European tournament prize money. He pointed out that the CEV managed in a short period to bring a lot of money for that discipline. He thanked the President of the Dutch Federation, Mr SPRENGER, as well as Mr EVERAERT for bringing value to the sport. He felt that it was the beginning of a major change of the position of Beach Volleyball in Europe. He admitted that it was not an easy endeavour. The FIVB had also initiated some changes, but with the contribution of the CEV, there was an improvement regarding the Beach Volleyball players participating in tournaments in the FIVB level.

## Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of Sportworx together with the Dutch Volleyball Federation as co-organisers of the CEV European Queen and King of the Court Final in 2022 and to establish a longer collaboration with Sportworx for organising the annual European Queen and King of the Court Finals on behalf of the CEV.

## CEV age-group Volleyball European Championships

The CEV President informed that there was an application from the Netherlands to organise the CEV Volleyball U22 European Championship Men 2024 and an application from Armenia to organise the CEV Volleyball U17 European Championship Men 2025. Taking those applications into consideration, he observed that until 2025, there was only one age-group competition that had not an appointed organiser. It was certainly a significant difference with the past and marked a successful path for the CEV Board that had decided to increase the support towards the organisers, thus opening the way for smaller scale federations to take the leap and host such an event for the first time in their history.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Dutch Federation as co-organiser of the CEV Volleyball U22 European Championship Men 2024.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Armenian Federation as co-organiser of the CEV Volleyball U17 European Championship Men 2025.

## 8. Financial Matters

### Financial results

After a meeting with the CEV Finance Department at the CEV Office in Luxembourg, Mr ADLER reported that based on the current financial situation that far it would be possible to align with the amended budget of -3.7 million EUR and not go beyond that.

### Investing part of the CEV funds

Furthermore, during the previous CEV Board meeting, the CEV Board had approved to invest 6 million EUR from the CEV's savings and the CEV President and himself were in charge of looking into how they could invest that amount. There had been a small working group, met with three investment banks (initially it was four, but one of them pulled out), they made some proposals. All of the proposals were interesting, but they brought it down to two. Exploring further, they saw that the ROI was the same with both of them, so they concluded to make a final decision based on two criteria: the fees and the way they presented themselves in wanting to cooperate with the CEV. Looking at the fees, a point concerning a tax liability had come up and they questioned whether they could invest at all. Initially, the position of the accountants was that since the CEV was a non-profit organisation, it could not proceed to investing operations. When communicating that to the two banks, one of them got active quickly and got their lawyers involved and showed great interest in supporting the CEV. They managed to find a solution, as a non-profit organisation there could be no profit to individual members and the profits would have to be used for the sport or the institution. Another obligation was to get the agreement of the CEV Board in order to proceed. The investment should be made in a defensive manner, it should not be a very aggressive investment, because that would mean that they would go after profit, whereas the aim was to mitigate inflation and the negative interest rates. Therefore, they decided to proceed with a defensive investment, with a 1.5% of ROI depending on the markets.

Based on all that, Mr ADLER recommended to the CEV President and Mr ARENA, and subsequently to the CEV Board, to cooperate with Indosuez bank. After the approval from the CEV Board they would continue to work on the details and consult the Legal Team in order to avoid binding the CEV in a less flexible situation than it would have asked for.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to cooperate with Indosuez bank and make a defensive investment of six million EUR from the CEV accounts.

## 9. Proposals from Board members

### Mediterranean Beach Volleyball Cup

Ms LABRADOR had been in discussions with the federations from Gibraltar, Malta, Monaco and San Marino, in an attempt to create a new competition for those countries. She remarked that some smaller federations were facing difficulties that bigger federations might not. Some of those difficulties were the eligibility of the players and the travelling. Therefore, the proposal was to have the four countries compete in senior level, with men and women separately initially and then in mixed competitions. In order to resolve the eligibility issues, they proposed to have the FIVB-CEV eligibility criteria for one of the athletes of the Beach Volleyball team and the other one could satisfy the GSSE eligibility criteria.

Aiming for a long term development of that competition, they wanted to have some realistic aspirations about it and start off slowly with one competition in 2022, to be hosted in Gibraltar. In 2023, it would be hosted in two countries, possibly Malta and San Marino, in 2024 in three countries and in 2025 in four countries. In the following years they would continue with a little tour among them. The concept was to grow that competition slowly and organically and thus offer the players another opportunity to compete.

Ms FLEMING queried whether the described competition fell within a Zonal Association competition or if it was something separate, to which Ms LABRADOR replied that it would be something separate at regional level. In order to surmount the difficulties the smaller countries faced, they had decided to establish a new separate competition. During their discussions they had considered the possibility of the participation of other countries and while they were certainly open to it, they suggested to start first with the four countries, see how the concept would develop and then potentially open it in the following year. Rather than doing something overambitious, they preferred to start with something that would work and then grow it slowly.

Mr BORIČIĆ observed that in the past the small countries' participation would be limited to their political contribution during the CEV General Assembly. He was quite pleased with the fact that, in the recent years, he saw a change in that tendency, mentioning several examples of small countries deciding to organise European events in junior and senior level. It was the first time in the CEV history that so many small countries were applying to organise European events, not only regional or special small countries events.

Having said that, he expressed the view that organising only one tournament per year might be too slow of a development, explaining that it could not keep up the interest of the participants. He suggested that the CEV could provide some kind of support, so that they would manage to organise more tournaments per year. He suggested to work with the CEV Beach Volleyball department to provide more Beach Volleyball activities.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the establishment of the Mediterranean Beach Volleyball Cup as regional event among Gibraltar, Malta, Monaco and San Marino, which would be financially supported by the CEV with travel allowance to participating teams.

### Think Pink Europe

Mr De DOBBELEER referred everyone to the CEV Board decision to have Think Pink Europe as partner of the social responsibility plan. He noted that the goals of the plan were clear; to raise awareness for breast cancer and inform people about the dangers and the possible ways to limit the chance of cancer



and, linking it to Volleyball, to promote a healthy lifestyle. That goal would be achieved by using online and offline communication strategy to reach the right target groups and aiming to develop the Think Pink Volleyball events across Europe. There were four important flagships, the ambassadors, it could be national or international stars, or even local players from clubs. There was also the Race for the Cure event, which was well known in a lot of countries. Another event was the Pink Duck Race, during which one could "adopt" a duck for five EUR. And the fourth flagship would be the Pink Volley Games / Day, to be organised by clubs and/or federations who are interested.

Then he presented a timeline for the implementation of the Think Pink partnership: in March/April the organisation of the online international working group with members from the CEV but also members from Think Pink Europe. In May, they planned to establish a starter kit for National Federations. In June, they wished to contact the possible ambassadors, officialise their cooperation and determine clear expectations. In July, they were planning to have a landing page on the CEV website, so as to start with national and local actions from July and September onwards.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the proposed actions and timeline for the implementation of the Think Pink partnership.

## 10. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

The CEV President referred to the information the CEV Board of Administration members had received prior to the meeting regarding the proposals from Commissions. He proposed to reject two of the proposals. Namely, proposal No. 9, regarding the additional licenses proposed by some clubs for the players of clubs that are out of the competition. Based on his experience, he had already witnessed manipulation with such activities. He recounted how they had discovered a manipulation where a player was playing in competitions for two countries. He explained that in order to exclude and eliminate any potential of manipulation and potentially get involved in court cases with clubs, it would be wise to reject that proposal.

Next, he expressed his strong objection to proposal No. 27, which was about appointing a national Supervisor in the CEV Cup, explaining that the national Supervisor was part of the Federation, which meant that there was a conflict of interest regarding the flow of information on the situation. The CEV Cups as an international competition needed an international Supervisor.

#### Decision

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed changes to the CEV Volleyball Competitions Regulations except the additional license in the CEV Cup & Challenge Cup and the appointment of a national Supervisor in the CEV Cup.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the EBVC proposed changes for the Beach Volleyball Zonal Events Terms & Conditions.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the EBVC proposal regarding the classification matches for Age-group Beach Volleyball European Championships.



The CEV President analysed that they needed the EBVC to make a proposal for the future business plan regarding the international Beach Volleyball clubs competition, in order for the CEV Board to have a clear understanding about the amount they could invest there. In addition, he specified that each player and club in Beach Volleyball should be registered members of the National Federation.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved that the EBVC had to provide a concrete proposal and business plan for the newly introduced Beach Volleyball clubs competition and Beach Volleyball National Team competition before considering any financial support.

Mr ENDRES explained that the aim of the ECC proposal was to maintain quality in the CEV European Cups competitions and thus to enhance the actual CEV Champions League Volley format, in order to provide more opportunities for the teams to stay longer in the competition, respecting and valuing the investments made to participate.

More specifically, until the 4th Round everything would remain the same and there would be no changes for the composition of the 4th Round either. In the actual format, out of the 20 teams playing in the 4th Round, the next phase was the Quarterfinals with eight teams: the winners from the five Pools plus the three best 2nd ranked teams. That way, after the 4th Round, eight teams continued in the competition and all the others were eliminated.

Based on suggestions coming from clubs and in line with the ongoing discussion to have more matches with the top teams, the CEV European Cups Commission (ECC) had proposed to introduce a Playoff phase in between the 4th Round and the Quarterfinal phases: five winners of each Pool phase would qualify directly to the Quarterfinals. Then, the five best 2nd standing teams plus the first best 3rd ranked team would compete in the Playoff phase, in a home and away matches system. The winners would proceed to complete the roster the Quarterfinals. The 3rd ranked teams that had not qualified to the Playoff phase would continue in the CEV Volleyball Cup. Thus, next the previous link to the CEV Volleyball Cup (the teams eliminated in the 1-3 Rounds continue to the CEV Volleyball Cup), an additional link would be offered for the 3rd ranked teams to proceed in that competition.

The aim of that proposal was to maintain quality in the CEV European Cups. Only the five last ranked teams would be eliminated and the rest would continue. Given that the strongest European Leagues were represented in the ECC, they had expressed their support to that proposal. Lastly, Mr ENDRES added that the proposal had also been supported by Infront.

Mr ARENA suggested to perform a Drawing of Lots, in order to prevent any chance of manipulation of the games, with which everyone agreed.

Mr ADLER inquired whether the change would influence the calendar. Mr ENDRES replied that the office in cooperation with the ECC had produced two versions of the calendar, one with the former format and one with the proposed one. The new format would take two additional match days, and that had also been accepted by the major European Leagues representatives during the ECC meeting.

#### Decision

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the ECC proposal to amend the CEV Champions League Volley format starting with the 2022-2023 season.

#### Decision

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the anticipated European Cups calendar 2022-2023.

Mr ENDRES reported that the Minutes of the CEV European Refereeing Commission (ERC) meeting had not been finalised until then, because the meeting had taken place shortly before the CEV Board meeting. He informed that the only approval required from the CEV Board was the introduction of a "Challenge Referee" also on the CEV level, since there had not been such a role until then. The rest of the proposals were of a more technical nature and did not need to undergo the CEV Board approval. Regarding the lists of the referees, the President of the ERC, Ms Zorica BJELIĆ, had been instructed by the FIVB that it was the Continental federations that had to approve the lists for the International Referees. However, that had not been confirmed from the FIVB until then. Therefore, based on the proposal of the ERC, all the National Federations had been asked to confirm that the candidates proposed for Referee Delegates and International Referees were also supported by their respective National Federations.

The CEV President explained that the reason behind that request to the Federations had been a case where someone was an International Referee, without being part of the National Federation and had not participated in any activities within their own country.

For the moment, the only approval needed from the CEV Board regarded the introduction of dedicated Challenge Referees in Europe.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the ERC proposal to introduce dedicated Challenge Referees in Europe.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the **ERC proposal to follow the FIVB and change the terminology of "Referee Delegate" into "Referee Coach"** in the entire CEV Regulatory Framework.

## 11. Any other business

### XLIII CEV General Assembly 2022

Mr ENDRES informed the CEV Board members about the site visit performed in Utrecht, since the aim was to associate the XLIII CEV General Assembly 2022 to the 38th FIVB World Congress. They had conducted a meeting with the Dutch Federation and the FIVB to discuss the conditions and the proposal was to hold the CEV Congress on 22 September 2022 in Arnhem, the Netherlands. The CEV Board approval was needed, based on the CEV Statutes and subsequently all the stakeholders would be informed. He commented that the conditions of organisation would be according to the usual standards, while also being a solution that was financially beneficial for the CEV.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously confirmed the organisation of the XLIII CEV General Assembly 2022 on 22 September 2022, in conjunction with the 38th FIVB World Congress, in Arnhem (NED).

### XLIV CEV General Assembly 2023

Moreover, for the XLIV CEV General Assembly 2023, along with the Italian Federation, Mr ENDRES and Mr ARENA had performed a site visit in Bologna (ITA), where the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men's Final would take place. They were working on a solution to hold the CEV Congress there.

### Meeting with Israeli Federation

The CEV President wished to inform the rest of the CEV Board members about a meeting he had conducted with the Israeli Volleyball Federation. They held a meeting for two days and he thanked the Italian, the Serbian and the Bulgarian Federations for their great support towards Israel in order to develop a member federation which was geographically very far. All those three important federations from the European community had offered to support and started to work and make plans for the future. ISR NF were planning to organise in 2025 one Pool in CEV EuroVolley.

### CEV – FIPAV cooperation

In addition, the CEV President was very pleased that the President of the Italian Federation, Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI, had visited Belgrade for a meeting with the CEV President and Mr ARENA, in order to discuss about the future cooperation between the CEV and Italy. He stated it was very important to have an understanding of what both parties needed for the future and hold open discussions in order to provide each other support. Since the introduction of the new format of the CEV EuroVolley, Italy would be the first country to hold competitions for both genders. They had also discussed about the CEV Champions League SuperFinals, about a cooperation for all Volleyball disciplines, age-group competitions, etc., and they were open to cooperate. They were also willing to support the smaller federations by providing coaches, and at the same time they cooperate with the rest of the strong major Volleyball Federations of Europe, like Poland, Turkey, France, Germany, the leaders of European Volleyball, in order to coordinate and form a common main goal for the future of the sport in Europe.

He also expressed his gratitude for the direct support demonstrated by the Italian Federation to cover the hosting of the CEV Champions League Volley SuperFinals, as soon as the Bulgarian Federations stated that it would withdraw its application.

### MEVZA

The CEV President expressed his grave concerns about the developments within the Middle European Zonal Association (MEVZA). Despite the CEV Board decision to hold the MEVZA General Assembly under the supervision of the CEV, a communication had been circulated earlier announcing the organisation of the MEVZA General Assembly in Vienna (AUT). After the interruption of their General Assembly, there had been a stream of misinformation. He also divulged the intention of some MEVZA members to eliminate two member countries, namely Israel and Cyprus, a decision which went beyond the scope of their mission and competences.

He then referred to the decisions of the previous CEV Board meeting in Budapest (HUN) in December 2021, according to which the President of the CEV European Legal Commission, Mr Alain FISCHBACHER, would supervise all the necessary documentation and lead the electoral MEVZA General Assembly, in order to ensure legal compliance. The MEVZA General Assembly would take place at the CEV Office, in Luxembourg. He informed that all the members of MEVZA were to propose only one candidate for each position from their federation and they could be officially represented in the General Assembly by two Delegates.

Afterwards, he advised to revise the MEVZA Statutes, suggesting that they could follow the example of the Balkan Volleyball Association (BVA), where the President was a political person and had a one year mandate, in an attempt to shift the focus and the significance to the technical part of the Association that would devise the whole programme and activities.

The CEV President informed that an official letter would be sent to the MEVZA countries with proposed dates for the General Assembly. Mr BORIČIĆ highlighted the importance of keeping a clean procedure

and operation of the institutional body and of avoiding internal conflicts. He wished to point out the important role of the Zonal Associations in developing age group competitions and inspiring young athletes to engage with the sport.

Mr Metod ROPRET wished to express his agreement with the CEV President's recommendations and said that he had also been surprised by the said announcement. Mr LEITNER expressed his gratitude to the CEV President about taking control of the organisation of the MEVZA General Assembly, since they had been counting on that. He suggested to keep the proposed date of 18 March 2022, and bring that situation to a conclusion.

The CEV President added that it was important to coordinate with Mr FISCHBACHER for his availability, given that his presence in the General Assembly would be essential. He clarified that the CEV wanted to give a fresh start to the entity and then leave them to continue their work.

#### Reaction on the CEV statement regarding the UKR / RUS situation

Mr LEITNER informed that after the publication of the CEV statement regarding the situation in Ukraine, there had been an intense reaction on the social media platform, criticizing the use of the word "crisis".

Discussions followed on the appropriate course of action. Mr GANEV suggested on a more neutral reaction, in a way that would leave the possibility to reunite the European Volleyball family, even after the situation would be resolved. The CEV President recognised how difficult it was to reach an agreement, even in less complex situations. Therefore, when faced with such critical events, it became even more difficult to have a common view. While recognising the gravity of the situation and the complexities emerging, the CEV wished to remain aligned with the positions expressed by the rest of the European sport community. He pointed out that in its capacity the CEV should try to help any athlete and avoid blocking anyone. Any decision would be subject to modification, monitoring closely how the situation would unfold.

## 12.Next meeting

The CEV President shared that the intention was to hold the following CEV Board meeting in the context of the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals, but the location remained to be confirmed.

## 13.Closing of the Meeting

Closing the meeting, the CEV President wished to thank all the members of the CEV Board of Administration for their work and for the discussion, the Belgian Federation for hosting the meeting and Mr SPRENGER for his presentation.

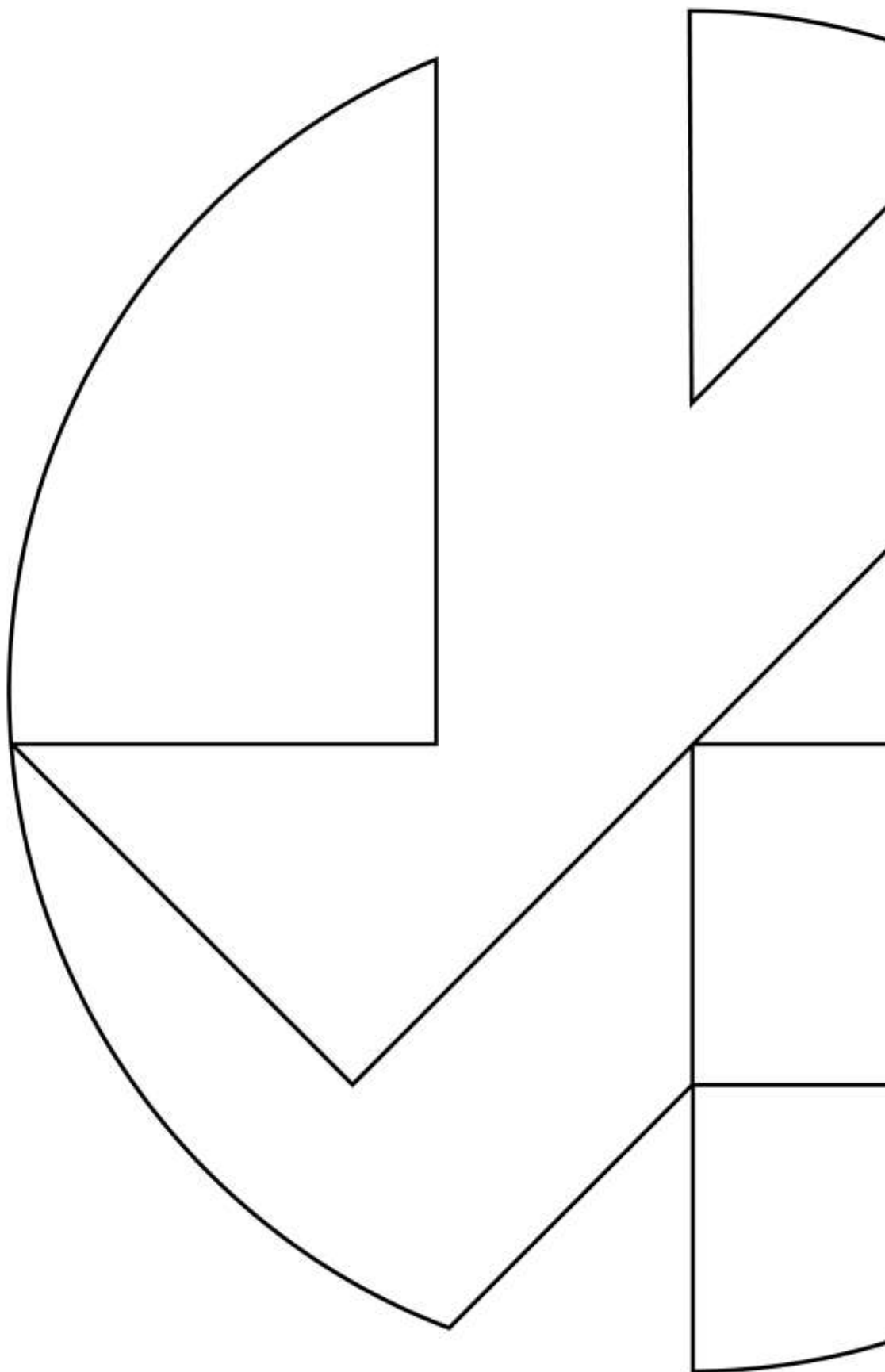
Board of Administration Meeting held at the Hilton Antwerp Old Town Hotel in Antwerp (BEL)  
26 February 2022

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RCS Luxembourg F1135 · 488, route de Longwy, L-1940 Luxembourg  
Phone: +352 25 46 461 · Fax +352 25 46 46 40  
info@cev.eu · cev.eu



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting  
held at the Kempinski  
Hotel in Budapest  
(HUN)

18 December 2021



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball



Place: Kempinski Hotel, Budapest (HUN)

Date: Saturday, 18 December 2021

<b>Attendees</b>	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
<i>online</i>	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
<b>CEV Office</b>	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
<b>Excused</b>	Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO	Vice-President



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## 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, greeted everyone, officially opened the meeting, and directly gave the floor to the Hungarian Volleyball Federation CEO, Mr Balazs NEMCSIK and the Secretary General, Mr Zsolt LUDVIG.

## 2. Presentation of the Hungarian Volleyball Federation

Mr Zsolt LUDVIG, Secretary General of the Hungarian Volleyball Federation, welcomed everyone expressing how glad they were to host that meeting in the occasion of the 75th anniversary of their Federation. Despite the fact that the pandemic had limited the extent of the celebrations permitted, they stated that it was a big honour to welcome everyone in Budapest.

While the anniversary was celebrating the important milestones of the past, Mr ZSOLT wished to highlight that the Hungarian Federation also had a very active present and put a lot of effort for the future. He divulged that they had conducted the federation's General Assembly on the previous day, where they approved their strategy for the following twelve years. He then gave the floor to the CEO of the federation, Mr Balázs NEMCSIK, to present the federation's strategy.

Mr NEMCSIK expressed how pleased he was to address the members of the CEV Board of Administration, the people managing European Volleyball, and was glad that they would join the celebration of their 75th anniversary. Speaking about the Hungarian Federation's strategy, approved by their General Assembly, he mentioned that it had taken ten months and a substantial financial investment to create it, along with their partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers, who had brought their standards and professionalism into Volleyball and had interviewed 50-80 people, who all had a part in devising that strategy.

He explained that the strategy had been based on four pillars: sustainability, youth development, competitive results and marketing. He argued that a strategy could not produce any result on its own, but it surely provided a great amount of help.

First of all, just by devising it, it helped the people of the federation think about their position in the game and what they needed to do. They spent ten months thinking and talking about the game, something which was already valuable. Secondly, the strategy outlined clear plans on what they needed to do right from the beginning of the following year. Thirdly, that process made them realise that they would need investments both for creating and implementing the strategy.

With their strategy in their hands they approached each and every sports political leader and sponsor in Hungary to ask for their contribution. They were in a position to have a clear picture of their financial needs for their future steps. Concluding, he reiterated how glad they were to be hosting that event and wished everyone a successful and fruitful meeting.

The CEV President thanked them for their presentation and took the opportunity to refer to the fact that during the CEV General Assembly he had encouraged all the National Federations, of all categories, to create a strategic plan for the future. He specified that the point was not to share all the details but the general direction each National Federation wished to go. Having such a strategy would enable the federations to approach political bodies in their country and ensure funding for creating great events.

He opined that the whole Volleyball family should endorse the idea of involving political entities in the investments in the sport, since big events required considerable financial investments. He talked about the general tendency in the sports institutions to open up in the markets, in order to suggest sport products and create income, and he believed that Volleyball should also be ready for that path. He added that with a common approach Volleyball could approach and ensure funds from the European Union, which was investing a lot in physical activities. In order to approach such political bodies, one must have a clear vision and a concrete project. Mr BORIČIĆ also mentioned the possibility to partner up with the FIVB in similar big projects.

He expressed how pleased he was that the Hungarian Federation was the first one to announce their strategic plan in front of the Board and thanked them for all the information that they had shared.

### 3. Approval of Agenda

#### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

### 4. Approval of Minutes

#### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 14 August 2021 in Vienna, Austria

#### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 14 August 2021 in Vienna, Austria.**

### 5. FIVB

#### Cooperation with the FIVB

The CEV President started by informing that several meetings of the FIVB Commissions had been postponed for the following year. Given that there were several open questions, Mr BORIČIĆ stated that he was planning to organise a meeting with the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup> to speak about the future cooperation between the FIVB and the CEV.

#### **Keeping the door to the Olympic Games open**

He reported that one of the open questions were the new directions regarding Beach Volleyball. He divulged that in his long career he had always witnessed promises and proposals regarding that discipline, and yet there had not been any progress. He recounted how the previous FIVB presidency had applied a very closed system of qualification. President GRAÇA introduced the Continental Cup and thus opened the door for many young athletes from many small countries, giving hope to everyone that they could achieve something, no matter where they came from. He argued that the road to the Olympic Games should not be blocked for the young athletes, because that chance would motivate them to keep practicing and trying.

With the introduction of the commercial entity of the FIVB, Volleyball World, the new Beach Volleyball structure was going back to the previous restrictive system. The 16 top teams would travel around the world playing and gathering points. Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his strong concerns about the system which

did not follow any qualification process and did not give any chance to young players. He also stated that according to the Olympic Charter, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) should protect every person's right to have a chance to participate in a qualification for the Olympics. Through competitions and qualification processes, everyone should be given the opportunity to try. Closing that door would discourage many young players from playing Beach Volleyball. The Olympic Games represent the dream for any young athlete.

### **CEV affiliated to sports institutions not commercial entities**

The CEV President continued by pointing out that the CEV as a sports institution was concerned about safeguarding the competitions and was affiliated to the FIVB and not to its commercial entity, Volleyball World. He shared that many federations were not pleased with the fact that they were receiving communications directly from Volleyball World and not from the institutional body, the FIVB. He also cautioned against involving the commercial entities in projects where government funding was involved, since the governments would principally recognise sports institutions and not commercial entities.

He commented that the main objective was to solve problems and not create them. To do that, open and clear communication was necessary. He reported that Volleyball World had made many decisions without prior information to the stakeholders. Such tactics led to a thorny path in a cooperation. The only possible way for progress was open discussion and communication on common base, in order to reach solutions. Concluding, the main message was that the CEV was willing to participate and cooperate, and only asked to be involved in the discussion and the communication.

### **Non implementation of confirmed legal decisions**

Moving on, he raised a legal issue regarding proposals for decisions submitted by the CEV to several FIVB bodies, like the FIVB ExCom and the FIVB Board. While those proposals were confirmed during the meetings, later the confirmed decisions were never implemented. Even though the decisions were made during the meeting, they would not even appear in the Minutes of that meeting, which was also not a positive sign. The CEV President referred, for example, to decisions confirmed regarding the FIVB Volleyball Men's and Women's Club World Championship, which were changed afterwards with no prior communication.

With all those amendments, he expressed his serious concerns about damaging the value of that major event. On that note, he expressed his gratitude to his colleagues from the CEV Board for making the right decisions to build and increase the value of the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals.

Going back to the legal issues, the CEV had proposed that a person could have only one federation of origin in Volleyball, with the aim to block manipulation for political reasons. The proposal concerned all officials, not only athletes. In the same spirit of keeping clean competitions, another proposal was that International Referees could not hold the position of National Federation President; the proposal had been accepted by the FIVB Board. A third proposal made was about the players' multi seasonal contracts with clubs, aiming to not involve the managers and agents in the transaction and keeping the International Transfer Certificate (ITC) with the players, as well as keeping large amounts of money within Volleyball and not in the pockets of private persons.

Another proposal made by the CEV and accepted by the FIVB was to have players from federations of category 4 and 5 to only participate in two age-group competitions per year, aiming to protect the young talented athletes from participating in too many competitions. Records of that decision were also not available. The CEV President argued that it was important to have a clear understanding which decisions were valid and backed legally in order to proceed with their implementation.

### **Calendar changes**

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the issues arising regarding the sports calendar. He wished to reiterate the significance of the clubs competitions in Europe, referring to the support expressed on that matter by the President of the International Olympic Committee, Mr Thomas BACH.

The CEV President wished to emphasise the fact that the whole discussion did not aim at opposing the FIVB but at finding a common ground for mutual understanding and solid cooperation. It was very important that both sides would respect the mutually agreed decisions. He then gave the floor to the representatives of the two host countries of the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Women's World Championship to share their experience in dealing with the FIVB and Volleyball World.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Vice-President, stated that every event organiser was facing issues at that moment, since the current heavy inflation, especially in the event industry, was causing an increase in costs. The reason was expensive materials and lack of personnel, given that the event industry had been highly impacted by the pandemic and a lot of people had quit. In addition, gaining income became increasingly difficult. While sponsorships for national teams were still easy to find, in such unpredictable times it was very difficult to find and secure investors for events taking place in the following year and lasting for two and half weeks.

He explained that another important source of income were the ticket sales. Normally, there would be a 10-20% variation in the estimation on the revenues from ticket sales. During the pandemic, though, the variation would go from 0 to 50 or 100%; quite unstable circumstances for investments. Mr EVERAERT reported that the Dutch federation was in close contact with the government and believed they were able to keep solvent. However, in trying to approach the FIVB, they were only able to discuss with Volleyball World, who were not very cooperative. The promoter with which the Dutch federation was working divulged that when approaching the FIVB for investing, and while there was a widespread attitude of solidarity in the Volleyball community with other institutional bodies, it was the first time that they encountered a closed door.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President, also shared his experience, depicting a similar and even worse situation for Poland. He divulged that in negotiating contracts with the FIVB, the Polish Federation did not want to get involved with Volleyball World, wishing to only interact with institutional bodies, so as to ensure government support. He argued that the main issue was that while the federations and the confederations were stakeholders of the FIVB, the FIVB transferred all the competences and the responsibilities to its commercial partner, who had a different focus than an institutional body. It focused on profit and did not leave any room for adjustment or solidarity during such volatile times. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI did not feel very optimistic for the negotiations and expressed his serious concerns that the Polish government would withdraw its support if an agreement would not be reached, and they would not be able to organise the event.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President, informed that there had been a meeting in the Italian Federation with the FIVB and a meeting with the Italian Sports Minister. He pointed out that the Sports Minister made it clear that the governmental support would only go to the federation. He also mentioned instances when events were organised by commercial entities and the federation had not received any compensation. The President of the Italian Federation, voicing the official decision taken by his federation, insisted that they only wished to conduct transactions with the FIVB and not with Volleyball World.

Mr BORIČIĆ supported that they needed to respect the new structure in the FIVB but he would also expect that the FIVB respect the general structure of the CEV as a sport organisation. He also noted that when dealing with governmental funding, all the transactions needed to be open and clear and that could not be guaranteed when private entities were involved. It was important to keep the structure with the federations being affiliated to the CEV. The CEV as a sports organisation would be responsible to negotiate contracts and agreements with commercial companies and ensure an open and clean investment.

He pointed out that it should be clear that the CVC Capital Partners and Volleyball World were commercial companies and they were rather interested in profit than in developing the sport.



## Exploring the benefits of long-term event planning

Mr Gernot LEITNER, CEV Board of Administration member, wished to add a comment on the issues raised. He started by describing that for 15 years he had been dealing with the IOC host city contracts. Those contracts were part of a bidding process and then they featured as the governing contract for organising the Olympic Games.

He voiced his concern about the risk that the CEV was running with its products, like the CEV EuroVolley. He opined that the time between the appointment of the hosting country and the event was very short and suggested that there would be a huge potential in starting a bidding process for further in the future, i.e. three years.

He then explained the benefits that such a move would bring to the CEV. He argued that a federation could approach its government having a bidding documentation, in order to bid for any premium product of the CEV, carrying a letter of guarantee of a certain amount of budget and services for the year 2025 or 2026. That way the federation could easily ensure government support. A preliminary organisers' contract outlining the general terms and conditions of organising the event would confer the necessary amount of time to know who would be the organiser for the future.

He stated that the IOC had mastered that process; in the host city contracts the stakeholders, the event organising parties etc. were clearly stated. He noted that, at least in the Western European countries, short term (for the following year or the year after) applications for budgets were not possible. He supported that if a federation negotiated with the Sports Ministry three years in advance, expressing its intention to organise an event and then signing a letter of guarantee, in combination with a set bidding process, it would ensure very safe circumstances to organise that event. Raising the price tag would also be possible, if the process was longer. Mr LEITNER informed that other sports organisations (ski, football, IOC) were following a similar process. He firmly believed that the CEV should also follow such a process and that it would be very helpful.

Mr Michel EVERAERT asserted his agreement with Mr LEITNER's proposed action from an international perspective and went further to suggest it would be beneficial on a national level. With the Dutch federation as an example, he described how they had started planning some major events they had hosted as early as 7 years before. In that period, they had all the time to collect large amounts of funding and to discuss with the various governments to see what was important also to them: in the case of the Netherlands, for example, integrating the food industry in the events was important and helped a lot with the development and promotion.

While also agreeing with the idea, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI wished to turn the focus on the current situation, where the FIVB and Volleyball World were changing the calendar events, describing how the Polish Federation would find itself with signed agreements but no events to organise. He expressed strong concerns about those circumstances, which did not allow good and in-advance event planning.

Mr Thorsten ENDRES, CEV Managing Director, added that the suggestion regarding early planning was linked to the proposal made by the CEV President during the XLII CEV General Assembly towards the federations and to what had been discussed with the Hungarian Volleyball Federation earlier that day: devising strategical plans. He illustrated that the early appointment of organisers depended very much on the strategical plans of each National Federation, in order to have a clear picture of when and how international events would fit into their development programme. Therefore, it was essential to convince the member federations to plan many years in advance and, thus, fit international events into their plans. Even though the CEV was ready for that, already setting up tenders for the big events years in advance, the federations were not ready to integrate international plans into their strategical plans, and that was something that needed to be improved.

Continuing the discussion, Mr EVERAERT wished to elaborate on how the federations would manage to develop such strategical plans. Extending Mr ENDRES's suggestion that they needed to be taught, Mr EVERAERT opined that what the federations needed more than teaching was concrete help, proposing that the CEV would provide such help with a strategic phase when planning for events.

After listening to the several proposals voiced by the various members, the CEV President suggested a combined solution: strategic planning from the federations side, as well as from the CEV Office side. On the latter, he suggested that the CEV Office could already start working ahead, on a period of two Olympic cycles. He mentioned for example the IOC, which was already planning for 2032. In terms of Volleyball, he suggested already starting to work on 2029, devising a strategic plan on the number of the teams, of the countries and then opening a bidding procedure and tenders and the cooperation with the organisers.

Concluding the argument, while affirming the significance of the strategic planning on all sides, the CEV President reiterated how important it was to safeguard the European calendar and establish a good communication with the FIVB. He also opined that a big European country, like Russia, should step up and organise European Championships. On the other hand, he was pleased that a country like Bulgaria, Italy and The Netherlands were stepping up every year with a major event.

Praising the fact that most of the new CEV Board members were people that were involved in Volleyball, Mr BORIČIĆ encouraged the CEV Board members that were also involved members of National Federations to continue working on results, encouraging people from the federations to take initiative. In addition, he explained that after many CEV Board members attended the CEV EuroVolley onsite, they had a first-hand experience of the event, learning valuable things that would help them cooperate better with the stakeholders and promote it. The CEV President highlighted how important and valuable it was when the people working for Volleyball were in direct contact with the reality of the sport and the events. He urged everyone to get more involved and have more contribution during the meetings.

### **Future Development project**

Moving on with the next point regarding the FIVB, the CEV President stated that they should find ways to help federations from category 1 to 3. With several CEV people in key positions regarding the Development, like the CEV Board member, Mr Zdeslav BARAČ, at the position of Secretary of the FIVB Commission, and Mr Özkan MUTLUGIL at the helm of the CEV Development Working Group, it would be a good opportunity to rectify the scarce communication patterns between the two institutions regarding Development projects.

Mr BORIČIĆ also pointed out that while the CEV was always willing to provide help and support to the federations, it would not approve the tactic of some federations applying for funding and support to both the CEV and the FIVB for the same project.

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President and Treasurer, wished to voice his concerns about what was mentioned earlier regarding the decisions taken during the FIVB Board meetings not appearing in the minutes of that meeting. He commented that it was an alarming practice and expressed his hope that the CEV Board members participating in the FIVB would make sure this would not happen.

Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON, CEV Board of Administration member, commented that the point raised regarding the good governance in the FIVB was very interesting and inquired whether it would be possible to have access to the minutes of those meetings.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked for the contribution and constructive discussion and highlighted the importance to have direct communication with the FIVB leadership and clearly describe our proposal so as to get them to accept parts of it. However, despite the intricate decision making, the problem of not implementing those decisions after they had been accepted remained.

## 6. The Future of European Volleyball

### Commercial Partnership

#### Centralisation of marketing rights

The CEV President informed that they were expected to have a decision on the matter of centralisation of the marketing rights. The CEV leadership had conducted several meetings on the matter, and the information received by the partners was that it was not a good moment for the market for such a move, since the value was decreasing. Mr BORIČIĆ added that they were willing to keep the same system for the time being. He reminded that with the initial proposal to centralise the marketing rights, they had also suggested that every organiser would have the right to choose to keep two companies that had invested a lot of money in many years.

#### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to remain with the existing system of marketing rights for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 events and postpone the centralisation, due to the overall market situation.**

#### Potential cooperation with the CVC Capital Partners

Mr BORIČIĆ then gave a short recount of the meeting with the CVC. The two main people from that organisation were the CVC Managing Partner, Mr Nick CLARRY and CVC Managing Director, Ms Gemma WRIGHT. The CEV President had repeated several times during the meeting that the CEV was a sports institution and from the CVC side they ensured him that they were only interested on the commercial side, the sports part was entirely on the competence of the CEV. The CEV President argued that while that concept seemed logical, they already had the experience of the FIVB and Volleyball World, and the CEV would not accept such an interference with the sportive part.

He clarified that he was not opposed to having discussions with commercial partners and he recognised that generating profit was also in the main goals of the institution, in order to be able to invest further in the sport. Mr BORIČIĆ also reported that the CVC wished to bring in their "know how" and focus exclusively on the commercial side. They expressed an interest in the media rights, but when informed that those were handled by Infront their interest shifted towards the markets, the data, etc.

After the meeting, the CVC approached the CEV President asking whether they could contact him directly about their plans, to which Mr BORIČIĆ replied that the CEV needed a concrete proposal so as to study it and submit it for discussion with the CEV Board. While the CVC appeared to wish to put some pressure in order to have a final decision, the CEV President stated that the CEV was not in a hurry. Its main purpose was to protect the sport and the relation with its member federations. He also pointed out that as a sport institution the CEV had a good clean image at the moment and it was important to safeguard that for the future. In order to be able to increase its value, he believed that it should retain the status of being open for discussions, exploring the various possibilities for partnerships, but keeping some principles it considered important and unnegotiable. Therefore, he proposed to continue the discussions and wait for the next steps to have some concrete proposals on the table. The CEV should have a clear understanding of all the conditions for the investment the CVC was willing to make.

#### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to continue the discussion with CVC and to obtain a written proposal on a potential partnership for further discussion in the Board of Administration..**

## **CEV Data strategy / business plan**

### **Presentation of Professor WESTERBEEK's report**

Before giving the floor to Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI to present the data strategy, Mr BORIČIĆ wished to take the opportunity to thank him and the whole CEV Marketing Working Group, as well as Professor Hans WESTERBEEK for all their hard work on that project.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI started by saying that he believed that the data project could have a positive impact on the revenue of the CEV. He referred to the report regarding the data development of the CEV prepared by Professor WESTERBEEK, saying that it was very insightful and helpful and went on to give a short summary of the key findings of the report.

The global sports industry, along with the world of business, was undergoing a digital transformation – slowly at first but catching up recently. The path to the future was through the digital revolution. Therefore, it was in the CEV's hands to put all of its efforts to examine ways to incorporate and handle that digital transformation.

Digital data could really help the CEV understand and engage Volleyball fans and attract even more. It provided opportunities for increasing revenues for European Volleyball but involved hard work in getting that data. In order to draft the report, Professor WESTERBEEK interviewed several people – Board members, National Federation members, CEV Office staff and Working Group specialists. From those interviews, some really interesting insights had come up. Some stakeholders were not aware of what kind of data was available and how it could be used.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI then argued that while there had been a lot of effort put by the CEV in order to improve the CEV Top Events and attract more fans, no collection of information on those fans was performed. Another key finding was that the CEV did possess the data, but it was spread out in several different places. Therefore, one of the major projects would be to identify where the data was and how to gather it in one centralised database.

### **Concrete steps of the data strategy**

The target of a centralised fan database would be to build the institution's data competencies, to create new revenue streams for European Volleyball, and support the CEV stakeholders in data literacy. Professor WESTERBEEK had identified six distinct steps in order to achieve that.

1. Data Inventory
2. Data Platform & Technical Architecture – with the help of external specialists through a tender
3. Testing & Processes
4. Staffing & working style
5. Implement monetisation strategy
6. Monitoring & Evaluation

### **Indicative budget**

There was also a preliminary indicative budget for those steps. The estimated total budget ranged between 260,000 and 410,000 €, based on the information from the report. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI advised not to postpone that project for a later period or take too long to implement it, due to the fast growing and evolving nature of the digital world. The CEV should seize the opportunity to get on that technological wave. The main revenue opportunities touched upon three different areas: digital monetisation, ticketing and marketing rights. He illustrated some applied monetisation examples from artificial intelligence to gaming and fan engagement activities to unleash the potential value from all the technology and data investments.

## Next steps

Concluding, he informed that the following steps would be to share the report with all the relevant CEV Stakeholders and partners and to compile an inventory of all existing data within the CEV by the end of February 2022. By the end of March 2022, they were planning to draft the tender documentation and the list of providers for the data platform and technical infrastructure. Later, they would present everything to the CEV Board and there would be an internal discussion on the appointment of the external support. Finally, they would present the data inventory list and tender documentation to the CEV Marketing Working Group for review. Finishing his presentation, he assured everyone that they were prepared to fully commit to that project and work hard.

## Open floor for comments and questions

Mr LEITNER shared that he had an eye-opening negotiation in the previous week with A1 Telekom Austria, as the representative of the Austrian Volleyball Federation. The first question that he was asked was what kind of e-sport activity they were involved in as a federation, what kind of data they were producing and sharing and what kind of digital platforms they were operating. He opined that if the CEV did not move in that direction as soon as possible, it would have a lot to lose and he was convinced that monetisation through digital data was the future.

Mr THORSTEINSSON stated that it was a very interesting discussion and presentation, and it surely represented the future. He noted that the CEV would have to inform its stakeholders and, most importantly, teach them. Then, he asked for some clarifications regarding the concept of the fan database. Mr ENDRES replied that the concept regarded the creation of a technical solution, a unified technical database, where the CEV would combine and collect data from the fans, the sport, from the federations and the clubs, which was a crucial point of that project, as he pointed out. Collecting data just from the CEV side would bring a very limited final result. The only way for the project to be successful was to collect and share data from as many stakeholders as possible.

Mr EVERAERT divulged that the Dutch Federation was already in that direction for several years. They were talking with two big companies in the Netherlands and other federations. Those companies had some requirements. While the Dutch Federation was able to meet those requirements because they committed to that project, some other federations were struggling and reluctant. He recognised that such a direction was a necessity and the governments would also be interested in such data.

Ms Emma LABRADOR, CEV Vice-President, also thought that such a project was very important and really interesting. She believed it was necessary that the CEV realise the importance of the data monetisation aspect and that it assign a dedicated person with that role in the CEV Office to work on that part, in order to give it proper attention.

Mr Eric ADLER was also positive on that project and he could also see the future of data. However, he was questioning the timeframe: given that the basis of the project was that the federations and the clubs would be part of it, if they did not open up for the data project, then the project would not be able to work. The data that the CEV possessed from the ticketing and the OTT platform would not be sufficient for such a venture. He highlighted how essential the participation of the clubs and the federations was. Therefore, he argued that expecting to have input from them within a few weeks at the beginning of the year was overly optimistic. He emphasised that the CEV needed to build trust among the stakeholders in order for them to accept to share that kind of data. In addition, past experience had shown that the clubs were not always very keen on giving out information to the CEV. For that reason, Mr ADLER felt that more time should be allocated for informing and building trust among the stakeholders for the project to start running.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI thanked Mr ADLER for his observation, recognising that it was one of the key issues. During the presentation of the data project in the CEV Congress in Katowice, he had emphasised the fact that the federations and the clubs needed to have a clear vision of the purpose of the data project, in order for them to accept to share all that data. The CEV could not just go asking for data, but present a concrete programme and transmit the hope of the project's potential benefit and additional profit for the stakeholders to participate.



Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, CEV Board of Administration member, said that looking around the table he could see a lot of data. National federations had many licensed players and in a lot of countries, for the federations to receive official recognition, they needed to handle the data of the clubs' members. Having said that, he believed the data project did not really have to start from scratch, since the 56 federations already had a lot of data. He added that by the beginning of January, they would have a new digital platform to be put on the markets only fan and data driven. He also wished to point out how necessary and valuable that project would be for both the CEV and the federations.

The CEV President was also convinced about the necessity of the project and stated that the CEV should start working in that direction. He was pleased with the optimistic attitude towards the project during the discussion, but he also wished to put forward a more pragmatic aspect. He was questioning whether all the clubs and the federations would accept cooperating with the CEV. He stated that in order for them to be active in that part and provide all that data, they needed to have a concrete benefit. He pointed out the fact that the people working in many federations were volunteers and they would not have any interest in that.

Another point he wished to make was that Volleyball and its players did not have a global appeal, mentioning the example of the football player Ronaldo, who had a global star status, even higher than the status of his team. In addition, regarding the budget, Mr BORIČIĆ noted that there was not enough money to invest in everything they wished.

After voicing his concerns, the CEV President wished to present his proposals. He suggested that the CEV should cooperate with the biggest federations, sharing the investment and the potential profit. It was important to point out that the project would not only benefit the CEV or European Volleyball, but Volleyball in general. Therefore, he proposed to start discussions with some big federations about investing in that project. He highlighted that the most important aspect in all that was the cooperation and understanding among the stakeholders. Solely investing the money would not be enough; cooperation was of primal significance.

He described how the FIVB leadership had regrets about how little investment was being done by federations in Volleyball. Mr BORIČIĆ did not agree with that view and wished to survey and estimate the total investment made in European Volleyball. They estimated a total investment of around 3 billion, but he was convinced that the real number would be much higher. After that experience, he had realised that a lot of federations were not in favour of sharing such information.

Therefore, if the stakeholders were not willing to cooperate, there could not be any partnership. It was important for the big stakeholders to realise the importance of such a cooperation. In the case of small countries, it could be easy to retrieve such data, but in the case of bigger federations, their budget was much higher and their structure much more complicated.

Having said that, the CEV President made three proposals: that the CEV Board members accept the project in principle, that they start looking for stakeholders to become investors and that they start building solid communication first with the institutional stakeholders, like the federations. He drew attention to the fact that some clubs within a country might be opponents, and they might not be willing to cooperate with each other. He also advised that there should be some understanding from the CEV side if some stakeholders were not ready to take part in that project.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI agreed with the CEV President's points but he was still willing to at least try to present the project to the stakeholders and explain the potential benefit they could get out of it. He also mentioned that such a project could also be submitted to the European Union for support.

In response, the CEV President suggested that the CEV first dedicate a small budget in order to have a starting point and then start discussions with some large federations and clubs. He admitted that it was not possible to engage all the clubs and the federations, but it was important to partner up with some basic major federations and clubs. Afterwards, new additional partners could join. He also suggested to have a dedicated group that would monitor the project for its progress and direction. He agreed that the CEV should keep up with the new technologies all the time.



Mr Margaret Ann FLEMING, CEV Vice-President, wished to congratulate Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI on his work and the presentation he had made. She believed strongly that the CEV should be moving forward and engage in the digital project. She agreed with the CEV President's view to start with a pilot project with the larger federations. She raised the question whether there was an understanding if the smaller federations had the capability to be engaged in such a project. Cyber security and data sharing were aspects that would hinder the participation of many federations.

In response, Mr BORIČIĆ wished to discard the notion of small and big federations, and argued that the difference was between the active and non-active ones. It was not a matter of size, but a matter of commitment and involvement in activities and reaching one's full potential.

Ms FLEMING wished to clarify that in her point she referred to several federations within the CEV that did not have the professional capacity to deal with such a platform and they would require support from the CEV. Mr BORIČIĆ added that when speaking about strategic planning of federations, part of that planning should include finding sources of support for the federation within their country (e.g. government, Olympic committee, local authorities, private companies, etc.) He argued that if a federation could not guarantee some kind of support within its own country, it would be difficult to manage to get it from outside.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI summarised that in that project for any federation, no matter how big or small it was, there were three elements that could generate marketable products: players, data and fans. If put together, those three elements would lead to a big stream of revenue.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided to accept the data project proposal in principle, following some concrete steps. More specifically:**

- **To discuss with the federations and clubs on the matter and establish a partnership model**
- **To have the CEV Office compile an internal inventory on existing available data and to launch a tender process for a data platform, with the CEV Marketing Work Group as advisory body**
- **Based on the result of the tender process, the CEV Board to take a final decision on the investment on the said platform**
- **The Marketing WG along with the CEV Office to develop monetisation opportunities.**

## CEV Beach Volleyball Think Tank

### **New Beach Volleyball products**

Mr LEITNER started by thanking everyone involved in the think tank and for being so active, especially in the second half of 2021. They had conducted discussions in smaller and bigger groups, with more than 20 experts, federations, promoters, etc. He gave a short summary of the outcome of those discussions, which was also presented during the XLII CEV General Assembly in Katowice (POL).

He started by commenting that Beach Volleyball was a "sleeping giant". While there were a lot of activities and many promises, he claimed that it was the CEV's responsibility to stimulate actions and to get things moving. Based on the survey they had conducted, 34 federations replied and according to feedback there was a substantial number of participants to start with new products. Even though at the moment it was not possible for the CEV to invest in all directions, Mr LEITNER demonstrated that it was important to start "bottom-up" and "top-down" activities. By the term "bottom-up" he meant products and projects for the National Federations and by "top-down" he meant products defined by the CEV.

The CEV products would be the Beach Volleyball European Championship and every four years the Continental Cup as an Olympic Qualification Competition. Mr LEITNER noted that it had become clear,

and supported by all the members of the think tank, that a club championship on European level, starting from National Federations, would be one of the future products that could be initiated, with no substantial investment needs for the moment. The first support should be given to the active National Federations and then to the rest that wished to be active, to start national competitions, to support their club scene, given that 34 federations had registered Beach Volleyball clubs.

A second product that could be developed would be a type of Beach Volleyball Nations Cup as a spin-off of the Continental Cup with the known format. They believed it had a good potential and there was even a letter of proposal to organise such an event from an organiser in Vienna. Taking as an example the Continental Cup Finals in The Hague the previous year, they were convinced that it would be a very attractive format and it should be implemented, giving the top players as well as the younger generation the chance to play.

The third product they wished to develop was something already established by an organiser in the Netherlands: the King of the Court. It had proved as a very attractive and trendy format for Beach Volleyball and a King of the Court European event was in the pipeline, which did not need a big investment either. In the long run, they aspired to convince the National Federations to organise national King of the Court Championships. For the moment, it could be a competition where players would qualify through the world ranking.

Therefore, there was a field of four European trophies: the traditional Beach Volleyball European Championship, a clubs champions competition, a Nations Cup Competition and a King of the Court competition. Mr LEITNER informed that there had been some preliminary budgeting on prize money, etc. but it would apply from 2023 onwards. He confirmed that they needed to create a self-sustaining format, which would bring money to the CEV within a two to three years prospect.

Ms LABRADOR affirmed the need to extend the Beach Volleyball calendar and indorse the proposed formats. She also believed in the immense potential of the discipline and after a lot of work in the think tank she felt that the proposals would be a good starting point to see if they could lead Beach Volleyball to the next level.

Mr EVERAERT explained that the thinking behind their proposals was that they needed more competitions for Beach Volleyball players, more marketing value for the CEV and they believed that they could achieve that by having more title competitions and adding more stakeholders that were not involved in Beach Volleyball until then, like clubs, federations and organisers. He considered that they had found a path to a sustainable model, with a lot more marketing value and a lot more possibilities for many players to play.

### **Discussion on the proposed Beach Volleyball products**

Mr Eric ADLER wished to also give his point of view as Treasurer. He confirmed that he was very positive towards that proposal. He acknowledged the good basic work that had been done before forming the proposals, which included talking to federations, making it not a "top-down" decision, but based on information from "bottom-up". That was the reason he was more convinced with those proposals than in the past and he endorsed them. Looking at the numbers for the prize money, however, he considered whether it would be possible to avoid starting everything at the same time. In principle, he stated that the proposal would be a good solid base for the future.

Mr EVERAERT added that when talking to the various federations, different countries expressed strong interest about different products, depending on their location. He felt that the differentiation was a very interesting feature. The CEV President highlighted that the diversity among the member federation was a privilege for Europe and suggested that even federations that had not expressed any interest in Beach Volleyball could potentially be inspired by the new different products to start thinking about joining.

In addition, Mr BORIČIĆ stated that he could understand Mr ADLER's concerns about the budget, since the CEV had made great investments by supporting federations and clubs. He was not in favour of

saving money in the bank but rather preferred investing it further in the sport. He proposed that the CEV should try to encourage the National Federations to start organising in the following two years National Clubs Championships, as officially recognised institutional bodies. Furthermore, the federations should inform the CEV on the official clubs participating in the competitions. After that two year period, they could explore the territory and proceed with the development of a championship with the participation of minimum 20 federations and thus moving also to European Cups.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to introduce a Beach Volleyball Club competition and to start by working with the National Federations on national championships.**

## Meeting with ACTS Group

The CEV President informed that they had had a successful meeting with the ACTS Group, who had been the organisers of the European Beach Volleyball Championship in Vienna 2021. Since the ACT Group had finished its association with the FIVB, the CEV could feel free to proceed to a cooperation with them. In the meeting held in Luxembourg, they discussed about starting a Nations Cup kick-off event in 2022.

In addition, the ACTS Group proposed to enter into a long-term partnership for organising a European Major Series. The CEV President proposed to the CEV Board that they accept in principle the cooperation with the ACTS Group and that they organise the Nations Cup event in 2022 in Vienna. While there is strong interest to join forces in the years to come, he explained that for the moment it was not possible for the CEV to proceed into a long term partnership with the company, if there was not a concrete proposal on the table.

He also noted that in order to move forward with the development of Beach Volleyball another important factor was the calendar. He stated that Beach Volleyball should not be constricted to the summer months, competitions should be played throughout the whole year. Therefore, he suggested that the European Beach Volleyball Commission along with the Beach Volleyball Department could work on establishing the technical conditions for the competitions.

Mr LEITNER shared the same frustration regarding the lack of terms and conditions for the competitions from the FIVB side and the fact that big Beach Volleyball tournaments on traditional Beach Volleyball locations would not happen, and they were all on European soil. He agreed with the CEV President's view that the CEV was not in a position to sign a long-term contract. He also endorsed the idea of the Nations Cup competition and suggested that the CEV could sign a letter of intent to work on a common future format, even if it would not be limited to a Nations Cup but a Nations Championship, so as to further solidify the cooperation with the company. He also saw a big advantage for the CEV to be able to negotiate directly with a big agency, since it would help build a stronger position for the institution in the world calendar.

The CEV President expressed his agreement and reiterated his conviction that the CEV could not establish a long term contract with the company with no information. He referred to a meeting with the CEO and Founder of ACTS Group, Mr Hannes JAGERHOFER, during which it was agreed to further discuss and negotiate the framework of such future partnership. Referring also to the discussions with the CVC, he highlighted that the CEV should protect its interests for the future and make its decisions accordingly.

## Proposals:

Apart from the plans with the ACTS Group for the development of Beach Volleyball at the top level, the CEV President wished to propose the increase of playing opportunities for the young and developing athletes, and suggested to increase the events between the European small countries to more than once a year.

Acknowledging the inability to invest in many projects at the moment, the CEV President suggested that the first two directions to invest, as soon as the finances would become better, should be the data project and the Beach Volleyball project.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to introduce a European National Team competition, starting with a kick-off event to be co-organised by the Austrian Federation and the ACTS Group in early August 2022 in Vienna (AUT).**

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to introduce a European King of the Court competition.**

## 7. Competition Matters

### CEV EuroVolley 2023

The CEV President informed that for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men's competition, the confirmed organisers were Italy, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Ukraine. For the Women's competition, the confirmed organisers were Belgium for the Finals and Estonia for one Pool.

Mr René HECHT, CEV Board of Administration member, informed that the German Federation had gotten the green light from the government of the North Rhine-Westphalia to organise one Preliminary Pool for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Women. Mr BORIČIĆ wished to express how satisfied he was with that information. While every country's participation was important, it was also important to have a strong involvement of the bigger countries.

Mr ARENA reported that the Italian Federation was open and willing to continue to cooperate with the CEV and potentially organise one more pool plus the matches up to the quarter-finals for Women's competition. The CEV President wished to take the opportunity to express his gratitude to Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI for the great cooperation. He appreciated that he was open for discussion and that he saw the Italian Federation and the CEV as sharing the same role. It was very fortunate that such a big and strong federation was very committed to work for Volleyball. Mr BORIČIĆ intended to send a letter to Mr MANFREDI to encourage the Italian Federation to be the organiser up to the quarter-finals phase.

He continued praising the achievement of having eight countries as organisers of the European Championship. He considered it a great merit for European Volleyball to have many countries involved. He repeated how important it was to also have Germany in the group of organisers. He congratulated Mr HECHT and his new team and wished them great success.

Mr BORIČIĆ mentioned that the Israeli Federation was also discussing about organising, but they were awaiting feedback from their government until the end of the year.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of Italy and Germany as co-organisers for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Women, to be announced at a later stage, once the official documentation is received by the respective federations.**

## **New organisational structure for the EuroVolley events**

Mr ARENA gave a short report on the future structure and the approach for CEV EuroVolley 2023. There had been discussions on handing over more responsibility to the people working onsite and on making a distinction among the professional and political responsibilities.

He then described the proposed new organisational structure in the EuroVolley events, so as to have a clear distinction of roles: Ms Maja POLJAK as the CEV Head of Events would refer directly to the CEV Managing Director, Mr Thorsten ENDRES. There would also be two project leaders: one for the Men's and one for the Women's competition, who would refer directly to the Head of Events. The cooperation with the other departments, e.g. Marketing, Digital, Sports Management, etc. would remain the same. Therefore, the most important thing was that they needed one person as a contact point from the CEV Office regarding the Events, and that would be Ms POLJAK referring to Mr ENDRES, who would refer to the CEV President. For the political side, Mr Arena would remain the Top Events Responsible who would supervise and communicate to the CEV Board. He further explained that the previous Jury Presidents would be replaced by a political representative to be appointed for each of the co-hosting countries. Mr ARENA argued that the described structure had a clear distinction of who would be responsible for what.

## **CEV European Cups 2022**

### **Running season**

The CEV President started by expressing his gratitude to the CEV Volleyball Department for the incredible work they had performed with numerous meetings and video conferences. He noted that they had done a great job. Thanks to them no big issues were encountered in the clubs competitions and hoped that it would continue like that. Even in comparison with the rest of the sports facing major problems due to many cancellations of matches, the CEV President stated that Volleyball was still alive. Mr BORIČIĆ wished to thank them for their hard work and for being available to resolve issues 24/7, especially the CEV Head of Volleyball, Mr Roko SIKIRIĆ. He also wished to thank the clubs and the federations for the very good cooperation and for their understanding.

## **CL Super Finals 2022**

The CEV President reported that for the organisation of that event there were discussions with Poland and Bulgaria.

Mr Lubomir GANEV, CEV Board of Administration member, informed that in 2022 they would celebrate the 100 years of the Volleyball movement in Bulgaria. For that reason, they were planning to organise something they had never done before, like hosting the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals for 2022. Mr GANEV stated that he would need a bit more time until he gave the final confirmation, since they had a very recent change in their government. He was planning to meet with the Bulgarian authorities in order to see if that would be possible. He was convinced that it would be a great event for Bulgaria and a very fitting celebration for their anniversary. Mr BORIČIĆ divulged that in his latest visit in Bulgaria they met with the state President, who was a fervent supporter of Volleyball. They had a very successful meeting regarding EuroVolley 2023. Mr BORIČIĆ agreed that the 100 years anniversary was a very good occasion to celebrate with the best Volleyball players.

## **CEV EuroSnowVolley 2022**

Mr BORIČIĆ started by saying that there were two European tour stops confirmed until the day of the meeting, in Turkey and in Italy. There were discussions for one more stop in Turkey and one in Austria,



but they were not confirmed yet. He commented that the discipline was still very fresh, the CEV had started promoting with a lot of energy but the pandemic had a great impact on it.

The CEV President did not want to elaborate further regarding that discipline, since there would be a meeting with the FIVB in February 2022. In the meantime, he had spoken with the FIVB President about Snow Volleyball and he had confirmed that they agreed to work together with the CEV for the future development of Snow Volleyball.

### **CEV European League 2022**

The CEV President informed that there would be 12 teams for the CEV Volleyball European Golden League 2022 for Men and the Final Four would take place in Croatia. There would be another 12 teams for Women and the Final Four would take place in Ukraine. For the Silver League, there would be seven teams for Men, with the Final Four taking place in Hungary and five teams for Women with one Final match.

### **CEV age-group Volleyball European Championships**

Mr BORIČIĆ went on to ask the approval of the Board for the appointment of age-group Volleyball European Championships organisers:

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Italian Federation as organiser of the CEV U21 Volleyball European Championship 2022 – Women.**

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Polish Federation as organiser of the CEV U22 Volleyball European Championship 2022 – Men.**

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Bulgarian Federation as organiser of the CEV U18 Volleyball European Championship 2024 – Men.**

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Icelandic and Faroese Federation as co-organisers of the CEV U16 Volleyball European Championship 2025 – Women.**

### **European Games 2023**

The CEV President started by expressing his dissatisfaction that the European Olympic Committee (EOC) did not give the due respect to the sport of Volleyball and went on to describe an incident of miscommunication between the two institutions. He added that despite the fact that Volleyball had been confirmed as one of the five basic sports in the European Games, in a EOC meeting he had attended himself, that term had not been respected after the change in the leadership of the EOC. In a meeting with the EOC Executive Committee, Mr Zlatko MATEŠA, member of the EOC ExCom, President of the Croatian Olympic Committee and CEV Volleyball Ambassador, was a strong advocate and provided a great deal of support in order to include Volleyball. For the 2023 European Games in Poland,



the CEV's proposal regarding Beach Volleyball was the European Championship 2023 and for Indoor Volleyball, the U23 Men and U22 Women European Championships. However, the proposal was rejected by the President of the Polish Olympic Committee, Mr Andrzej KRAŚNICKI.

The CEV President expressed the opinion that they should be discussing those topics at the level of the National Olympic Committee and not on a local level. He explained that when the decisions on the sports part were made at the level of organiser cities, the criteria were different and focused on the organisation budget, illustrating the point with the example of the Netherlands, which was a candidate organiser. While the Netherlands is a strong Volleyball country, no organiser city wished to include Volleyball in the sports programme of the European Games.

He also divulged that there had been an issue with the European Youth Olympic Festival (EYOF) in Slovakia, where they did not want to include Volleyball. He placed a lot of importance on that event, since it would be the first opportunity for young athletes to participate in an Olympic multi-sport event and wished to fight for that opportunity for the new generation.

Moving to the Games of the Small States of Europe, he informed that also in that event, all of the countries had excluded Beach Volleyball from their sports programme. He argued that there should be a cooperation within the EOC and not with the host cities. Since the European Olympic Committee had confirmed that Volleyball and Beach Volleyball were among the five basic sports, it should be respected by the rest of the institutional Olympic bodies.

Referring back to the 2023 European Games in Poland, despite the refusal expressed by the Krakow organiser, the Polish Volleyball Federation had sent a letter, confirming their full support together with the host region Małopolska, as well as the host city Kraków for the proposed Volleyball U23/U22 category. However, there had been no answer from the EOC side. The CEV President supported that the CEV could not continue the exchange with the EOC if they did not recognise Volleyball as one of the basic sports in the European Olympic Movement.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI informed that he had a talk with the Polish Olympic Committee President, Mr KRAŚNICKI, and reported that he seemed to be changing his mind regarding the inclusion of an age-group Indoor Volleyball competition in the European Games. Nevertheless, Mr BORIČIĆ stated that a mere acceptance from his side at that point would not suffice. The discussion and the recognition should be kept at the level of the EOC and not at the level of National Olympic Committees, arguing that if Volleyball encountered problems in a strong Volleyball country like Poland, it would be even more challenging to fight for its inclusion in the next country hosting the European Games. Therefore, he concluded that it was very important to receive the confirmation from the EOC that Volleyball would feature among the five basic sports.

Mr ARENA wished to add that the EOC should also clearly confirm their support of Volleyball for the Games of the Small States of Europe, because it was not constant. From a discussion he had with the Sports Manager of the Maltese Volleyball Federation, he realised that the decision not to include Volleyball had been taken by the local organiser.

In response to that, Mr BORIČIĆ reiterated that even though he understood that all of the small countries were not in a position to organise tournaments for Indoor Volleyball, they could commit to organising a Beach Volleyball event.

### **Collaboration European Championships 2026 & 2030**

Mr BORIČIĆ expressed how pleased he was that the CEV was participating for the first time in the multi-sport event of European Championships in Munich 2022, organising EuroBeachVolley 2022 under that framework. Even though at the beginning of the negotiations there was no income for the CEV, in the end the ECM organisation paid 1,2 million EUR in order to include Volleyball and expressed their interest for 2026 and 2030.

Mr ENDRES reported that in the first approach for the 2026 and 2030 events the ECM had proposed the same amount along with some changes of the organisational model, in collaboration with the other European confederations, in order to achieve a shared revenue model. However, during the negotiations it was argued that since the CEV, as well as the other confederations, had a very limited impact on the financial revenue, given that the host city agreement was made by the ECM organisation, it was preferable for the participating confederations to have a fixed amount for the media rights and the hosting fee. In addition, the CEV would protect the existing agreements with Infort and AMI for the betting rights and refused the 1.2 million with a counterproposal for a bigger and guaranteed amount. The ECM showed that they understood the model requested by the CEV and they were willing to negotiate a concrete proposal for 2026 and 2030. Lastly, he noted that as soon as the negotiation would be finalised, the concrete proposal would be presented to the CEV Board for a potential decision to include EuroBeachVolley 2026 and 2030.

Mr BORIČIĆ congratulated Mr ENDRES for his contribution to the negotiations and for the great result achieved, noting how the suggested income went from zero to 1.2 million.

## 8. Financial Matters

### **Investment of funds**

Mr ADLER referred to the proposal that had been sent to the CEV Board members before the meeting and wished to make some comments. The background had started a few months before, when the bank where the CEV funds were saved announced that they would start charging negative interests on all the CEV accounts. He added that he had asked the CEV Office to make a quick calculation and the cost in 2022 would amount to 80-85.000 EUR, an amount which had not been depicted in the Budget.

Then they started looking at the alternatives, searching possibilities of investing some of the CEV savings to mitigate some of the cost. The CEV President had asked them to research further and hold talks with various experts, the CEV Finance Commission, various banks, etc. They gathered several different opinions, ranging from the totally conservative to more adventurous solutions, like investing with a relatively high risk to be able to mitigate big amounts.

In the past, the CEV had never used the option of investing its funds, other than the CEV Office building. Mr ADLER commented that the approach in the CEV regarding the finances had always been very conservative, avoiding any risk. In his proposal Mr ADLER wished to respect the limited risk approach of the CEV, even though there was always some degree of risk. He believed that the best option at the moment was to invest in equities, in stocks, about 30% and 70% in bonds. He explained the differences between bonds and equities: bonds would not bring so much money, but when equities would go down, that was when bonds would come in. The profit would not be a big amount, about 1.5% but it would at least mitigate some of the losses. He also mentioned that the FIVB was very active in investing their savings through the years. The CEV had not chosen that approach, as the focus had always been on the identity of the CEV as a sports organisation. Nevertheless, the proposal was to take half of the CEV savings, 6 million EUR and use it to invest in the manner described. He admitted it was a quite new concept for the CEV.

The CEV President thanked Mr ADLER and commented that for many years the CEV Leadership was just keeping its savings in the bank, but the current situation would direct them to choose such a path, without taking a very high risk, just in order to compensate for the loss through the negative interests.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to invest part of the CEV savings into a funds in the form of equities and bonds.**

## 9. Proposals from Board members

No points discussed.

## 10. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

### Commission and Working Groups Presidents meeting

The CEV President referred to the Commission and Working Groups Presidents meeting that took place in Luxembourg on 07 December 2021. He stated that he had not been satisfied with the work performed by some of the Commissions, and more specifically the European Cups Commission (ECC) and the European Sports Organisation Commission (ESOC). He also proposed to unify those two Commissions in one, given that they were not very active.

In the discussions he held with Mr Roman STANISLAVOV and Mr Wojciech CZAYKA, he noted that, despite the big investment in the CEV EuroVolley, European League and in the CEV Champions League Volley and the efforts to achieve gender equality (increasing the prize money and setting the same amount for both men's and women's competitions), the technical conditions to organise a competition, especially in the qualification phase, were not the same for the two genders. Taking into consideration that there were so many strong Women's clubs, he argued that the required number of spectators should be unified for both genders. After that discussion, Mr BORIČIĆ confirmed that they had started being more active and that both Commission Presidents agreed that it would be good to unify those two Commissions.

Another point Mr BORIČIĆ wished to raise was that during EuroVolley 2021 they had discovered that some CEV Officials were commenting negatively about the CEV and he stated that such behaviour would not be accepted. He noted those persons had been given a last warning and added that it was not acceptable for them to use their position in a National Federation in order to express negative opinions for the CEV. The point was to discuss any issues and problems directly with the CEV. He also commented that the common goal for everyone was Volleyball, no matter anyone's position.

### **Board members in charge of the EMC and ESOC**

Mr BORIČIĆ also expressed his concerns about the work of the European Medical Commission (EMC). He opined that the Commission needed more young Medical Doctors to be involved the competitions. The EMC President, Mr Manfred HOLZGRAEFE, had proposed to also have a CEV Board member in charge of the EMC. Therefore, Mr BORIČIĆ wished to propose Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING as the CEV Board member in charge for the EMC.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING as the CEV Board member in charge of the European Medical Commission.**

In addition, Mr BORIČIĆ suggested Mr Metod ROPRET as the CEV Board member in charge of the European Sports Organising Commission.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint Mr Metod ROPRET as the CEV Board member in charge of the European Sports Organising Commission.**

Mr BORIČIĆ added that the reason behind those appointments was that the Commissions had expressed the concern that while they were making efforts to be active, at times they felt they were far from the decision making and the exchange of information within the CEV Board. The CEV Board members in charge would serve as a communication channel between the CEV Board and the CEV Commissions.

### **Changes in the CEV Beach and Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations**

The CEV President informed that there had been some proposal made in the CEV Beach and Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations, which had been checked by the CEV European Legal Commission (ELC).

#### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the amendments in the CEV Beach and Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations.**

## **11. Any other business**

### **MEVZA situation**

The CEV President expressed his concern regarding the direction the Zonal Associations seemed to have taken, stating that it appeared that they had missed the main line of their mission. He explained that the Zonal Associations had been created in order to bring closer together some National Federations in their efforts to organise age-group activities. He did not approve of the micro political conflicts that had developed among them. All the Zonal Associations were receiving an annual support by the CEV, and if they were not active, Mr BORIČIĆ felt that the CEV should stop providing that support.

He mentioned the Western European Volleyball Zonal Association (WEVZA), saying that they did not seem to hold any internal collaboration regarding their competitions. He then referred to the incident of the interruption of the General Assembly of the Middle European Volleyball Zonal Association (MEVZA) due to conflicts that had arisen.

The CEV President wished to highlight the need for cooperation within the Zonal Associations, so that they organise the competitions for the young athletes, for Beach and Snow Volleyball and potentially for any clubs they had. He expressed his disappointment because he had observed that this crucial role of the Zonal Associations had been minimised in the recent years and that an old mentality prevailed. In that context, the CEV President initiated the checking of the Zonal Associations' activities and future plans and proposed changes. He wished to bring back the feeling of solidarity among the Zonal Association members. He emphasised how important it was for the stronger federations within a Zonal Association to provide support to the smaller ones.

The President of the Development and Cooperation of Zonal Associations Working Group, Mr Özkan MUTLUGIL, would start a new project to renovate the status and the activities of the Zonal Associations. The President of ELC, Mr Alain FISCHBACHER would supervise all the necessary documentation and lead the MEVZA Electoral General Assembly, which would be organised by the CEV in close cooperation with MEVZA. Lastly, Mr BORIČIĆ put forward the view that the President of a Zonal Association should have a one year mandate.

### **Request from POL NF: replacement ERC member**

The Polish Federation did not wish to continue their cooperation with the European Refereeing Commission (ERC) member, Mr Grzegorz JACYNA, and wished to replace him with Mr Piotr DUDEK. The



CEV President proposed to the CEV Board to accept the replacement. The proposed candidate had been checked and approved by the ELC.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the replacement of the ERC member, Mr Grzegorz JACYNA, with Mr Piotr DUDEK.**

## 12. Next meeting

The CEV President expressed how pleased he was that the Royal Belgian Volleyball Federation wished to invite the CEV Board of Administration to hold its meeting in Antwerp, on 26-27 February 2022, on the occasion of the official announcement of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 and their National Cup Final.

After that, the CEV President proposed to hold the following CEV Board meeting in the frame of the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals on 20-21 May 2022.

### Webinar on applying for EU funding

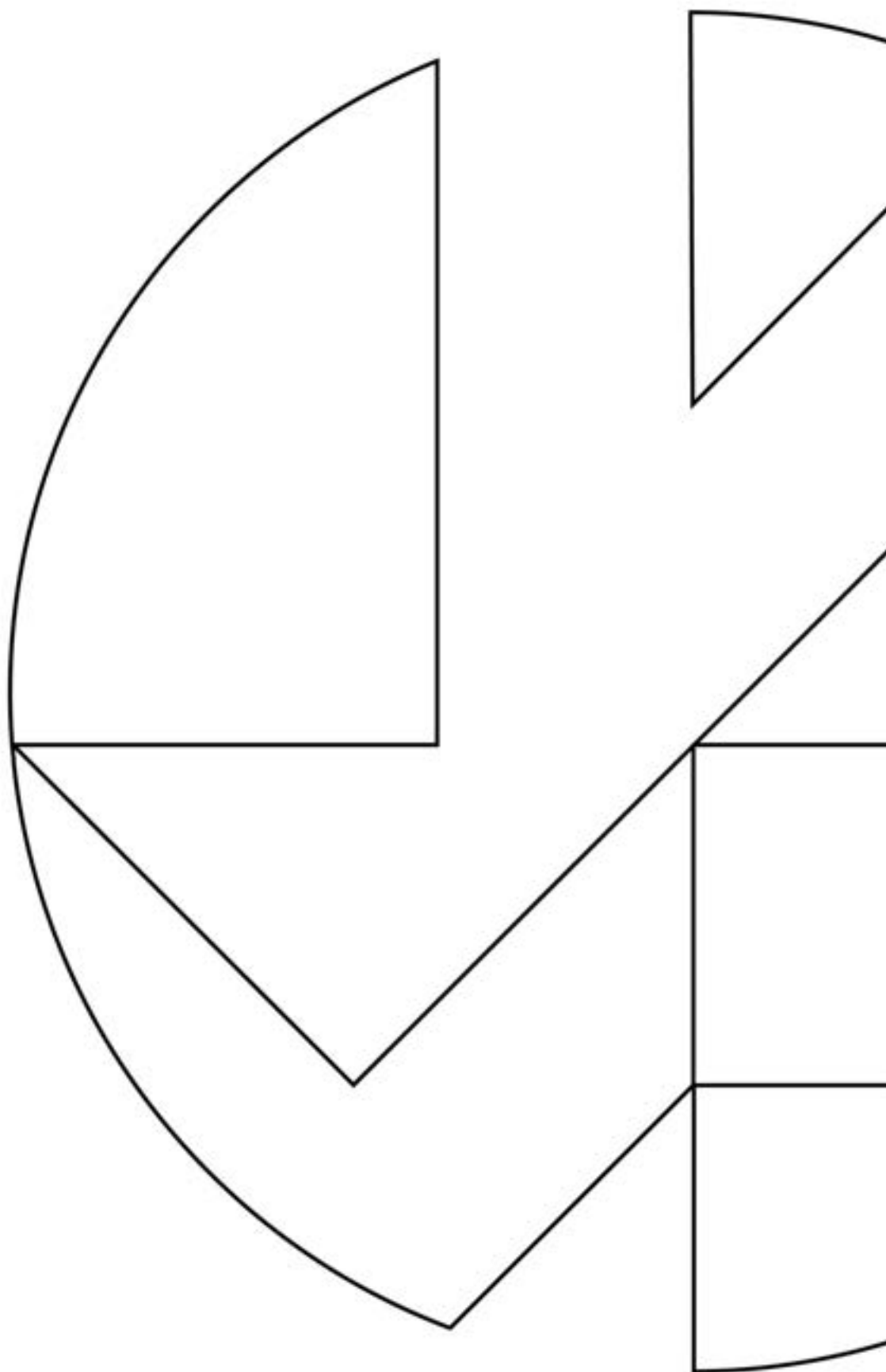
Before closing the meeting, Mr DE DOBBELEER wished to add that in close cooperation with Mr ENDRES and the CEV Development Department they were planning to make an official communication towards all the National Federations in order to share relevant information and documents of a webinar regarding the funding provided by the European Union in the frame of the Erasmus+ programme. He was convinced that such a programme could really contribute to the development of Volleyball. Mr BORIČIĆ praised the initiative and added that Mr DE DOBBELEER should also encourage the National Federations to be more proactive towards those opportunities.

## 13. Closing of the Meeting

Closing the meeting, the CEV President wished to thank all the members of the CEV Board of Administration for their work throughout the year and congratulate them on their active contribution to the sport, despite the challenges of the pandemic. He extended his gratitude to all the National Federations, the clubs and all the stakeholders. He sent his best wishes to everyone for a healthy and happy New Year.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the Kempinski Hotel in Budapest (HUN)  
18 December 2021

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting  
held at the Marriott  
Hotel in Vienna (AUT)

14 August 2021



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball



Place: Marriott Hotel, Vienna (AUT)

Date: Saturday, 14 August 2021

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, officially opened the meeting, welcomed everyone in Vienna and expressed his satisfaction that after a long time, all the members of the CEV Board of Administration were present in a physical meeting. He thanked the Austrian Federation, and especially Mr Gernot LEITNER, for hosting the meeting.

He then mentioned the Tokyo Olympic Games and thanked the CEV Board members that were able to attend, acknowledging the challenges they had to face, due to the strict sanitary restrictions. He was very pleased about the major success of the European National Teams, since 50% of all the Volleyball Olympic medals went to European teams (50% in Beach Volleyball and 50% in Indoor Volleyball). Another important fact was that two European teams, Russia and France, reached the Finals of Men's Volleyball. Similarly for Beach Volleyball, two European teams, Russia and Norway, reached the Finals.

He praised the French team for its Olympic success, noting that the next Olympic Games would take place in Paris, and expressed the hope that the gold medal would make Volleyball stronger and more popular in France and in Europe in general. Finally, he wished to thank the FIVB for the cooperation and for the recognition of CEV's important role in Volleyball. He then left the floor to Mr LEITNER, to say a few words as the host of that meeting.

Mr LEITNER, CEV Board of Administration member and President of the Austrian Volleyball Federation, greeted everyone expressing how happy he was to welcome everyone in Vienna for another unique event with the Covid-proof concept of the CEV EuroBeachVolley, as well as for another important CEV meeting. He believed it was an excellent opportunity to showcase the magic of Beach Volleyball even to people that had never experienced Beach Volleyball live in that intensity. He was convinced that it would help their ultimate goal, which was to invest more in Beach Volleyball. He personally thanked the CEV President as well as everyone for coming to Vienna.

# 2. Approval of Agenda

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

# 3. Approval of Minutes

## Minutes of the CEV-FIPAV Executive Committee Meeting held on 30 April 2021 in Verona, Italy

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration acknowledged the Minutes of the CEV-FIPAV Executive Committee Meeting held on 30 April 2021 in Verona, Italy.**

## Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 30 April 2021 in Verona, Italy

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 30 April 2021 in Verona, Italy.**

## **Minutes of the CEV European Financial Commission Meeting held on 09 June 2021 in Luxembourg**

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration acknowledged the Minutes of the CEV European Financial Commission Meeting held on 09 June 2021 in Luxembourg.**

## **4. FIVB**

The CEV President started by saying that in the framework of the Tokyo Olympic Games, the members of the CEV Board that attended had the opportunity to conduct meetings with the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup> and the FIVB General Director, Mr Fabio AZEVEDO, and other officials of the FIVB. They concluded that while in theory the relations between the two institutions were good, in practice they were still facing some issues.

To illustrate the situation, Mr BORIČIĆ recounted a past attempt by the CEV to organise the FIVB Volleyball Club World Championship in London. He had proposed a budget of 5 million to be shared by 50-50. A meeting was held in Belgrade, with Mr ARENA and Mr ENDRES from the CEV side, and Mr AZEVEDO leading from the FIVB side. The proposal had been enthusiastically accepted at the beginning by the FIVB Board and they proceeded trying to book a big sport hall. However, after several postponements they were unable to secure a venue. Later, another proposal came from the FIVB side to organise a Championship in India.

The CEV President also informed everyone that a new intention to organise the FIVB Volleyball Club World Championship in London in December 2021 had been communicated to the CEV in mid-August. Mr BORIČIĆ explained that, while he was very satisfied about the proposal to organise the event in Europe, given the short notice, the CEV could not be involved at that stage. He believed that in order to bring big sponsors for such an event, preparation and promotion actions should have started a few years before.

Mr BORIČIĆ also briefly mentioned a meeting about Volleyball Nations League (VNL) in which the CEV had not been involved. He commented that the aim was to always focus in solving problems and not on creating them. He said he was very happy for the meeting with the strongest federations held in Verona, Italy, in the framework of the CEV Champions League Volley 2021 Super Finals and that he intended to continue the fruitful interaction with the National Federations in Katowice, in Poland, in the framework of the XLII CEV General Assembly.

Referring to the emerging issues with the calendar, he was convinced that the FIVB had recognised that Europe was their equal partner. While respecting all other continents, he noted that Europe was the continent demonstrating the largest amount of Volleyball activities, a fact which should also be taken into consideration when devising the calendar.

There were discussions on the attempts to clarify the official qualification for the VNL. The CEV President pointed out that a lot of money had been invested in the CEV Volleyball European Golden and Silver League competitions. According to the previous FIVB statements and the subsequent provision in the Regulatory Framework, the winner of the European League competitions would qualify to the FIVB Challenger Cup competition. However, due to the pandemic, the FIVB decided, without consulting the CEV, to keep the same participants in the VNL for two years. Mr BORIČIĆ described how this was posing a problem for the European teams. He commented that decisions from the side of the FIVB were announced last minute and were disrupting the balance in the European teams.

He then put forward the view that, even though Volleyball was not as big as Basketball and Football, in the last five years it had gotten stronger and closer to the rest of the big sports. Having said that, he

wished to turn the attention to the Transfer Regulations that needed clarifications. He stated that it was important to protect the clubs and the players.

He described an issue that arose when players and player agents, after having signed with one club and concluded all the procedures, they negotiated new better contracts with other clubs without the initial club's approval. He explained that such actions were not tolerated in other sports, by giving an example of a similar case in Football. He analysed how disruptive this procedure was by demonstrating the importance of the player composition in teams. The club would invest on one strong player and then the rest of the team would be formed accordingly.

He then informed that he had raised this issue with the FIVB Legal team and he advised that the rules should be clear in order to protect the legal procedure conducted when a player/player agent sign a contract with a club. He also suggested to introduce the rule of suspending the player agents that initiate such non-approved contacts with different clubs. He declared that such moves were not beneficial for the sport or the players themselves but served solely the agents' financial interests.

Continuing with the legal issues, Mr BORIČIĆ went on to report that they were planning to prepare a document with the support of the European Legal Commission President, Mr Alain FISCHBACHER, regarding the introduction of the possibility for the FIVB or any Confederation to act as a Trustee in the frame of the Financial Dispute procedure, in case a continental decision was appealed at the FIVB level, until a final decision would be taken.

Moving on, given the fact that several CEV Board members were present during the discussions about the VNL competition, the CEV President wished to open the floor for them to share their thoughts.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President, claimed that there was a lot to discuss prior to the the FIVB meeting among European federations about that topic but they needed first to analyse the views presented during the meeting. However, during the meeting no objections had been raised and discussions were only conducted outside of the meeting. He was also not in favour of the fact that additional costs were put on the National Federations, while the prize money was not increased accordingly.

In response, the CEV President, recounted how he had faced similar difficulties with the FIVB in the past, when he was the President of the Serbian Federation. He strongly believed that everyone should state their opinion freely. He also shared that he had informed the FIVB President that in Europe the strongest Federations expressed concerns regarding the VNL competition. He proposed to invite the leading federations to speak openly about that issue. He then went on to highlight how important it was that the FIVB communicate the big achievements of Volleyball from all over the world. The FIVB being the umbrella institution for the whole world, their website should feature success stories from all the confederations.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Vice President, agreed with the view expressed by the CEV President regarding the relations between the FIVB and the Confederations. He cautioned about not letting the issues grow bigger. He analysed that since the creation of Volleyball World, the experience until then was that they were not interested in the Confederations, they were even not recognising their existence. He expressed his concerns regarding imminent problems for the Federations and stated that the CEV could not just stand on the side-lines. He agreed with the view that the federations should speak up. However, when facing decisions that were so important and with such a big impact on Volleyball worldwide but also on the federations, he believed that the CEV should take a position – even if not officially involved, a fact that he described as strange. In his opinion, the confederations should be involved when presenting plans regarding the sport.

Mr BORIČIĆ wished to inform everyone that he had an unofficial meeting with the CEO of Volleyball World, Mr Finn TAYLOR. He divulged that from their side they were insisting several times to conduct that



meeting but the CEV President believed it was too early. They discussed about the entities that wished to invest money in the CEV. Mr BORIČIĆ wished to highlight that, above all, the CEV is a sport organisation and, as such, its prime concern was to safeguard the competitions, the clubs, the national federations, the development of Volleyball, Beach Volleyball, Snow Volleyball, helping smaller federations, organising tournaments, activities, Coaches Conventions, etc. That is main goal of the institution. The second goal was to create business relations but with the aim of bringing more money to the sport and organising more activities, not engaging in business and neglecting the rest.

The CEV President strongly opposed the notion of a business entity taking over control and interfering with matters that should rightfully and exclusively belong to the sport institutions. For example, he explained that it was unacceptable that the commercial entity of the FIVB, Volleyball World, was the one issuing the official letters for the Olympic Games. While acknowledging and respecting the role and the importance of the commercial entities in the sports world, he insisted on the institutional role of the Confederations towards the National Federations.

He added that he was not in favour of making fast movements and decisions, cautioning that fast solutions could prove risky for the smaller stakeholders. He believed that faced with a multi-billion partner, a smaller stakeholder could easily be manipulated and argued that the CEV should protect what belonged to its territory. He wished for a clear proposal from a party that would have clear intentions for investing in Volleyball. While examining the options for investors, he was highlighting how crucial it was that the CEV and the National Federations maintain their right to make decisions about the sport, the competitions, the clubs, the federations, the compositions of the pools.

Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, CEV Board of Administration member, addressed the meeting and voiced his concerns about the lack of good governance in the FIVB. He drew attention to the VNL situation as an example, where neither the Confederations nor the National Federations were involved. Another indication of the situation was how they had approached the stakeholders meeting. He believed that a proper meeting for such an issue should have an agenda communicated in advance, so that the participants could analyse it and prepare to discuss it. In his opinion, the way the meeting was conducted was lacking the due respect to the Confederations and the Federations.

On that note, the CEV President wished to underline that the CEV should continue in a spirit of positive approach, focusing on solutions and avoiding conflict. In order to achieve that, the CEV should proceed slowly and in caution, after careful consideration of the situation. He was not in favour of aggressive moves, especially in a context where for a long time no one would express any opposition to the decisions made by the FIVB. He advocated the direction of protecting the interests of the CEV without hampering the interests of the FIVB.

Mr Gernot LEITNER, CEV Board of Administration member, wished to express his agreement with the CEV President's approach to protect the territory on a small national scale. Mentioning the example of his country, Austria, he divulged that they had already experienced instances where big promoters would negotiate directly with Volleyball World. He explained that Volleyball World would approach the big countries in Europe, i.e. Italy, Russia, Germany, France, and even Vienna in Austria, since it was considered by most as the Beach Volleyball capital. He also shared that he had stated to the chief of the Austrian National Television for Sports, that in case anyone approached the ORF (the Austrian national public service broadcaster) on a Volleyball product without informing the National Federation of Volleyball, they would not grant approval. Given that the promoters would ask a lot of money from the government and the government subsidies had to be channelled through the federations, he argued that he was not willing to sign papers that were not within the interests of the National Federation and the CEV and allow the channelling of millions of Euros through the Federation, through the promoter to the product of a commercial entity.

He also noted that the CEV, as the representative of 56 nations, should have a very strong understanding of how they could protect their territory. It was common knowledge that Volleyball World was going to different countries, sometimes through the National Federations and sometimes directly

through the promoters. The moment he would be approached by that entity, he planned to consult with the CEV Board, inform the CEV and ask for the strategy to be followed. He admitted that they should not be aggressive against what was not even known officially, but they should be very well prepared to protect the European and national territory, i.e. the countries and the national broadcasters.

The CEV President continued his rationale by pointing out that the CEV must respect the National Federations, which were responsible for their territory. He debated on why he found it unacceptable to organise in Italy a big competition like the VNL without formerly informing or involving the Italian Federation. He stated that the CEV was always willing to cooperate and was always involving the National Federations in the organisation of events. By respecting and protecting the National Federations, they would also protect the clubs.

Continuing on the CEV President's suggestion to protect the clubs, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI was wondering how it would be possible to achieve that, when Volleyball World was directly approaching the Leagues. Mr BORIČIĆ clarified that while in most countries the National Federation was the key player, in certain countries the National Federation and the National League had an equally strong role and the CEV did not wish to intervene in their national structure.

Concluding the discussion for the cooperation with the FIVB, Mr BORIČIĆ wished to state once more time that the intention of the CEV was to support the FIVB, to be members of the same team, work together and create common projects. He reiterated the request that the CEV be informed about the important issues on international level.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### **Commercial Partnership**

The CEV President wished to inform everyone on some meetings conducted in Verona with the potential commercial partner, FSI, along with some high rank CEV Officials. He determined that before proceeding with any partnership the CEV needed to know the clear intentions of the commercial partner, why they wished to invest their money in Volleyball and what would their requests be. He informed that the CEV had still not received any concrete written proposal. He briefly explained the background of the FSI and its relation to the CVC that had partnered with the FIVB. The FSI wished to quickly proceed to an agreement, but the CEV President was not interested in making hasty decisions. He argued that first they needed to receive written documents in order to carefully evaluate the proposals and how that agreement would benefit the CEV.

Mr BORIČIĆ stated that in the next EuroVolley Organiser Agreement, the CEV Leadership was planning to insert a condition that the CEV is 100% owner of the marketing rights. He explained that the reason for that was the intention to have a centralised system for the rights. In many European countries the National Federations were facing grave financial problems and were selling marketing rights for very low prices, something which damaged the negotiating power of the CEV in its attempt to achieve higher value for the sport.

Exploring any potential interest, the CEV Leadership was aiming to find a solution by the end of 2021, in order to find a commercial agency/partner or consortium to market all centralised CEV sponsorship rights for the upcoming years. Therefore, the goal was to unify the rights so as to be stronger and be able to give more money to the federations. A first meeting was planned with the President and CEO of Infront, Mr Philippe BLATTER, in Katowice, Poland, in the framework of the CEV XLII General Assembly.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President, expressed his agreement for the future to centralise the marketing rights, but he cautioned on an important issue, on which they needed to inform all National Federations: the rights for the events. He mentioned that several times, when the National Federations were selling the rights to the sponsors, they were selling the international rights and not only the national

ones. That was an issue that had to be clarified with the National Federations that they could not sell the international rights, since they did not belong to them. Everybody should have a clear picture of what they could sell and what belonged to whom.

Mr BORIČIĆ said that he partly agreed with Mr ARENA, since all the conditions were stipulated in the Organiser Agreement. However, he drew attention to another problem, since many federations failed to read carefully and grasp what they had paid and which were their rights. He commented that some federations had the impression that by paying the organiser fee they also paid for the rights, which was not the case. It should be clear that with the fee they only bought the possibility to organise the tournament under the conditions stipulated in the Organiser Agreement. He added that he was very glad that they were working 99% with state institutions and the money was coming from the states and not from the federations. However, he emphasised that it was important that the federations signing the agreements understand the content and all the conditions of the agreement.

### **Update on CEV Data strategy / business plan**

The CEV President gave the floor to Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI to present the updates regarding the project of the Data strategy.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI argued that the CEV needed some additional tools in order to be able to achieve its goals. The tools the CEV was already using, e.g. event, TV and betting rights had improved in the recent years, but they were still only a part of the possibilities within the sport, which were not yet utilised enough. He believed that the CEV could create an attractive marketable product using what already belonged to the Institution, which could benefit the sport itself and create additional income for the Institution.

He explained that there were three important elements in the sport: players, fans and data, and a business product could be created from those. Elaborating further on that idea, he illustrated that the biggest Volleyball players had a very small presence in social media in comparison to the equivalent Basketball stars. The gap between the two sports grew even wider when comparing the available information on Volleyball clubs. He believed that there should be an attempt to help the Volleyball players become more popular and engage better with the fans. The more these three elements would be improved the better the product that would emerge from them.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI referred everyone to his presentation and wished to present some examples of the concept, since it did not really exist in team sports, an especially not in Europe. By using the available data, the CEV could provide additional information to fans through OTT platforms, which could build a new place for a potential sponsor and for the fans.

He continued by analysing that through sports spectators and fans could have a powerful emotional experience. During the games, the music and deejays interacting with the public were already examples of the effort to evoke some emotions. However, with the young generations being fully dependent on their smartphones, through the data project the CEV could transform Volleyball data into a marketable product and try to emotionally engage the fans through their smartphones. They could run projects similar to the betting campaigns, having the fans vote for e.g. their favourite player, etc. The fans could get a feeling of being more involved in the game and in Volleyball universe and potentially win some prizes through that experience. He then illustrated some examples of engaging fans by using data. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI stated that he saw a lot of potential in that area. In his presentation, he showed a comparison of the screen of a betting programme and the example of a screen of the potential data project. The betting screen was dark, only featuring data, whereas the other screen was utilising the data in a way that could stir up the users' emotions.

Furthermore, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI presented how the data project could be utilised for TV, explaining that the broadcasters could benefit from a wide range of well presented data that could be ready to be uploaded and presented on the TV screen at any time, integrating them with the game.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI divulged that he was in contact with Professor Hans WESTERBEEK, from the Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia, the independent expert working on a strategy plan together with the CEV Marketing Working Group, a very well-known person in the sport business industry globally. The Marketing WG believed that the plan had more chances to succeed if each of the parties would have some kind of benefit, including the players, the clubs, the National Federations, the operator (CEV, etc.), the betting companies, the sponsor, etc. They were aiming to create a system in order to make that possible. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI added that it was very important to involve the players in that effort by providing them with incentives in order to engage more with the fans and thus helping them become more popular.

For the moment, they were waiting for the strategy plan prepared by Professor WESTERBEEK, and estimated that it would be finalised by October/November 2021. Professor WESTERBEEK was conducting interviews with some people involved in the project, in order to discuss the project further. After that, by November 2021, they would devise a detailed business plan on how they would proceed further. The aim was to implement the data concept in the CEV Champions League Volley Season 2022-2023. Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI also explained that the inspiration for the project came by observing other sports and divulged that many companies were working on developing something similar.

Mr BORIČIĆ was very pleased about having such a high authority person in the sports industry, like Professor WESTERBEEK, involved in that project. He was convinced that he could provide a great deal of help. He thanked Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI and all of the Marketing WG members for all their work in that project. He then posed some questions regarding the connection of the players with the betting. In addition, he mentioned that the CEV was the owner of the three CEV Cups, which meant that those activities could not include National teams, which belonged to the National Federations. There could certainly be some kind of agreement with the National Federations, but they would surely need to have some benefit out of the project.

The data project included the possibility of providing data to be utilised by sponsors. However, the CEV President wished to touch upon the fact that Volleyball, unlike Basketball, was lacking the big sponsors. Then, referring to Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI's presentation and the comparison of the players of the two sports, he put forward the view that things were different in Volleyball. In the previous years, there was hardly any discussion about money for the sport and Mr BORIČIĆ admitted that things could not change so quickly. He also recognised the tremendous increase in the value of Volleyball. In the past there was no fee for organising competitions and nowadays federations were paying millions in order to become organisers.

He believed that since it was a new project for the Institution, they should proceed slowly so as to take into consideration all the important points. He thanked everyone in the Marketing WG for their work and added that he was looking forward to Professor WESTERBEEK's insights. He suggested that there should be presentation of the project in the XLII CEV General Assembly in Katowice, in order to inform the National Federations, so that they could also potentially offer some more new ideas.

Mr LEITNER also agreed that the data project was an important topic and wished to inform everyone that the ACTS Group, which was the company organising the EuroBeachVolley, was one of the top companies in Europe in developing event related and data related apps and it had been recently hired by the European Handball Federation to manage all their social media and applications, etc. A really good example of their work was the app they had created for a Handball event, which was linked to a lot of data. He also opined that in terms of commercial development, Handball would be considered as several years ahead of Volleyball, despite it being a much smaller sport. Mr LEITNER believed it was a good sign that Handball had hired a Volleyball promoter to handle their social media, data, applications, etc. since he considered that key for the future.

Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON, CEV Board of Administration Member, also found the presentation interesting. He said that for the future the digital strategy was what the federations should



be looking at and endorsed the project. He suggested that the CEV should assist the small and medium sized federations at the beginning of that project. He elaborated that the industry of electronic sports was growing fast and became an essential part of the federations' development. As soon as the final product would be ready, he suggested to organise some sort of seminar for the federations on how to implement that project in their work in the best possible way. He was very pleased that such a project formed part of the agenda, since he believed that it would be the key element for the future.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI wished to add that while he focused his presentation on monetising the data and creating a product, another important aspect of the project was the collection of that data. Fast growing technology could provide a lot of data. However, adopting this data to the fans' needs was the main aim. Therefore, gathering data and knowing how to use them was essential for that project.

The CEV President suggested that the Marketing WG could finalise the proposal of the project by November, so that it could be confirmed in the following CEV Board of Administration meeting taking place in December. Subsequently, he added that there could potentially be a newly assigned person at the CEV Office coordinating that project, adding to the value of the CEV team.

At that point the CEV President wished to take the opportunity to express how happy he was with the way the CEV Office was working and how they handled the pandemic crisis in a successful and smooth way. He thanked the CEV Managing Director, Mr Thorsten ENDRES, and everyone in the CEV Office for their hard work, conducting so many video conferences with the clubs and the federations. He referred specifically to the Head of Volleyball Department, Mr Roko SIKIRIĆ, who managed with his work to protect the competitions and keep them clean. Achieving the organisation of so many competitions with no problems was something which should make everyone proud.

### **Update CEV Beach Volleyball think tank**

Mr LEITNER took the floor and summarised the workings of the Beach Volleyball think tank. In Verona, they had informed the CEV Board about the creation of the think tank, which was split in three groups covering the following: the commercial event future of Beach Volleyball, the improvement and involvement of National Federations, and the opportunities regarding the Beach Volleyball clubs.

He explained that the aim of the think tank was, first of all, to analyse and understand the status quo. The second aim was to improve and develop the National Federation activities and the club activities. The third aim was to create future Beach Volleyball products for Europe and event formats. All of those aims had been discussed in different configurations. In the previous two months, they had sent out a questionnaire to all 56 National Federations, in order to better understand the situation in each country: 41 federations replied, and 34 provided a proper level of information.

Mr LEITNER considered the outcome of the questionnaire as quite positive, because there was a critical mass of activities. Out of the federations that had answered, 75% of them were recognising Beach Volleyball clubs. Out of those, 66% have a clear process established inside the National Federation. Out of those, 75% were monitoring Beach Volleyball clubs operations. He said he was missing the total number of Beach Volleyball clubs. He estimated that since several countries had more than 200 Beach Volleyball clubs, the total in Europe would surely be a 4 digit number. 65% of the clubs were organising events already, mostly under the monitor of or in collaboration with the National Federation. He found that it was a really promising picture. He added that big Volleyball federations had replied and proved that they had a quite established structure. He believed it was a very good and positive foundation to start working on.

Ms Emma LABRADOR, CEV Vice-President, outlined the situation in terms of the National Federations, saying that they also went in line with the clubs, as mentioned by Mr LEITNER. She reported that there was still some development to be done in that respect and they still needed to identify the best way to go forward. Based on the outcome of the questionnaire regarding the clubs, the facilities and the

National Federations together, she stated that some countries operated with a structure, collaborating with their clubs. She opined that the situation was quite positive, but there was still room for improvement. Most National Federations had reported no Beach Volleyball club competitions. That would be the starting point for the think tank; inviting the National Federations to organise such events. Therefore, the main aim for the think tank would be to develop a concept for all National Federations to simplify things. To create a blueprint or roadmap for all National Federations in order to develop Beach Volleyball inside their country and in relation to the involvement of Beach Volleyball clubs. The long term plan would be for the National Federations to have events such as Beach Volleyball Euro League or Beach Volleyball club Champions League.

Based also on what had been mentioned earlier about the cooperation with the FIVB, Mr LEITNER acknowledged that it was an important moment for Europe since they were implementing a solid approach towards creating new products and events, especially for the potential new World Tour. He proposed to consider the establishment of a European Tour, which would then lead to the European Championships. He suggested to address the “chicken-egg issue” on whether the development of the “Tour event” or the marketing investment was more important. He voiced the Beach Volleyball Working Group’s request towards the CEV Board and the CEV President to officially assign them to create a roadmap, which would lay the cornerstones. Those could then be presented in Katowice during the XLII CEV General Assembly. By doing so, later in that year, they could come up with preliminary rules and regulations. They could also think about a preliminary number in the future budget, on what kind of investments needed to be done in-house, in Luxembourg, as well as in terms of investment in setting that project in motion. Therefore, he kindly asked that the CEV Board put forward what had been initiated in that meeting.

Mr Michel EVERAERT stated that, for the moment, the situation was unclear from the FIVB side and needed more clarity. He commented that circumstances had drastically changed over the previous six months. He agreed with the need to develop a European Tour, which he believed was important. He noted that there were opportunities which were not available some years earlier. He proposed to present something on that topic during the XLII CEV General Assembly and then get the approval to move forward from there.

Following the report of the think tank’s proceedings, Mr BORIČIĆ wished to present some comments. Based on various discussions with the members of the think tank regarding the new proposal from the FIVB, he described an ongoing tendency of the FIVB failing to recognise the success in other institutions. He recounted that at the beginning of his mandate, he attempted to organise meetings between the Volleyball and Beach Volleyball departments of the two Institutions, which did not lead to any concrete results. He affirmed that in the recent years Europe had become very strong in the Beach Volleyball scene and he supported that it in order to move forward, the CEV should devise a concrete strategy. He added that the path to success for any sport was long, needed a lot of energy and nobody could guarantee a good result.

He reiterated that the aim of the CEV was not to create conflicts, but to move forward with positive energy and with concrete proposals. If presented with better ideas, the CEV would be ready to support them. He strongly supported that the road to a better future in Volleyball was through solid arguments and proposals.

Sharing some anecdotes from his meeting with Mr Finn TAYLOR, the CEO of Volleyball World, the CEV President wished to outline the ongoing dynamic between the two institutions with regards to the development of Beach Volleyball. He argued that there should be open communication on that matter with full respect to the other side. He also drew attention to the fact that the interest around Beach Volleyball was only rising around the Olympic Games and then the efforts were really scarce, limited to the national level.

Following up on some aspects developed by the CEV President, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI wished to also share his experience of working in marketing with the people in the FIVB. He remarked that, based on the



situation in Europe, in terms of marketing, the CEV was in the lead, despite the fact that the FIVB had a big investment backing them up. He put forward the view that the CEV was more focused on the development of the sport and of the events. He believed that the FIVB would need to discuss on the matter of future strategy with the CEV.

In response to that, the CEV President suggested that he did not really see a clear strategy from the FIVB part, noting that they had changed their direction several times in a short period. On the other side, he stated that the CEV as an institution made a point of protecting its legacy and future by seriously committing in the sport and making decisions based on the principles of reliability and accountability. In order to cooperate with the FIVB it should be clear who would be the decision maker. He took the view that the CEV should find a solution to protect its interests.

For Beach Volleyball, he pointed out that it was important that they had already started to collect information regarding Beach Volleyball clubs and other relevant information. He advised to continue with collecting more specific information. In addition, it was important to determine the ownership of the Beach Volleyball clubs, whether they belonged to a greater Volleyball club or to another private entity. Either way, the clubs needed to be registered in the National Federations. After collecting all that information, the CEV President suggested that during the XLII CEV General Assembly the CEV should request from the National Federations to officially organise a Beach Volleyball Clubs Championship and inform the CEV about it. After grouping all the data of the official Beach Volleyball Clubs Championships in the following two years, the next step could be the International European competitions. In deciding to create a Beach Volleyball Champions League competition, a budget should also be made for the relevant prize money for the clubs and the players.

Concluding the discussion on Beach Volleyball, Mr BORIČIĆ advised the three members of the think tank to continue gathering more information in order to present it during the XLII CEV General Assembly.

### **Think Pink Europe Charity project**

Mr Geert De DOBBELEER proposed the establishment of a CEV charity project in collaboration with Think Pink Europe. He informed that the Think Pink organisation was founded in 2018 in Belgium and their goal was to eradicate breast cancer, aiming to close the healthcare gap between various European countries. They were active in 33 national organisations in various European countries; countries where Volleyball is very popular sport.

Mr De DOBBELEER commented on the statistics regarding breast cancer, which affected 1 of 8 women. The Think Pink Europe organisation wished to focus on the modifiable factors that could reduce the risk of breast cancer by 30 to 40%. He reported that the organisation had a strong presence with various activities to raise awareness, e.g. Race for the Cure, Think Pink Duck Race. The Italian National Volleyball team was also involved and other National Teams were also connected to that project.

He then thanked the CEV President and Mr ENDRES and his team, informing that they had conducted several meetings with the organisation. He presented that the proposal was to work with them in the communication, using the recognisable pink ribbon in the CEV logos and channels and the CEV events. The intention was to promote all the aspects that could prevent breast cancer, promoting a healthy lifestyle and connecting it to Volleyball. There could be some common events as an example of a healthy lifestyle, performing some fund raising around them, as well as supporting their activities.

In conclusion, the concrete proposal to the CEV Board was to make Think Pink Europe the first charity partner, to make an official presentation during the XLII CEV General Assembly and then create a Working Group, bringing some women together in order to determine the concrete actions.

The CEV President expressed how happy he was that the CEV also demonstrated a more charitable side, contributing something back to society. Admittedly, Volleyball is a popular sport for women, and would be the perfect opportunity to raise awareness for breast cancer for women across the sports world and beyond. He also highlighted how important was prevention and early detection in order to beat that disease. He was hoping that the project would receive a wide acceptance. He believed that being part of such a project was giving Volleyball the opportunity to send important messages to the world.

Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING believed very strongly that it was an exceptional project for the CEV. For many of the small federations in the CEV that was an access point to the health of their federations and also of their government. It allowed them to actually participate in a CEV project which they could see some action they could do. For the CEV Board, she strongly believed that it was something that they should take forward, because it would allow the smaller federations, in particular, to access their government and some recognition within the sport.

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President & Treasurer, also supported the initiative. He described that when starting with kids Volleyball in Denmark in the 90's, the main goal with that initiative was not the sport per se but to get young people moving. Therefore, in reviewing some of the reasons of the Think Pink project, he agreed that it fitted perfectly for Volleyball. He also agreed that it represented a great opportunity for the smaller federations to potentially work together with the government and have access to different kinds of sponsors than the traditional sports sponsors.

The CEV President wished to clarify that it would not be mandatory for all the National Federations to participate in the same project, because they could potentially be involved in other projects. Deciding to join such a project would not necessarily mean that every National Federation would have to become a member of that organisation. He thanked Mr De DOBBELEER and said that it was a pleasure to have the opportunity to give something back to the community.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved to make Think Pink Europe the first charity partner, and to make an official presentation during the XLII CEV General Assembly.**

# 6. Competition Matters

## CEV EuroVolley 2021

The CEV President started by saying that the main goal of the CEV, in particular during this sanitary crisis, was to provide help and find solutions in order to prevent problems in the competitions. He described that there had been discussions with the CEV Medical Commission (EMC) and the CEV Sports Organising Commission (ESOC) and various proposals had been submitted in cooperation with the CEV Office.

Concerning the CEV EuroVolley 2021 events, a contingency plan had been proposed: to extend the article of the CEV Competitions Regulations regarding the Medical Joker, so as to include Covid-19 in the "medical reasons", in order to replace the players tested positive in Covid-19 from the team listed in the CEV form 05: namely, out of the 24 registered players, every National Federation was entitled to bring 14 players in the tournament. In case of Covid-19 cases, the team would have the right to change 10 players from the registered ones. This meant that the coaches had 24 registered players, 14 on the court and 10 waiting in case an issue with Covid-19 cases arose.

The discussion continued on the subject of the potential withdrawal of the winning team in a Preliminary Round due to Covid-19 reasons. The proposal was that in case of withdrawal of the winning team, the

next best ranked team would have the right to continue in the competition. In the quarter-finals and the semi-finals, in case of withdrawal of the winning team due to Covid-19 reasons, the losing team would continue. In case of withdrawal of the two teams in the Finals of EuroVolley, the third and fourth teams would continue. In case one of the teams that had qualified for the Final was not able to continue the competition, the respective opponent from the semi-finals match would compete instead. The CEV President also noted that they needed a legal confirmation, in order to determine which two teams would qualify for the World Championship.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Contingency plan proposed by the EMC, ESOC and the CEV Office for the CEV EuroVolley 2021 events:**

- **Medical Joker: to replace players tested positive in Covid-19 from the team listed in the CEV form 05 (25 players);**
- **Proposal on how to proceed the competition in case a team had to withdraw due to Covid-19 reasons.**

Mr Lubor HALANDA, CEV Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs and CEV EuroVolley 2021 Women Jury President, reported on the status of the event after the webinar that took place the previous evening with all the CEV EuroVolley Jury members. All four venues were ready to start the competition, the possibility of spectators in the venues also looked promising, apart from Zadar in Croatia, where only 1000 persons were allowed. In addition, the tickets sales had already started.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President and CEV EuroVolley 2021 Men Jury President, reported that the Jury members of the Men event had also conducted a webinar and they were also ready to start the competition. The spectators status also looked promising, apart from the Czech Republic, where a maximum of 2000 spectators was allowed. However, the situation was evolving, and he was hopeful that they could possibly have some good news by the end of August, when the competition would start.

At that point, the CEV President wished to present some comments regarding the two competitions. He recognised that the status regarding Covid-19 restrictions in every country was constantly changing day-by-day and he believed that the CEV decisions would also have to follow that same day-by-day approach. He commented on how stern measures were usually announced, but then in practice they were not kept. He advised that regulations should be constantly monitored and the restrictions for the competitions should be constantly reviewed, in order to comply with the latest measures. By illustrating some examples from their experience during the Olympic Games, he wished to point out that it made no sense to keep overly strict restrictions for the participants and officials of competitions, while volunteers or other people working in the event were circulating freely.

## **CEV EuroVolley 2023**

*[Mr Geert De DOBBELEER was not present in the meeting room for that topic.]*

The CEV President informed that the Belgian Federation had sent an official letter for co-hosting the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Women event for one Preliminary pool, 4 eighth-finals, 2 quarter-finals, 2 semi-finals, the bronze medal match and the final match, by paying a fee of 2 million EUR.

The Turkish Federation was also willing to pay the 2 million EUR fee for that same event. He explained that since the Belgian Federation had not yet organised such an event and the Turkish had already organised the finals of 2019, he would propose to give priority to the Belgian application and communicate to the Turkish Federation that they could choose among the quarter-finals of 2023 or the finals of 2025.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Belgian Federation as co-host for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Women event for one Preliminary pool, 4 eighth-finals, 2 quarter-finals, 2 semi-finals, the bronze medal match and the final match.**

*[Mr Geert De DOBBELEER was invited to join the meeting room again.]*

Mr BORIČIĆ congratulated the Belgian Federation for the hard work they had put in submitting their application and collecting the money for the fee. He also expressed how happy he was that there were increasingly more federations willing to step up and organise such big events. Then, he announced that the Estonian Federation wished to organise one Preliminary pool for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Women event.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the Estonian Federation as co-host for the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Women event for one Preliminary pool.**

## CEV European Cups 2022

The CEV President briefly explained the proposal submitted by the EMC, the ECC and the CEV Office, which aimed to help in the continuity of the competitions and in the protection of everyone involved in them.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal that the CEV should continue to provide rapid tests until 31 December 2021 and, if needed, to cover the cost of PCR tests for the CEV officials and referees; that the CEV should advise all officials to get vaccinated and that there would be no sanctions in case of a withdrawal caused by governmental decisions due to Covid-19.**

He added that depending on the development of the pandemic, the CEV Board of Administration could potentially decide on a prolongation of the measures during the next CEV Board meeting, taking place in December in Budapest.

Mr BORIČIĆ then informed the CEV Board about discussions to host the CEV Champions League Finals in Budapest, but at the moment the Hun National federation priority was to be able to organise the Finals of the CEV EuroVolley 2025 Men event.

## CEV EuroSnowVolley

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS reported on the Snow Volleyball Working Group meeting, led by Mr Peter KLEINMANN and with the participation of members of all Zonal Associations. The proposal submitted by the Snow Volleyball WG for the CEV Board to make a decision was regarding the qualification for the CEV EuroSnowVolley 2022, namely:

- a) Two direct spots in the Main Draw for the Host National Federation;
- b) A direct Main Draw spot to the National Federation organising a Snow Volleyball National Championship in 2021 and/or 2022, whose teams had participated in at least one European Tour event in the respective gender in 2021 and 2022;

- c) Minimum 3 best ranked teams from the CEV Snow Volleyball Ranking.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal of the Snow Volleyball Working Group.**

Among the other issues discussed in the Snow Volleyball Working Group meeting was getting better spreading within the Zones, where each Zonal Association would have a task to fulfil, as well as determining how many representatives a country or a part of a Zone could have. Another discussion was about introducing Age Group competitions. They believed that there were many reasons to introduce such competitions; it would be beneficial for the development of the sport and the recruitments. It would be a significant move towards the IOC in the attempt to establish Snow Volleyball as an Olympic sport. He reported that there were plans of launching the first under-age competitions in 2023. He then shared how satisfied he was with the work of the Group, praising their sense of initiative and their effective approach.

Mr BORIČIĆ informed that he had had a meeting with the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. GRAÇA F<sup>o</sup>, about Snow Volleyball, noting that it had been the FIVB President himself who had started talks with the IOC members. He pointed out that such a step constituted a big progress, considering the fact that Snow Volleyball was not mentioned by the FIVB President in the previous Congresses. They were planning to organise a meeting at Lausanne about Snow Volleyball to devise a strategic plan for the future and determine which steps should be made.

He then referred to the CEV Volleyball Ambassador, Mr Zlatko MATEŠA, who had been working hard for the promotion of Snow Volleyball in EYOF. He also mentioned the EOC General Assembly meeting he attended together with Mr ARENA, in Athens, Greece. There were a lot of different opinions regarding the inclusion of Volleyball in the European Games. The CEV President noted that the positive move was that they had accepted Snow Volleyball in the EYOF event. Having said that, he noted that even if the sport had been accepted in the event, there were no players to attend. He then proposed that for the following season the CEV should send a letter to all federations to start preparing to play Snow Volleyball in the winter. He added that the Zonal associations as well as the National Federations should start organising competitions in different categories. That way, they could present to the FIVB a concrete European plan for the following four years.

He commented that it was not possible to have Snow Volleyball accepted in the IOC if there were no Snow Volleyball events on World level. He asserted that there was a good lobby to support the promotion of Snow Volleyball as well as many IOC members who were positive towards that.

## European Games 2023

The CEV President described that there had been discussions in order to include Volleyball as a basic sport in the European Games 2023 that would take place in Poland. However, while initially that request was met positively, the situation had shifted. From the CEV side, the basic plan was to participate in the European Games 2023 with the official U23/22 European Championship and in Beach Volleyball either with the EuroBeachVolley or Continental Cup Final.

He described all the discussions and negotiations and then stated the proposal regarding the European Games, that it only made sense for Volleyball to participate if it would be included as a core sport. The CEV President explained that it was important to keep the value and the level of respect for the sport high, since there were other events that were willing to pay high amounts in order to include Volleyball and Beach Volleyball.



## **Volleyball under-age European Championships**

The CEV President wished to thank the Federations organising tournaments and praised them for their good job. He also recognised the progress made by certain Federations. As for the future, he informed everyone that some applications had been submitted. He was happy that after a long time the Hellenic Federation was willing to organise again a tournament and that the Cypriot Federation was aiming to apply to organise a tournament for the first time.

He also mentioned that he had been in talks with the President of World Athletics, Mr Sebastian COE, and that the CEV wished to organise a historic European Championship in Great Britain. He also expressed the wish to support some small countries in their attempt to organise tournaments, like the Federations of Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

## **7. Financial Matters**

### **Accounts / External Audit Report 2020 / Internal Audit Report**

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President & Treasurer, referred everyone to the documents sent prior to the meeting. There had already been a description of the situation in the previous CEV Board meeting.

The explanations from both the External and Internal Auditors summarised the work that had been performed and the decisions made by the CEV Board. Mr ADLER pointed out that in response to the Covid crisis there had been a lot of movement with money and that they had to consider the years 2020 and 2021, and possibly part of 2022, together. There might have been a positive number in the accounts of 2020, but when starting to look at the accounts of 2021 it was evident that there would be a bigger deficit than originally budgeted.

Mr ADLER went on to explain the reasons behind that situation. While originally the CEV Board had decided on a deficit of about 1.5 million EUR, the current situation pointed to a 3.7 million EUR deficit. Some of the main factors for that were the CEV Board decision to increase the Prize Money for CEV EuroVolley 2021, increase of support for organisers and investments in CEV EuroVolley 2021, decisions on sanitary support for the organisers and participants, additional support for the organisation of the Continental Cup, increase in the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals, sanitary support for organisers and participants in the CEV European Cups competitions, increase of the CEV Board of Administration allocations.

He also argued that during the pandemic everything was quite fluid and he stated that based on the decisions made by the CEV Board, the focus had always been the sport, making sure that the competitions could continue and be successful. He admitted that Covid was still a big factor and its evolution in 2021 was unknown, but the focus still remained on supporting the sport, the clubs and the National Federations.

The CEV President wished to add some remarks. He reminded the CEV Board that they had invested 11.5 million EUR in the "Marshall Plan" to help the federations, the clubs, the players, etc. He noted that the feedback had been enthusiastic. The increase of the Prize Money had also been met very positively. Mr BORIČIĆ argued that in times of crisis the CEV, as an entity that had available resources, had a duty to provide help and support to the stakeholders and it did not make sense to keep those resources blocked in a bank. He also noted that having ensured contracts for the Organiser fees of CEV EuroVolley 2023 and 2025, i.e. 6 million EUR more than before, the CEV has a stable financial situation. In addition, the income from Infront would be more than what was expected. He also expressed how happy he was that the CEV had progressed from an institution of numbers to an institution providing help and support.



The fact that even small federations had started applying for hosting events was a clear proof that the method was successful.

Lastly, he thanked Mr ADLER and the European Finance Commission, the CEV Finance Department as well as the Internal and External Auditors for their work and, based on the reports, he concluded that the CEV was on the right path.

Ms LABRADOR pointed out an amendment to be made in the dates (from 2015 and 2016 to be changed into 2020 and 2021 respectively) in section 13. Staff costs of the External Auditors' Report.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the accounts of 2020.**

## **Proposed budget 2022**

Mr ADLER mentioned that the draft budget for 2022, prepared by the CEV Office, presented a smaller deficit compared to 2021. According to the European Medical Commission's proposal, the CEV would continue to make expenses in terms of Covid protection measures. On a question addressed to him earlier, on when the federations hosting CEV EuroVolley or other events paid their fee, he answered that it depended on the federation, since some of them get the governmental support in advance and some of them get it closer to the event. Therefore, the income portrayed in the draft budget was what was in their best knowledge.

Mr ENDRES wished to point out that by looking at the numbers of 2020 and 2022, two years without the CEV EuroVolley event investment, one could witness the major growth of the investment made by the CEV, more than 40% of investments in 2022, in comparison to 2020. He believed that it constituted a strong message towards the European Volleyball family that the CEV was increasing the volume of activities and working hard in order to raise Volleyball to the next level.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Budget for 2022 to be presented to the XLII CEV General Assembly for final approval.**

Mr ADLER also informed everyone on the liquidity status of the accounts, assuring everyone that there would not be any liquidity issues.

Concerning the allocations received by the CEV Board of Administration, after some discussions Mr ADLER had with the CEV President, and in collaboration with the Luxembourgish tax advisor, they concluded that the CEV would support the CEV Board receiving an allocation, in order to alleviate their tax assessment. The 25% withholding tax on the net allocation was to be paid to all CEV Board of Administration members, as well as 17% VAT for those receiving more than 30,000 EUR annually as of 01 January 2021. More details would follow on that, the CEV Office would have to collect some info in order to perform that action.

Mr ADLER commented that the allocations were a token of appreciation for the work accomplished by the CEV Board and he recognised that the current Board was working very hard and was very active.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the coverage of withholding taxes and VAT on the net allocation in Luxembourg.**

The CEV President added that the Luxembourgish state had offered support to the CEV and he had proposed, through the federation, to organise an event in the city of Luxembourg, since the headquarters of the CEV were in Luxembourg for so many years. His proposal did not receive the expected enthusiasm from the previous leadership of the federation. He intended to organise another meeting with the Luxembourgish authorities in order to negotiate the support provided.

Concluding, he thanked Mr ADLER for his work, recognising that it had been a difficult task. He added that since the activities of CEV increased, the intention was to reinforce the CEV Office with more young and talented people that could help the institution achieve its goals.

## 8. XLII CEV General Assembly Katowice, POL

The CEV President drew attention to the fact that the intention was to promote some small federations with some activities so that they could present their achievements in the recent years. Regarding the Irish Federation, Mr BORIČIĆ praised the work of the young people that had taken over the federation and they were willing to work hard. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, he praised the work of the President FATIĆ, who was very good in communication and had organised age-group tournaments. Their National Women team had won the European Silver League medal in 2021 and they also qualified, for the first time, to participate in the European Championship. They participated in the School Project, involving many young players and promoting Volleyball. He believed that their progress served as a very good example; such a small federation having so many achievements in such a short period of time.

### **Approval of the candidates for the vacant positions:**

All the candidates had been examined by the CEV European Legal Commission (ELC).

- Legal Chamber: Ms Giulia VIGNA (ITA) and Mr Marek KRUPSKI (POL)
- Reserve Internal Auditor: Ms Çiğdem DILEK (TUR)

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the candidates for the vacant positions for the Legal Chamber and the reserve Internal Auditor.**

In respect of the eligibility of National Federations to speak and vote, the CEV President noted that in some countries existing Covid-19 related restrictions were preventing them from organising activities; he added that other countries were using that as an excuse to explain their lack of activities. In the period from 19.9.2020 until 18.09.2021 the following National Federations presented no activities: Greenland, San Marino and Ireland. Ireland had sent an application to play Beach Volleyball tournaments in Spain and the Netherlands. From the Small Countries Association there was information about organising an U19 European Championship in Iceland from 02-06 September 2021 as well as applications from Faroe Islands, Malta and Gibraltar. If they ended up participating in that tournament, that would mean that Greenland and San Marino would be the only two federations with no activities.

The CEV President had coordinated with Mr ARENA, so that the latter would encourage the Federation of San Marino to participate in Beach Volleyball tournament. He also referred to an important problem with Slovakia regarding their pending debts. Mr HALANDA had spoken with the newly elected Slovakian Federation President, Mr Marek ROJKO, who had promised to pay the federation's pending fees before the Congress and then they would try to devise a written proposal on how to eliminate their debts. He reminded everyone that when he had started his mandate at the helm of the CEV, the Norwegian Volleyball Federation had a lot of debts, but they were determined to find a solution and avoid

suspending them. Several years later, the Olympic Champions in Beach Volleyball were from Norway. The goal was to always find ways to provide help and not to block any federation.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to re-define the payment plan of the Slovakian National Federation under their new leadership.**

## 9. Proposals from Board members

No points discussed.

## 10. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework

The CEV President referred to the discussion regarding the European Sports model and the role of clubs during the previous CEV Board of Administration meeting, the ELC had drafted a legal advice on potential sanctions to clubs participating in non-official competitions. Given that there were on-going court cases on the matter in football, the proposal was to wait for further developments and clarifications on that issue.

Mr ENDRES referred to one more proposal from the Commissions: to extend the Article 14.2.1 of the CEV Volleyball Competition Regulations "Knock-out competition method" and add paragraph §3 to determine the standing of the Participant after the Knock-Out competition method. The aim was to have a clear and transparent approach for the future.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to wait for the court decision regarding participation in non-official competitions and to extend the article 14.2.1 as proposed.**

The CEV President informed that the CEV had received a proposal from the FIVB after having declared that in Europe the wild card was not being used. The proposal from the FIVB was about the World Championship, with 8 teams, 3 out of which coming from Europe. In case of 4 teams, one coming from Europe, and so on and so forth. The information he had gotten was for a competition of Women in Turkey and for Men in London. In case of eight participating teams, the CEV could send the first and second team of the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals. For the third team, the CEV President proposed to send the winner of the CEV Volleyball Cup. Following the example of football, the CEV President analysed that in the CEV Cups there were many strong teams. That would be a move that would confer a lot of power and energy to the CEV Cups competitions, it would give much more incentive to the clubs to participate in those competitions.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to send the two teams of the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals and the winner of the CEV European Volleyball Cup to the FIVB Volleyball Club World Championship 2021.**

## 11. Any other business

No points discussed.

## 12. Next meeting

The Hungarian Volleyball Federation had invited the CEV Board of Administration to conduct their meeting in Budapest, in the framework of the their 75th anniversary celebration on 18 December 2021.

## 13. Closing of the Meeting

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked everyone for their contribution and their insightful proposals. He reminded them that after the Congress that would take place in Katowice, Poland, another important CEV event was the CEV European Volleyball Gala, taking place in Ljubljana, Slovenia. He pointed out that Slovenia had achieved great success in Indoor, Beach and Snow Volleyball. They had also organised the Coaches Convention, with the participation of 200 coaches, 40 of which were coming from 38 countries outside of Europe.

He thanked the President of the Slovenian Volleyball Federation, Mr Metod ROPRET, for his great work. He also noted that the mayor of Ljubljana, Mr Zoran JANKOVIĆ, was an ardent supporter of Volleyball. They managed to organise many competitions and activities. Therefore, the CEV President wished to nominate Mr JANKOVIĆ as European Volleyball Ambassador as a token of appreciation for his big contribution.

Mr ROPRET wished to add a few words regarding Mr JANKOVIĆ, saying that his contribution had benefitted greatly Volleyball and sports in general in Slovenia. He said the he was a very dedicated Volleyball fan and he greatly deserved the honour to be nominated as Volleyball Ambassador.

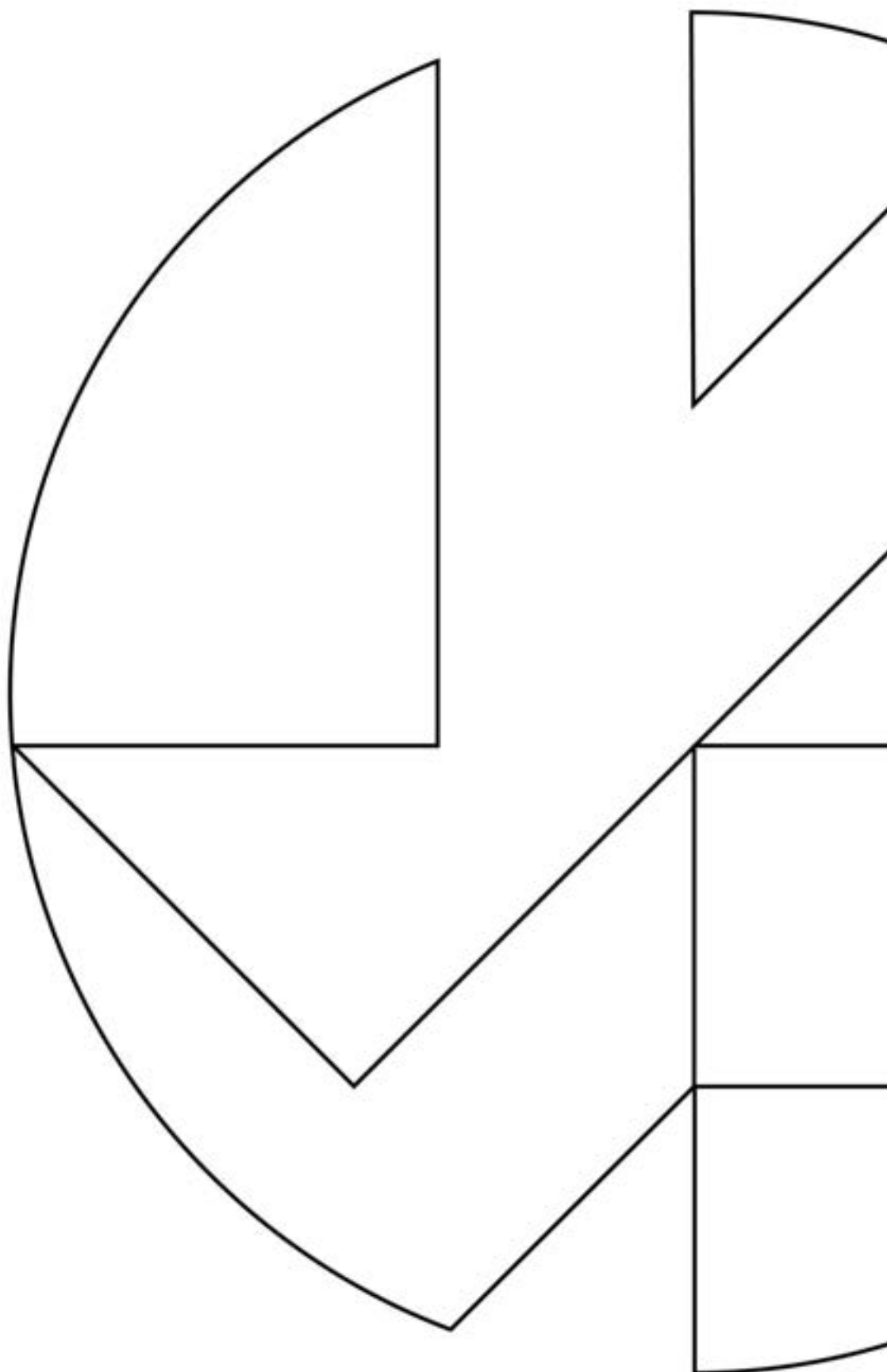
### Decision

**In the absence of any further comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal Mr Zoran JANKOVIĆ as European Volleyball Ambassador.**

The CEV President concluded the meeting wishing everyone a great stay in Austria, he expressed once again how happy he was that all members of the CEV Board were present to also honour the great work carried out for Beach Volleyball.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the Intercontinental Hotel in Vienna (AUT)  
14 August 2021

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting  
held at the Due Torri  
Hotel, in Verona (ITA)

30 April 2021



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball





Place: Due Torri Hotel, Verona (ITA)

Date: Friday, 30 April 2021

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
online	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
online	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
Excused	Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO	Vice-President



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, officially opened the meeting, welcomed everyone in Verona and wished that the meeting would leave a mark in history. Mr SHEVCHENKO was excused, and Mr THORSTEINSSON and Ms FLEMING were joining online and Mr JAFAROV would join later.

He informed everyone about the first joint CEV Executive Committee meeting with the Italian Federation and stated that discussions were on the right track.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

## 3. Approval of Minutes

### Minutes of the CEV Executive Committee Meeting held on 25 February 2021 in Luxembourg.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration acknowledged the Minutes of the CEV Executive Committee Meeting held on 25 February 2021 in Luxembourg.**

### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 26 February 2021 in Luxembourg.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 26 February 2021 in Luxembourg.**

## 4. FIVB

### CEV-FIVB joint Eurosport investment – financial issues outstanding

The CEV President started the meeting by informing the rest of the CEV Board members about some outstanding financial issues. During the FIVB Congress in Cancún (MEX), the FIVB President had accepted the proposal to proceed in a joint investment of more than 1 million EUR for two years in Eurosport cooperation. The FIVB would participate with almost 50% of the investment. They had paid only 250,000 EUR so far. That was one of the issues raised by the Audit control. The second issue was that the agreement was still with the FIVB. Mr BORIČIĆ reported that the FIVB Secretary General, Mr Fernando LIMA had promised to sign, but the CEV had not received anything. He was hoping to raise the issue later when the Leadership of the FIVB would join the event in Verona.

### Snow Volleyball and FIVB

Since Snow Volleyball had not been mentioned in the last FIVB General Assembly, Mr BORIČIĆ readdressed the issue with the FIVB President in order to get a clear reconfirmation of his commitment

to support the development of the new discipline. Mr BORIČIĆ announced that they had agreed to proceed to a joint promotional event about Snow Volleyball that would take place in the Beijing Winter Olympics of 2022, similar to the one in the PyeongChang Olympics in 2018, sharing the costs 50-50.

## **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to organise a joint promotional event together with the FIVB in Beijing during the Winter Olympics 2022, sharing the costs 50:50.**

He added that a support lobby had started to form around Snow Volleyball and its introduction to the Olympic Games, with the endorsement of high rank people in the Olympic Committees. He proposed to schedule a meeting in Lausanne with the FIVB Leadership, the IOC President, Mr Thomas Bach, the President of the Austrian Olympic Committee, Mr Karl STOSS, as well as with the President of the CEV Snow Volleyball Working Group, Mr Peter KLEINMANN and Mr Gernot LEITNER in order to define a concrete action plan for establishing Snow Volleyball as an Olympic discipline, hopefully in the 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy, since the Italian Olympic Committee and its President, Mr Giovanni MALAGÒ, also supported that project.

## **Communication with the FIVB**

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the fact that Federations are not aware about many decisions taken by the FIVB Board of Administration. For example, one of the decisions was that athletes from National Federations of category 4 and 5 were allowed to play in no more than two different Age Group competitions yearly. Athletes from National Federations of category 1, 2 and 3 would be allowed to play everywhere. The aim was to protect the young athletes from the category 4 and 5 Federations, since they had to participate in numerous tournaments.

Another issue he mentioned was that in the future a person should only belong to one National Federation, so as any kind of manipulation with people having several passports and applying for the same positions in several Federations could be avoided.

The final administrative information Mr BORIČIĆ wished to pass on regarding the FIVB Board was that they had decided that a person holding the position of National Federation President could not be an International Referee.

## **Involving CEV with all European projects**

The CEV President then touched upon the importance of National Federations involving the CEV from the beginning in their inquiries and projects towards the FIVB. He pointed out that in order for the CEV to provide a proper assistance and support it needed to be at least informed about those projects, so as to be able to use the necessary synergies and coordinated the Volleyball activities in Europe.

## **Cancellation of the 2021 FIVB Volleyball Challenger Cup**

Then Mr BORIČIĆ explained that Europe was the only continent using a qualifications system –the European Golden and Silver League competitions– for the Volleyball Nations League (VNL). In fact, he pointed out that some small Federations invested a large amount of their budget in those qualification competitions. Therefore, the fact that The Netherlands, themselves organisers of a European League tournament, had accepted a direct qualification to the VNL, defeated the whole purpose of the European League Qualification system and of the enormous investment of several participating Federations. The CEV President sent a letter to the FIVB President explaining that the aim of the CEV was not to prevent any Federation willing to participate. He highlighted several times that the CEV's

main goal was to support and encourage Volleyball activities. He then expressed his concerns about bigger potential problems of similar nature arising in the future with the VNL competition.

Having outlined his rationale, the CEV President insisted that in every thorny problem the focus should be on the solutions. For the two European spots for the FIVB Volleyball Challenger Cup, he proposed the respective winners of the CEV European Golden League of 2021 and 2022. This would mean that the two winners of the European Golden League would have a chance to play for the qualification in the VNL for 2023. He argued that the Federations who had invested so much should have some kind of outcome.

Mr BORIČIĆ then thanked the Ukrainian, the Romanian and the Slovakian National Teams for agreeing to play two tournaments in Ukraine, since The Netherlands withdrew from the European Golden League. He also made a point about protecting the value of the competition, which had significantly increased over the years, since in the past the whole investment amounted to 125,000 EUR, while in 2021 the investment went over 1,2 million EUR. A result achieved respecting the value of the competition, by developing Volleyball in many more countries. He referred to the example of Sweden, who had considerably raised the level of Volleyball in their country and had recognised the potential that the European Golden and Silver League competition could bring in a country's Volleyball community.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Vice-President, took the floor and while expressing his agreement for the proposal, he also pointed out that the CEV should also take into consideration that in 2022 there would be potentially more teams in the FIVB VNL and thus more vacancies and that the CEV should consider what to do.

The CEV President clarified that the reason behind his proposal was in no way aiming to hinder the progress of The Netherlands in the competition. While recognising that the FIVB had a different way of functioning, he pointed out it was important that the Federations inform and involve the CEV in such kind of decisions. He elaborated that a participating team who was also an organiser withdrawing from the competition created problems with the rest of the pools and the teams. The CEV President referred to the fact that the FIVB went into discussions with Federations about the World Championship without involving the CEV. Moreover, he demonstrated that those kind of moves were disrupting the Competitions Calendar which had been agreed and fixed a long time ago, creating problems to many Federations. He added that the purpose was not to go against the FIVB but to establish a cooperation based on respect and communication.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to request the FIVB to allocate a spot in the 2022 FIVB Challenger Cup to the winners of the CEV Volleyball European Golden League 2021 and 2022.**

He then reported that the National Federations of Italy, Russia and Poland, had requested a meeting with the CEV President, where they had reported several problems with the FIVB. The CEV President commented that since the National Federation Presidents were not expressing their opinions or objections during the FIVB meetings, their silence was perceived as agreement. He added that it would be important if those three big Federations agreed on some common goals, so that they could all work towards them. He then mentioned the working dinner with the National Federations Presidents held the previous evening, where they had fruitful discussions and exchange of knowledge and opinions, with a view to also support smaller Federations.

While acknowledging the right of the FIVB to choose the best teams for their competitions, Mr BORIČIĆ pointed out that the European teams should take into account that they belong to the CEV and show consideration for the value of the European competitions.

Mr EVERAERT reaffirmed his opinion that the FIVB and the CEV should strengthen their collaboration. He added that the CEV should agree to a common position and know how to react to a potential proposal by the FIVB.

Discussions ensued, where the CEV President highlighted that everyone was invited to hold open discussions with the FIVB Leadership, adding that it was a big honour the FIVB President was attending a CEV event. He also cautioned on the fact that communication should always be transparent with clear intentions and goals for the common interest of the sport, so as to send out the message of one big Volleyball family. He added that sticking together should not only be something happening in the face of difficulties, but a constant principle. Based on that, the CEV President urged everyone to share their ideas, to share their plans with the FIVB, clarifying once again that the purpose was not to block any plan, but to be involved from the beginning of a project.

Concluding the argument, Mr BORIČIĆ wished to focus on the future, he expressed his hopes and expectations for the upcoming meeting in Warsaw, Poland with the three leading National Federations –Italy, Russia and Poland– to proceed slowly and carefully in good solid decisions that would unify all the Federations, taking the necessary time to thoroughly discuss and explore the best solutions.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President, took the floor informing everyone that he had voted against the FIVB proposal to cancel the FIVB Challenger Cup. He also explained that instead of merely accepting or rejecting a proposal presented through a letter or an email, he preferred to hold discussions, where he had the opportunity to get a better understanding and potentially change his mind. He mentioned that the approach of presenting proposals to be accepted or rejected through an email with a tight deadline had been going on in the last three or four years, without ever holding a meeting. Going further to explain his opposition to the proposal to cancel the Challenger Cup, he said that he was not in favour of reducing activities, especially one year after the beginning of the pandemic. He pointed to the contradiction of stopping activities in a time when the general message was to support the Federations to start working again to prepare events and competitions. He added that while in other occasions for the VNL all the Presidents of the participating Federations would be involved, that time the issue was approached by an email to be answered by Board members who might have not been wholly aware of the issue. He opined that such methods were causing damage to Volleyball activities in general, especially in the framework of a pandemic. Summarising his point, he reaffirmed that the aim should be to never result in stopping activities.

Mr Zdeslav BARAČ, CEV Board of Administration member, addressed the meeting and wished to establish that the Croatian Federation, the host of the 2021 FIVB Volleyball Women's Challenger Cup, had been open with the CEV concerning their communication with the FIVB and their intentions. Furthermore, he referred to the visit of the FIVB President in Croatia, where they held discussions concerning Croatia's chances for hosting the FIVB Volleyball Challenger Cup in the following year and they were informed that the FIVB was no longer in charge of appointing hosts for events. As for the cooperation of the Croatian Federation with the FIVB and the FIVB Volleyball Challenger Cup, Mr BARAČ recalled that he had been the one voting in favour of cancelling that competition in 2021, explaining that even though his personal opinion matched the position of Mr ARENA, based on his knowledge of the FIVB context, he felt there would be no point in opposing a decision already taken by the FIVB together with the other Confederations. He argued that if there had been an open discussion with the FIVB, then there would be some ground in negotiating on the matter.

He then described that in the past, in the context of the FIVB Board of Administration, the position of the European Representatives had been similar, they did not have an active participation, especially under the presidency of Mr ACOSTA. He suggested that in trying to change something, the CEV should keep in mind that for years there had been a big antagonism of all confederations against Europe. Therefore, he believed that the CEV should avoid clashing and should adopt a mild and effective way, precisely as the one the CEV Leadership was currently following, but adding a common front to that effort.



The CEV President affirmed that he was available and eager to hold discussions with the FIVB President in order to find solutions, as he had done in the past, even after voting procedures. However, the problem in that case was that there was lack of information. He explained that when proposals came for voting in the FIVB Board, the CEV could not pass its decisions. He mentioned the example of the Calendar 2021-2024 voting, where the FIVB accepted the proposals and then decided to schedule the European Championship in the first week of August, which was not a convenient period for Europe. By referring to that example, Mr BORIČIĆ emphasised the need for flexibility and the need to have a common strong front as a Confederation, acting promptly, before issues would arise.

He also mentioned that he had attended the General Assembly of the Balkan Volleyball Association together with Mr Lubomir GANEV, CEV Board of Administration member. In that General Assembly they were discussing about starting to collect information. Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his disagreement to that method, maintaining that it would not be effective to collect information about potential organisers in the yearly General Assembly. It would be impossible to make a decision like that, such things have to be prepared in advance.

While understanding that the National Federations Presidents would primarily fight for their own interests, he argued that the CEV Board members should also protect and promote the interests of European Volleyball and work in order to strengthen it. Addressing also the newest CEV Board members, he urged them to work and prepare the ground for the future of Volleyball. He also pointed out that the CEV did not wish to work against any Institution, clearly respecting the hierarchy of the FIVB, but also suggesting that the CEV should first work on creating a common front within Europe.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President, recognised the importance of discussing the matter in view of the pandemic and of the new investor in the FIVB. Given that in the VNL competitions nine of the participating teams –i.e. more than half of the total number of teams– came from Europe, he proposed that the discussions with the FIVB should be held on European level. He claimed that the negotiating power would be different if each country went individually. In his attempt to address the issue of lack of information towards the CEV with several people of the FIVB, in the responses he got the issued was attributed to lack of time. He put forward the question whether Europe should confront the FIVB regarding those competition matters united together as a continent, establishing a stronger position.

In response, the CEV President wished to also present another dimension on the matter. He explained that during discussions with the FIVB for the calendar, in several cases it had been some of the largest European National Federations that had accepted conditions that would go against the National Leagues and the strongest clubs.

He also stated that in discussing matters regarding the FIVB, the focus should not only be on money, but mainly on creating more sportive opportunities, organising activities, like re-introducing the U23 Age Group competition. He also described how most National Federations had immediately accepted to relaunch such a championship in the previous CEV Board meeting held in Luxembourg, especially the strongest ones. However, when the relative questionnaire had been distributed, the first answers for support came from the smallest federations..

Concluding his point, Mr BORIČIĆ took the view that working on the cooperation with the FIVB was an important part, but it should not block every other effort made by the CEV. He invited everyone to stay positive and to approach the FIVB with more understanding. After raising the issues and presenting some information, he suggested that CEV Board members could take the time and consider them carefully, so as to find solutions on how to unify the European system. He felt that he could be hopeful for the future, taking the CEV EuroVolley as an example, which had evolved into a competition with several organisers, suggesting that it could be also the case for the Age Group competitions, unifying the efforts of the European Confederations, helping each other and showing solidarity, especially for the smaller federations.

Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, CEV Board of Administration Member, addressed the CEV Board and expressed his concerns about the lack of information and meetings in order to receive information from the European Representatives in the FIVB Board, something that could jeopardise the good governance of the Institution. In addition, he expressed his objection to changing the rules for running competitions. Cancelling the FIVB Volleyball Challenger Cup did not represent, in his opinion, a good message, unless it was imposed by pandemic related restrictions.

He added that for the future it would be important to protect European Volleyball as well as the European countries that invested a lot in Volleyball and had a big impact on international Volleyball. He also referred to some changes of rules regarding the nationalities of players, stating that the FIVB had the last word on such matters, something that would only benefit the players' managers. He reiterated the importance of protecting the countries who invest a lot in the sport year by year, from the Under-age categories to the senior level and of not putting forward the market mentality. He agreed about the need to share information before making decisions and expressed his hope to work with the FIVB based on the principles of fairness and good governance.

Mr Metod ROPRET took the floor and cautioned everyone about the potential danger for the CEV to be excluded from a closed competition in the future, recalling the example of UEFA. He deemed it important to protect the European and Olympic model of the sport.

The CEV President considered important to establish an understanding firstly among the CEV Board members and to set common goals of increasing the quality and the value of the CEV tournaments and events, of helping the clubs and the Federations, developing the various Volleyball disciplines. While acknowledging that there could not always be a consensus among the CEV Board members, he advised to focus on the solutions and not on the differences.

In conclusion of that point, the CEV President presented to the CEV Board members the recorded keynote speech of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) President, Mr Thomas BACH.

[...]

*"Sport can only make its contribution to society if the values and solidarity-based model of sport are supported by the public authorities. This is why we need to strengthen the European Sports Model, its values and its robust solidarity funding mechanisms. The European Sports Model is something that we Europeans can really be proud of. It is a uniquely European approach to organised sports, reflecting the values of solidarity, of inclusion and of peace. This European Sport Model reflects the specific organisation of sport in Europe and its fundamental social and educational function. This unique model is built on solidarity and volunteers. It is based on the twin principles of financial solidarity, which allows revenues generated through events and activities at the elite level to be re-invested at the lower level and of openness of competition which gives priority to sporting merit.*

*Without solidarity, clubs and associations at the base of the European Sports Model cannot survive, and the huge contribution they make to their communities and to elite sports will be lost. In fact, the very existence of the values 'solidarity' and 'volunteer-based model' is under threat not only in Europe, but around the world. It is challenged by a purely profit driven approach that ignores the intrinsic values and social mission of sport. It is under threat, because the social mission of sports organisations is losing ground to the purely profit oriented goals of commercial sports providers.*

*Applying a purely market based approach to sport seriously jeopardises the values-based system as we know it in Europe. It neglects the social contribution of organised sport and its existing solidarity mechanisms. By only applying market rules, a sport organisation would be treated like regular for-profit business, like a steel manufacturer or an agricultural commodity producer. If everything is only looked at from a business perspective, if only the economic rules are applied to measure the impact of sport in the society, then the social mission of sport is lost. With the Olympic Games Paris 2024 we are going back to our routes and to the home country of our founder, Pierre de Coubertin.*

*Coubertin knew of the central importance of values for sport. He once said: "Sport without values is only a military parade". For once I will dare to add to the words of my illustrious predecessor by saying that today sport without values is just entertainment business."*

The CEV President wished to share that excerpt with the rest of the CEV Board members, highlighting the major essential values and structure of the European sports community. He noted the importance of the clubs for European sports, where new players, the new generation of Volleyball, would start to play and flourish. He argued that such an endorsement of the significance of Volleyball clubs by Mr BACH should not be overlooked, and spotted the main difference between the CEV and the FIVB, regarding the approach to clubs.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### **Commercial Partnership**

Mr BORIČIĆ reported that the CEV had established some first contacts with a big company and was having a second meeting on the following day. There was a strong interest from that company to proceed with signing a contract right away. However, Mr BORIČIĆ wished to make clear that the CEV would remain the owner of its products, retaining the right to make the final decisions at any moment. He stated firmly that no amount of money would be enough to sell the Volleyball heart of the Institution to any commercial company. He specified that the aim was to form partnerships, similar to the one with Infront, whose work he praised. In the Infront partnership as well, the final decision remained always on the part of the CEV.

He then explained that the company wishing to form a partnership with the CEV was FSI, on a similar level with the FIVB partner, CVC. The FSI had partnered up with the CVC in the Italian football League, then when the CVC proceeded with a partnership with the FIVB, the FSI wished to approach the CEV. Mr BORIČIĆ reported that they had been gathering all the necessary information about both companies, in order to prepare for the negotiations. He pointed out that IMG Arena, a company that was involved with all the major sports, had included Volleyball, for the first time in its international promotion campaign, a fact that proved that the market was starting to have an interest in the sport. He noted there was a clear intention from the market to invest money on sports, but as a sports institution, he believed that the CEV should examine the purpose of those investments, emphasising the importance of a thorough analysis of the content of their proposal, the criteria they would set.

He then referred to the case of the Super League in football. After that venture had been paused, he described how UEFA had the clubs sign an agreement that they would have to respect it and only participate in UEFA competitions, in order to take part in the National Championship. He added that they CEV was not aware of the full content of the CVC and FIVB contract, even if many of the CEV Board members were also FIVB Board members. On that view, the CEV President asked the CEV Office and the European Legal Commission President, Mr Alain FISCHBACHER, to start exploring ways in which the CEV could protect its competitions, and to draft an agreement to be signed by all National Federations, in order for them to commit to the core principles of the European Sports Model and to participate only in officially recognised competitions.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided that for any potential future commercial partnership the CEV shall remain owner of its sportive competitions and shall have the final decision.**

## **European Volleyball in post-corona times**

Based on the Covid-19 vaccine rollout in various countries, Mr BORIČIĆ expressed the hope that the pandemic would be contained in the months to follow. He pointed out that the pandemic did not have the same impact and damage in all countries. Small Federations that were previously struggling, were completely destroyed in the face of the crisis. He advised that the CEV should find ways to support them, even if they had not expressively asked for financial support. He added that in the previous year the CEV had helped in terms of ranking all Federations that were not able to finish their championships. However, he argued that this would not be the case for the current year, since everything had been decided on the court.

## **Update CEV Beach Volleyball Think tank**

Moving to Beach Volleyball, Mr BORIČIĆ mentioned the three key persons, Mr Gernot LEITNER, Ms Emma LABRADOR and Mr Michel EVERAERT, and asked them to inform the rest of the CEV Board members regarding their discussions during the Beach Volleyball think tank meetings.

Mr LEITNER addressed the CEV Board and informed everyone that further to the initiative of the CEV Board Meeting of 27 November 2020, the Beach Volleyball think tank had started to be built up and members had been selected. Three working groups had been formed: 1) Involvement of National Federations, led by Ms LABRADOR, 2) Importance and potential of Beach Volleyball clubs, led by the President of the European Beach Volleyball Commission (EBVC), Mr Tomislav ŠMUC and 3) Commercialisation and business model of Beach Volleyball in the future, led by Mr LEITNER. A number of very productive preparation calls had been conducted with the CEV Office, overseen by Mr Thorsten ENDRES and headed by Mr George GAGALIS, where they had outlined the tasks and the scope of each working group. Throughout March and April 2021 they had started their meetings with the various members and they also had a full round of exchanges and had consolidated a first protocol of all three working groups.

Reporting on his working group, he shared there were participations from the Infront team, from some of the big promoters and from some former players involved in the promoters business. The main purpose of those meetings was to get an understanding on the standing of Beach Volleyball. They had received a very good input from the promoters' side but also from Infront's side, commenting that it was on that feedback that they based the outlining of the future strategy for growing the sport. The main feedback on the commercial side from Infront was that Beach Volleyball was not a prime product for the media for several reasons, mainly to do with scheduling, awareness, the size of the sport in general. The feedback from the promoters was that there was a very small sponsor market for Beach Volleyball, there was no unified product across Europe during the summer that could be sold to bigger partners. Therefore, those issues would have to be addressed in the future work. In the wrap-up debrief there was a clear understanding that all three groups needed to deeply interact and integrate each other's tasks. The main goal should be to grow the sport on all levels, taking the example of big Beach Volleyball countries, and define what the National Federations would need to do, so as to grow the sport in their country. Mr Wilco NIJLAND, a Dutch club owner and Event Organiser, had provided valuable feedback and outlined the huge commercial potential of owning a big club: steady revenues through renting out courts, organising events on a local, national and international level and also being a player agent and managing teams. Those examples were self-evident and he opined that the CEV should put a lot of energy that more countries would start to grow the sport from within.

Mr LEITNER then divulged that it had been his ambition to promote the topic of the commercial product of Beach Volleyball, because the CEV represents and covers the European territory, which is not only the National Federations and their teams, but also the organisers. He fully agreed on the need to build the fan base and make the National Federations understand that the CEV was their voice to the FIVB. He described the need to grow more the Beach Volleyball product, the way it had happened in Indoor Volleyball with the Golden and Silver League, EuroVolley, Champions League. He cautioned that the complications of FIVB taking decisions without involving the CEV could also happen in Beach Volleyball.



He specified that while the CEV was not on a confrontational path with the FIVB, it should at the same time grow its own European products, so as to leave no other choice other than involving the CEV. He saw a very positive dynamic through the Beach Volleyball think tank and their next step was to have a meeting and produce a blueprint on how to move towards those three directions. They would then share it with the CEV Board so as to be able to act on it. He estimated some more interactions were needed. He felt that there were a lot of Beach Volleyball fragments across Europe but not a tangible product with which the CEV could approach the big media companies and sell it. He also noted that the CEV could take lessons from practices followed by other media-attractive, premium sports on TV, like the case of biathlon, who chose the big markets, signed big deals and got the premium time slot in the big media stations and thus it grew as a sport. He acknowledged the potential of Beach Volleyball as one of the most attractive sports in the Summer Games. He believed they should use the upbeat dynamic of that think tank, linking the work to previous years' experience. He praised the initiative and said they were working hard on providing that first blueprint to the rest of the Board so as to move to decisions.

Lastly, he set forth as a top priority the need to convey to the FIVB the notion that the CEV was very well on top of its territory and working effectively. In the future they would need to involve the CEV in whatever decision and strategy, so as to come up with a unified product.

Ms LABRADOR took the floor and reported on the lengthy meetings they had held with a lot of the National Federations. She felt that the fact that they conducted the meeting and discussed the proposals had been very well received by the National Federations and they had welcomed the opportunity to share what they had been doing and also to learn from others. She believed it was something that should be carried on forward from the CEV's end, holding regular meetings, since one of the points was to form a forum where they could hold discussions. A meeting of the three sub groups would take place on the following day in order to gather all the input and proceed to actions.

Mr EVERAERT then wished to share some updates regarding the clubs subgroup, since he had been in contact with the participants of that meeting. In connection with Mr BACH's message, he believed that the CEV should realise that there was a specific structure with clubs in Europe, which was really important. Organising events with the business model was a big challenge. Creating Beach Volleyball clubs represented a particularly interesting business model, Volleyball being a cheap sport and earning money from it was easy. Nevertheless, until then there was no system where the clubs could be part of a competition model. Therefore, he deemed important to give the clubs a position in the CEV Beach Volleyball system, something that emerged as a big opportunity, not only for the elite players, but also for the second level ones.

In addition, he described how some circumstances led to the creation of King of Courts, the company of Mr Wilco NIJLAND, proving that a club, given the right amount of dedication, could be a very successful business, providing a really attractive product for TV. Therefore, he argued that the CEV should formulate the clubs system also thinking in terms of the TV product.

The CEV President added that in case of ideas discussed in Europe, they were always communicated to the FIVB, in order to achieve better and stronger solutions. He also noted that the FIVB had been invited to participate in the discussions about Beach Volleyball, but in the end they did not attend. He explained that the aim was to build bridges of cooperation with the FIVB and not only work within Europe, emphasising the principle of open communication. Then he thanked all the working group members for their time and input, noting that their work was a good start in making Beach Volleyball stronger. He expressed his concerns that there was not a lot of active participation from the FIVB and despite the big investments, the discipline was not developed or promoted as expected.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI shared his experience from Poland, which had organised Beach Volleyball tournaments, playing matches of four against four, an event which had attracted a lot of public and media attention. He suggested the idea of creating a CEV Summer Beach Volleyball League.

Mr BORIČIĆ also mentioned the initiative of Mr GANEV, who had organised eight Beach Volleyball tournaments. While it had been an impressive achievement, it still did not resonate throughout the whole Europe, since it only came from one country. He also proposed that a first step could be to research how many countries had clubs in Beach Volleyball and subsequently to encourage some countries to form Beach Volleyball clubs.

Furthermore, a third idea was to proceed with organising competitions in countries without clubs and finally creating a CEV clubs competition in Beach Volleyball. He felt that it could be a sign of progress and hope for many players that could gain recognition within Europe. Another important step would be to have a unified system, going to a clubs competition based on the same regulations, a common system for all clubs and countries from the start.

Mr ARENA shared his experience from Italy, where the club competitions were registered in the National Federation and the players were linked to their club. In addition, the club had to be officially registered in the National Federation. Secondly, he reported that they organised matches of four against four, calling it Sand Volley, instead of Beach Volleyball which was played in two by two matches, following the FIVB system. He informed that they had club competitions in winter and summer season with two against two. In 2021 they had also started with age-category club competitions, in order to increase the activities and form the next generation of players.

Mr BORIČIĆ affirmed the need for clubs to be linked to their National Federations, all the CEV competitions should belong to them, and they subsequently can send the applications to the CEV. Some technical questions were raised, but the CEV President referred them to the European Beach Volleyball Commission.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS took the floor and said that he had the pleasure and honour to participate in the think tank and divulged that he was surprised by the difference in the level of organisation across the various National Federations and felt that it would be a crucial factor when trying to organise a unified system. He also wished to emphasise that looking in developing the age-category games there were some different models they were working with and he suggested that it would be helpful to create a development programme for Beach Volleyball similar to the School Project, with which it would be possible to see on different models how to develop youth tournaments and game forms within clubs.

Concluding the discussion, the CEV President said that the European Beach Volleyball Commission could start collecting data regarding clubs, systems and all the relevant issues, so as to prepare a proposal for the next CEV Board Meeting.

## 6.Competition Matters

### **CEV EuroBeachVolley 2021**

Mr Thorsten ENDRES, CEV Managing Director, took the floor and informed everyone about the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2021 taking place on 11-15 August 2021 in Vienna (AUT), right after the Olympic Games in Tokyo. The latest meeting was held with the promoter company ACTS, which had also participated in the Beach Volleyball think tank discussions. He reported that they were optimistic about the possibility of having spectators in the Covid-proof stadium. The biggest concern was about the players arriving in Vienna right after the Olympic Games in Tokyo and whether all teams would be allowed to enter the country. For that reason, contacts with the national and local authorities were made so as to ensure an equal opportunity to all the teams, as was the pre-condition for all the CEV competitions.

He also wished to emphasise that, as discussed during the previous CEV Board Meeting, the company ACTS was a worldwide known promoter, having organised many top Beach Volleyball events in the past.



The interesting development was that the ACTS group had realised the need to connect with the National Federations and to build up from the grassroots level, not starting directly with the top major events. There was a strong interest from their side for a future collaboration with the CEV. Mr ENDRES added that the CEV together with the National Federations could also benefit from the ACTS's accumulated experience. The discussions were still at the beginning, but as soon as they would have a concrete proposal on paper, they would communicate it to the CEV Board for a potential future collaboration. Regarding the EuroBeachVolley, he reported that the collaboration had been very good and he believed the event would be successful. Infront was also deeply involved, providing a great TV show.

There was a quite optimistic feeling about the event. The CEV President was happy to observe that little by little there was a stir in the market and the focus had started to shift towards Volleyball events.

### **CEV EuroVolley 2021**

Mr ARENA addressed the meeting and wished to present the latest information regarding the CEV EuroVolley 2021 Men's Competition. A meeting was going to be scheduled in Poland to further discuss some points regarding the organisation. He announced that the CEV EuroVolley Drawing of Lots for Men's Competitions would take place in a TV Studio without spectators in Finland on 27 May 2021. Some last issues needed to be confirmed, but generally everything was working out smoothly. Estonia and Finland had already started with ticketing procedures. The stadiums would be filled to a 30% of their capacity and he reported that in Estonia the tickets were already sold-out from the first day. Tickets were also sold-out in Finland. Selling of tickets had also started in Poland, but in the meantime they were waiting for some changes in the restrictions. Based on the latest news Mr ARENA had received, as of 26 May 2021 the stadiums could be filled with spectators up to 50% of their capacities, expressing his satisfaction for that development and wishing that similar measures would apply in Czech Republic.

Mr Lubor HALANDA, CEV Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs, informed the CEV Board regarding the Women's competitions of CEV EuroVolley 2021. He stated that the preparations were on the right track, they were working closely with the organisers and the CEV departments on a daily basis. Inspection visits had already been performed in all the venues, with the last site visits in Zadar, Croatia, to take place in the following week. The Drawing of Lots for Women's competition would take place on 20 May 2021 in the City Hall of Belgrade, Serbia. He reported that the ticket sale would start after the Drawing of Lots in the four co-hosting countries. He also announced that the Semi-Finals and the Finals would be played in Belgrade with 50% capacity and the same would apply for the matches to be played in Plovdiv in Bulgaria.

The CEV President was very pleased that the sale of the tickets had already started and cautioned that the organisers should take into account the fact that the pandemic was still ongoing, so they would not put any blame on the CEV, in case the sales would not go as expected. He referred to the example of the Olympic Games in Japan, where ticket sales had started, but in the meantime it was announced that spectators outside of Japan would not be allowed to enter, resulting to almost 1 million in refunds. He advised that the four organisers should be ready for the risk of having to stop the sales or refunding tickets. The CEV was not to be held liable for those potential risks.

Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of working hard for promoting the EuroVolley especially in the context of the pandemic, where priorities were different. He opined that after the two Drawing of Lots events, the promotion actions could be intensified, in order to raise awareness and bring as many people as possible.

Mr ROPRET reiterated that the risk regarding the tickets was quite high, since there was also the possibility of having zero spectators, based on the latest news regarding the Olympic Games in Japan. He further proposed to try and insure the competitions, so as to minimise the potential risks, to which Mr ENDRES replied that the answer they had gotten from various insurance companies since the beginning

of the pandemic was negative, since the pandemic and Covid-19 did not longer form part of the insurance coverage.

### **CEV EuroVolley 2023 & 2025**

The CEV President expressed how pleased he was that the organisers of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 – Men were determined:

- Italy to organise up to the Final with a 2 million € Organiser fee
- Bulgaria to organise matches including the Quarter-Finals with 1.2 million € Organiser fee
- North Macedonia to organise one Preliminary Pool with 650,000 € Organiser fee
- Ukraine to organise one Preliminary Pool with 650,000 € Organiser fee

Moving to Women's competition, the CEV had received a letter from Austria for organising one Pool with 650,000 € Organiser fee. Belgium, Estonia, The Netherlands and Slovenia had also expressed interest in organising something.

Mr ROPRET first stated that in the Slovenian Federation they were very happy to be included in that group and then wished to clarify at the moment the situation in their country was quite unstable regarding the government, thus he expressed his concerns on obtaining support from the government for Volleyball. They wished to remain a potential candidate, but needed to receive the official confirmation of their government that they would provide support.

Mr BORIČIĆ was quite pleased to divulge that there was an increasing interest in organising competitions from the Federations, a real difference in comparison to the past.

Mr LEITNER wished to share that there was a similar situation as in Slovenia and other countries. He stated that they had substantial informal support from their government but they needed a formal letter from the CEV outlining the requirements and stating the amount of the fee. They needed to do the overall budget in order to officially apply for the subsidy. Mr BORIČIĆ promised that by 15 May all organisers would receive the necessary documents.

### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of ITA, BUL, MKD and UKR as co-hosting National Federations of the CEV EuroVolley 2023 Men event.**

### **CEV Age-Group Volleyball European Championships**

Further to the CEV Board discussion on increasing the number of teams in the senior competitions, Mr BORIČIĆ advised that there should be also an adjustments in the Age-Group categories. The proposal was to increase from 12 to 16 teams starting with the U16/17 categories in 2023. Beyond this date, the appointed organisers were Slovenia, Serbia and Scotland and probably also Ireland. He wished to express how pleased he was about Scotland organising such an event in 2024, stating that it would be a good opportunity to promote Volleyball in the Great Britain.

Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING, CEV Vice-President, confirmed that they were in contact with two other Federations, Ireland and England. She informed that they were in the process of working with the CEV to organise the budget and the marketing. As for the decision to increase the number of teams, she believed that it would have significant impact on the organisation and said she was very interested to hear the other Board members' opinions on that matter. Lastly, she added that it was a unique opportunity for the UK and that Scotland was very proud to be leading the way on behalf of the UK Islands and thanked the CEV President for the opportunity.

Mr BORIČIĆ reiterated the importance of promoting the events in the three years prior to the championship and stated that the main goal was to benefit all the small Federations.

He acknowledged that the increase of the teams would be challenging and proposed that there could be a small additional contribution from the part of the CEV, so as to help the already appointed Federations, especially the ones of categories 1 and 2, to organise events.

As a principle rule for the future, in case Federations of category 1 & 2 wished to host the Final Round, the CEV President proposed that the CEV should also provide technical support, apart from the financial one. Therefore, he suggested to provide them with the Gerflor playing surface to support the organisers and protect the young athletes and offer them the same conditions as the senior teams.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided for all future age-group European Championships to provide National Federations of category 1 & 2 hosting a Final Round with a Gerflor playing surface.**

Mr Thorsten ENDRES invited the CEV Board to make a decision based on the proposal submitted by the European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC) and the CEV Office. The proposal and the preferred option was to harmonise the qualification method for all three existing under-age categories. He explained that for the moment there were Zonal Qualifications and the 2nd Round on the CEV level for the U16/17 and U17/18, while for U19/20 there were up to three Qualification Rounds. The proposal was to introduce also the oldest age category in the same harmonised system, so as to have a 1st Round organised on the Zonal level and then the 2nd Round on the CEV level. In addition, there should be an adjustment in view of the increase of the number of the teams in the Final Round from 12 to 16 starting with the U16/U17 edition in 2022/2023.

Mr BORIČIĆ wished to give an overview of the proposal. He opined that Zonal activities should be given due respect. When events were organised within the Zonal Associations, there was less cost for the transportation, which was an important factor for many smaller National Federations. He stated that the young players needed to participate in more matches and competitions. He also explained that the teams that did not qualify would have the right to play in the second round. However, the teams that could not show up in the Zonal Round, could not participate in the European Championship.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to increase the number of teams from 12 to 16 in the Finals Rounds for the age-group categories U16/17, U17/18 and U19/20, as of the U16/17 European Championship in 2023.**

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to use the same two round qualification formula for U16/17, U17/18 and U19/20, with the 1st Round organised by the Zonal Association and the 2nd Round on European level.**

Regarding the re-introduction of U22/23 European Championship, Mr BORIČIĆ shared his opinion that there should be a separation of the senior and the U22/23 European Championship in the same year. He elaborated on the matter, saying that many smaller Federations did not have many players. Therefore, the intention to develop more activities and give more opportunities to more players was in the right direction. He advised that those two events should not take place in the same year. Consequently, since the senior Championships were organised in odd years, there could be another

competition in the even years. After the CEV Board decision, the ESOC could elaborate on the technical procedure.

Mr ENDRES wished to clarify that there would be no U23 category, but category U21/22 in order to allow a continuous flow from the existing age groups, with the final rounds organised in each even year. The proposal was to start with a kind of test event of U22/21 in 2022, to have a qualification at the end of May 2022 and the Final Round in July 2022. From the 2024 edition onwards, qualifications would take place in July 2023 and the Final Round in July 2024.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to introduce a new category U21/22 and delegated the technical implementation based on the number of registered teams to the ESOC and the CEV office.**

### CEV European Volleyball Ranking

The CEV President informed that the CEV Board already decided to respect and use the FIVB ranking system for the CEV ranking. The European ranking would be based on the results of the CEV events and all matches during FIVB events among European teams. The results could come from any competition. The implementation of that system was to start from January 2022.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to start the new ranking system for the European Volleyball Ranking as of 01 January 2022.**

### CEV European Cups 2021-2022

The CEV President explained that the proposed CEV European Cups 2021-2022 calendar was in line with the initial formed calendar together with the FIVB until 2024, but there were occasional changes implemented to it. Therefore, the proposal of the amended would be submitted to the FIVB for potential comments.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed European Cups calendar for the 2021-2022 season.**

He then announced that the CEV European Volleyball Cups 2022 Drawing of Lots would take place on 25 June 2021 in Luxembourg. He also reported that there was a proposal to organise the CEV Gala and the Drawing of Lots for the 4th Round of the CEV Champions League Volley in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The President of the Slovenian Federation and the Mayor of Ljubljana had already confirmed.

## 7. Financial Matters

### CEV Office building mortgage

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President and Treasurer addressed the meeting and reminded everyone of the mandate the CEV President and himself had received concerning the mortgage of the CEV Office Headquarters building in Luxembourg. He reported that, after consultation with the CEV Office, the

Finance Department and the European Finance Commission, they had decided on 21 April 2021 to terminate the mortgage.

He gave a quick overview of the offer the CEV had received from the bank regarding the mortgage. The various bodies they had consulted advised them to proceed with the payoff of the mortgage, as there would be no penalty at that moment. He added that through the years the CEV had been receiving support of 50,000 from the Luxembourgish Government. They also consulted with the CEV Legal department in order to be able and retain that support for the years to come.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the decision to terminate the mortgage for the CEV Office Headquarters building.**

## **Auditors' report**

According to the Budget presented at the General Assembly, the accounts would reach a plus of 100,000 € in 2020. Based on the results of 2020, the final amount reached approx. 500,000 € more than the budget. Mr ADLER reminded that for 2021 the budget predicted a -1.5 million. There were discussions with the Auditors, the CEV President and the CEV Office and they concluded to consider the years 2020 and 2021 together as one picture, due to the impact of the pandemic.

The CEV President wished to add that instead of focusing on the negative number in the budget, he preferred to see the positive move that the CEV was the only body to invest 11.5 million € in support during the pandemic. He also pointed out that the CEV had increased the prize money in all competitions, in the European Cups and in EuroVolley. He argued that the CEV money could not just stay in the bank. That money supported many activities and provided a lot of help. He then thanked Mr ADLER and praised him, together with the Internal and External Auditors, for their great job.

Mr ADLER then gave an overview of the initial reports from the Internal and External Audits, which were positive. The Auditors had mentioned that in February 2020, when the CEV had signed the agreement with Infront, a few days before the pandemic hit Europe, it had been a very positive initiative, the result of a good strategic move from the CEV Leadership. The Auditors also took into account to the prize money increase.

One issue raised by the Auditors was the balance of receivables, which was a little bit high. Mr ADLER informed that they were working on it with the External Auditors and they were focusing on some of the debts both from companies and National Federations. They would see how they would follow-up on those, whether they would proceed with legal procedures for the companies debts, etc. The External Auditors also pointed out that Infront had paid the invoices on time, which was always a good sign for any partnership, considering also the fact that many media companies had been under a lot of pressure.

## **Infront partnership**

Furthermore, he wished to provide an update regarding the Infront partnership. He reported that the third Steering Committee took place on the previous day, with Mr ENDRES, Mr ARENA, Mr Aurèle WEYENETH, CEV Head of Digital from the CEV Office, and himself. He stated that it had been a fruitful meeting. After the first cycle of the partnership, Infront had reached its budget, something which would otherwise have been a point of concern in the context of the pandemic. That fact would alleviate the pressure on the group and it would also mean that both parties could start looking forward on how they could develop more on that partnership. Overall, he believed it had been a very positive meeting, they discussed on how they would tackle some markets, what could be done digitally, etc.



## **Support to the Croatian Federation**

Similar to the support provided previously to the Albanian Federation after the destructive earthquake in 2019, Mr BORIČIĆ proposed to offer an extraordinary first aid financial support of 40,000 € to the Croatian Federation, since Croatia had also been hit by an earthquake and the Federation's offices were completely destroyed.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to provide extraordinary financial support amounting to 40,000 € to the Croatian Federation.**

## **8. Proposals from Board members**

No further proposals presented.

## **9. Proposals from Commissions / CEV Regulatory Framework**

Mr ENDRES addressed the meeting to present the proposals of the Commissions. He referred everyone to the updated working file and stated that the Commissions had worked together with the CEV Office and the European Legal Commission, in order to propose updates for the Volleyball, Beach Volleyball and Snow Volleyball Competition Regulations. He noted that most of the changes were updates, definitions and wordings according to the signed contracts with AMI and Infront. The Regulations were updated also according to the decisions of the FIVB Congress in order to update the rules of the game.

The European Cups Commission had made a proposal to make the next steps of the CEV Cup and CEV Challenge Cup for the requirement of the challenge system. For the CEV Cup starting from the Quarter-Finals and in the CEV Challenge Cup starting from the Semi-Finals. The clubs had requested to use the challenge system and to have it as a standard component for the future.

Some more minor changes were also introduced, based on the ongoing experience and the learnings taken from the previous season. Following the CEV Board decision for the new ranking, the Competitions Regulations would have to be updated accordingly.

Moving to the General Regulations, the Legal Commission added an amendment, based on the CEV Board's request in 2020 regarding the Extraordinary General Assembly, which did not exist before. In addition, there was a proposal to introduce the possibility for a consultation by circulation with the National Federations for the General Assembly, an option which was not available in the past.

In that line, the Legal Commission had also made proposals for some amendments in the Statutes. Mr ENDRES informed everyone that after the approval of the CEV Board, the changes would also require the approval of the General Assembly. Following the FIVB Congress, which adjusted the age limit for candidates for the FIVB and continental bodies from 75 to 72, there had not been any Legal Commission meeting. Therefore, Mr ENDRES noted that the Legal Commission would work on adjusting the CEV Statutes accordingly.



## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the amendments to the CEV Volleyball, Beach Volleyball, Snow Volleyball Competitions Regulations, to the CEV General Regulations and to the CEV Statutes (the latter to be presented for decision to the XLII CEV General Assembly)**

## 10. Any other business

Mr BORIČIĆ offered a small welcome gift to the newly elected CEV Board members, Mr Jalil JAFAROV, and Mr Metod ROPRET.

## 11. Next meeting

For the next CEV Board meeting, Mr BORIČIĆ proposed to convene in Vienna (AUT) in the framework of the EuroBeachVolley 2021 taking place on 11-15 August 2021.

## 12. Closing of the Meeting

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked everyone for their contribution in the discussion and their understanding. He firmly believed that they could succeed in unifying the European Volleyball family and in sending out a strong message as on Volleyball team.

Board of Administration Meeting held at the Due Torri Hotel in Verona (ITA)  
30 April 2021

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting  
held at the Novotel  
Hotel Kirchberg, in  
Luxembourg (LUX)

26 February 2021



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



Place: Novotel Hotel Kirchberg, Luxembourg (LUX)

Date: Friday, 26 February 2021

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
online	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
online	Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
online	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
online	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
online	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director



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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, officially opened the meeting, welcomed all the CEV Board of Administration members and thanked those who granted the meeting with their physical presence in Luxembourg. He then congratulated the elected European Representatives in the FIVB Board of Administration for the new mandate and especially Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING, being the tenth European Representative elected FIVB Vice President among the gender in minority candidates. He was confident that the new Representatives would be able to achieve a lot for Volleyball in general, not only for Europe.

He also referred to the concept "You are CEV" and spoke about the importance of having common values and principles as an Institution, values that could be recognised as the trademark of CEV and make the Institution stronger. He reminded his colleagues that as CEV Board members their duty is to defend European interests and not national ones.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.

## 3. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held online on 27 November 2020

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held online on 27 November 2020.

## 4. FIVB

### FIVB Congress

Commenting the FIVB Congress, Mr BORIČIĆ was very pleased about the fact that there were ten European Representatives at the FIVB Board of Administration. He also noticed the advantage of having a physical CEV Congress in Vienna, since it allowed for a more direct and immediate exchange and access to information.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked the professional team of the CEV Office and Infront for the excellent video report they had prepared. He divulged that other continents had started asking for the video, in order to present it to their countries as a good promotion for the sport.

### FIVB Cooperation

As for the FIVB Cooperation, Mr BORIČIĆ spoke about the importance of having five different continents with different interests under one Institution. He asserted that Europe was the leading continent in terms of activities, which sometimes posed problems when it came to organising the calendar. He also



mentioned the fact that Europe was the only continent with strong club competitions, claiming that the CEV was striving to achieve a balance between the National Championships and the Clubs Competitions. Once again, he referred to the message of Mr Thomas BACH, the President of the International Olympic Committee, who said that the clubs were the heart and strength of Sport in Europe. He believed that it was a significant and beneficial message that could serve as a point of reference when discussing with the other continents.

Naturally, Mr BORIČIĆ noted that the European Representatives at the FIVB Board should first serve the interests of Volleyball and not the personal or national ones, not even only the European ones. Bringing value to Volleyball in general would benefit directly the CEV and European Volleyball. He then opened the floor to the colleagues of the CEV Board.

Mr Geert DE DOBBELLER, CEV Board of Administration member, remarked that it would be important that the CEV, as well as the European Representatives elected in the FIVB, would be accepted as spokespersons of the member federations of the CEV. He expressed his concerns on how the communication lines would be formed in the future, since in many cases the FIVB would contact directly some countries regarding projects and plans, without involving the CEV.

Finally, Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his hope that the CEV would remain the leading force of Volleyball within the FIVB.

## 5. The Future of European Volleyball

### Proposals from CEV Commissions

Mr BORIČIĆ recounted that he had invited all CEV Commission Presidents to organise meetings in order to prepare a strategic plan for the 2020-2024 mandate and he had insisted on including the contribution and the proposals of all members. He commented that in the past there was a tendency in the CEV Commissions to maintain a purely administrative role. However, Mr BORIČIĆ highlighted that it was a time to speak about the future. The Board members had already received the minutes of all the CEV Commission Minutes including their proposals and he wished to open the discussion about them.

Starting with Beach Volleyball, Mr BORIČIĆ wanted to thank the President of the Bulgarian Federation and CEV Board member, Mr Lubomir GANEV, because he had initiated a great deal of work for Beach Volleyball in Bulgaria, with eight one star tournaments. He recognised the importance of that development but also opined that eight tournaments in only one country would not benefit the general value of Volleyball that much, clarifying that activities were needed everywhere.

He also added that it was important to work on increasing and strengthening Beach Volleyball in the future. Beach Volleyball would usually get a lot of attention and discussions around the Olympics, but afterwards the attention would decrease. One of the most revealing examples regarding the situation of Beach Volleyball was the Continental Cup, which would qualify teams for the Olympics. He explained how problematic it would be if no one would step in to organise such a major Continental event for the sport. He thanked the Volleyball Federation of The Netherlands that gave a solution and accepted to organise that event. He pointed out that Beach Volleyball was in need of practical ideas in order to improve the status of activities for the sport.

He remarked that it was not so much a question of quantity of tournaments organised, but rather a matter of better promoting Beach Volleyball. He affirmed how important it was to join the forces of the CEV Beach Volleyball and Digital Departments, as well as the forces of CEV's partner, Infront, in order to show everyone, to the member federations and beyond, the beauty and potential of Beach Volleyball. He noted that currently Beach Volleyball was not a recognised sport in many countries. Even strong Volleyball Federations were not as active in promoting Beach Volleyball. He admitted it was not

an easy task, but was confident that they could achieve a lot of improvements. He then opened the floor to the Board members to comment on the proposals regarding Beach Volleyball.

Mr Lennart NEOVIUS, CEV Board of Administration member, stated that in the Nordic countries there was an effort to step up with the promotion of the sport, but those efforts were unfortunately halted by the surge of the coronavirus pandemic. They were looking at the overall picture of the sport for its future development and increase of activities. He wished to emphasise that the Nordic countries were trying to simulate the star system events in their national series, starting with 1-5 star events in their national tour. He believed it would be good for the teams to make a national starting step and then continue to the elite and international system. They were working on implementing that system for the young kids activities.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Vice-President, having been the President of the European Beach Volleyball Commission (EBVC) for four years, he could recognise that the problem the EBVC was facing was that they were expected to do anything from developing the strategy to the execution of the events. According to him, in order to develop a better strategy, more people should be involved. Studying the minutes of the Commission's meeting, he could see that the members were excellent in the execution and delivery of events, discussing mostly details of technical nature. He asserted that the technical approach was not enough to shape and change the future of the sport. In that perspective, it was crucial to have a think tank specifically for Beach Volleyball. He affirmed that Beach Volleyball needed a change in thinking as well as the involvement of the National Federations. Lastly, he argued that it was important to clarify whether the role of the EBVC would be more of an executing entity for the organisation of events or that of a strategic organ, in which case the federations would have to send different people.

Mr BORIČIĆ commented that there were many differences in Beach Volleyball across Europe. He mentioned the example of The Netherlands with many clubs, while other federations did not even have enough players. He remarked that in the context of the pandemic, the sport was facing major difficulties, since the players in many countries did not have any kind of support. Contrary to Indoor Volleyball, in Beach Volleyball the players were not covered by a contract, a salary, any kind of support or the involvement of the Federation. Without clubs and contracts, securing a sponsorship was very difficult, since the companies were facing problems. Mr BORIČIĆ recognised that the situation might be different for the top Beach Volleyball players, but the sport could not only rely on them. He pointed out the need for young players to join the sport and for federations to organise many more activities.

The classification of federations in categories 1 and 2 would mainly focus on Indoor Volleyball, while the case of Beach Volleyball was different. He mentioned the example of the Serbian Federation. The federation featured in category 5 for Indoor Volleyball, with many successful championships in Men and Women competitions. However, in Beach Volleyball the status was completely different. Mr BORIČIĆ argued that the current classification of federations did not depict those differences and was in favour of applying a different kind of classification, including also Snow Volleyball. He went further to suggest organising a panel which would only focus the discussion on Beach Volleyball, since it was such a critical matter to address.

Mr Gernot LEITNER, CEV Board of Administration member, drew the attention to the important crossroad at that time: The FIVB and the CEV had signed a multi-million contract. Beach Volleyball was one of the biggest sports in the Olympics. He noted that Beach Volleyball had premium and lower level products. He believed that it was very important that Europe was the biggest market for both Indoor and Beach Volleyball. Beach Volleyball was starting to get stronger. He agreed with Mr EVERAERT that the EBVC was required to manage many and different elements: administrative, regulatory, etc. He stated that laying out a strategy in order to reach the level of a sport like tennis or other super commercial sports with a pyramid system would be the main task of 2021. By 2022 the FIVB would come up with a new structure with a lot of money and the CEV would have to be ready to play its part in that venture.

Mr BORIČIĆ added that in order to devise an efficient strategy for the future, it would be important to keep the development and the organisational projects separate. The FIVB had established the structure of five star tournaments and had changed its approach regarding event organising. There was a great effort from the part of the CEV to upgrade the European Beach Volleyball Championship and assign a

bigger value to it. He cautioned that depriving the European Championship of the high value it rightly deserved and keeping it at the level of one star tournaments would not send out a good message to the Volleyball community. A lower value Championship would run the risk of failing to attract elite players.

Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING, CEV Vice-President, asked whether the CEV was considering as a European organisation to set different federation categories for Beach, Indoor and Snow Volleyball.

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the discussion conducted on the previous day on collecting data in order to have a better understanding of the federations, the clubs, the players and of the potential to further invest in future activities. He recounted that federations were asking for support in terms of balls, nets and money, in order to organise a Beach Volleyball event. In many cases, those initiatives would come once every two years, and that would be the only activity for the sport. He proposed that since the current composition of the CEV Board included people that were involved in Beach Volleyball, they could potentially form a panel specifically for Beach Volleyball in order to devise a strategic plan and not leave the entire responsibility only to the EBVC.

Mr DE DOBBELEER noted that Indoor Volleyball activities with clubs were very important. He even disclosed that during the summer, a lot of Indoor Volleyball players played tennis or other sports. Therefore, he suggested that an idea would be to motivate the Indoor Volleyball players to engage also with Beach Volleyball in the summer, when they do not have club obligations.

Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, CEV Vice-President, shared the approach followed in Poland regarding Beach Volleyball, which could be further applied by other federations during the summer. They had been organising Beach Volleyball tournaments with clubs that played in the National League. The players with no further obligations played matches of four against four. He commented that it had been a very successful promotional activity, with a great participation of spectators. There were five tournaments in 2020, all of them broadcasted by the Polish TV (Polsat).

Mr BORIČIĆ spoke of the importance of first collecting all the information on the differences across the federations. After that, the CEV could provide more solid information to the federations and let them choose the system that would suit them in the best way. While a concept like the one in Poland would be difficult to apply in smaller countries, it could potentially benefit some other bigger federations. He reiterated that the value of the European Championship in Beach Volleyball should be kept on a high level. He believed that the CEV and the FIVB should join forces and send out a strong message supporting Beach Volleyball.

Mr Renato ARENA, CEV Senior Vice-President, believed that the most important goal in Beach Volleyball should be to establish a stronger connection among the club/players and the respective National Federation. He mentioned, for example, that some federations sent applications for Beach Volleyball events only at the last minute, because the promoters had sent their organisation plan to the federations at the last minute. He argued that federations should not get involved in the technical details in regards to the organisation of the event, and thus delay their applications. Unlike Indoor Volleyball, where the organisational planning would start in October and last until May, Beach Volleyball needed a different concept. He suggested that the CEV should help change the model of the Beach Volleyball competitions and bring it closer to the federations.

Mr NEOVIUS wished to give a short recount on the effort that was being made in Sweden to start with National Leagues and also going for the European League in Beach Volleyball. He believed that the sport should be built more around teams and not on individual players. He added that they tried to apply that concept also in youth clubs and that it could be an interesting development that could receive some support.

Mr BORIČIĆ concluded by saying that all the minutes of that meeting containing all the proposals could be presented to all the Board members as well as the EBVC in order to incite further discussions and actions in the near future. Furthermore, he noted that along with the FIVB, the CEV should finalise the structure of Beach Volleyball for the future and focus on what was especially important for Europe. He

emphasised that the focus should not only be on organising five star tournaments, but on developing Beach Volleyball for the future.

### Proposals from the European Beach Volleyball Commission

Mr ENDRES referred to the three areas of proposals submitted by the EBVC. One of the proposals regarded the age-group ranking for the championship played in 2020, for which the EBVC proposed that the teams that had not participated in the Championship due to Covid-19 related restrictions should also be allocated points. He noted, though, that there was an issue with that proposal, because the CEV needed to see the bigger picture for both Volleyball and Beach Volleyball. He reminded everyone that for Volleyball the CEV Board had decided in the previous year that the teams which had not participated would not receive any points. Consequently, the same principle should be applied also for Beach Volleyball. He recognised that this would create a negative impact for some federations. In Beach Volleyball, if a team did not have enough ranking points to qualify immediately for the main draw, the team would have to play the qualification. He deemed that it was a fair solution and that the CEV should not make an exception for Beach Volleyball. Therefore, the suggestion to the CEV Board was to not approve the proposal made by the EBVC and to keep the same principle for both disciplines.

He then moved to the second proposal, which regarded the zonal events. The EBVC had submitted some proposals to amend the structure and number of events to be organised in each country and zonal association. Based on what the CEV President had referred to regarding the ongoing discussion in the think tank and the potential expected changes within the FIVB, the proposal to the CEV Board was to not proceed to changes for the zonal events for the current year, to maintain the existing structure and wait for the development of the discussions in the relevant CEV think tank, as well as the new structure of the FIVB, and then to adapt accordingly.

The third area of proposals was about the changes in the regulations. Mr ENDRES referred everyone to the working file. He informed that the CEV Legal Commission had reviewed the changes and approved them. Therefore, the suggestion to the CEV Board was to accept the proposed changes in the Beach Volleyball Competition Regulations.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided:

- to not allocate ranking points to the Beach Volleyball teams that did not participate in Age-group Championships 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions;
- to maintain the same conditions and requirements for the Zonal Beach Volleyball events in 2021;
- to approve the proposed amendments in the Beach Volleyball Competitions Regulations.

### Proposals from the European Coaches Commission:

Moving on to the proposals from the European Coaches Commission (ECOC), Mr BORIČIĆ first wished to thank the Slovenian Federation for organising the first Coaches Convention in 2019 and expressed the intention to continue in 2021. He also referred to the Coaches Cooperation project with the Asian Volleyball Confederation and the European Union. He mentioned that in 2019 there were 120 teachers and coaches in Slovenia. In 2020, the Coaches Convention was suspended and the budget was not spent. Therefore, he proposed to accumulate the budget for 2020 and 2021 and aim for a Coaches Convention with 300 teachers and coaches, claiming that the CEV was stronger, backed by a strong contract.

He divulged that during the FIVB Congress he had offered the opportunity to other continents to join the CEV in that project and reiterated the need to expand as much as possible the involvement of teachers in such a project. He elaborated on the very significant role of the coaches in motivating and inspiring children to get started and stay involved in Volleyball. He underlined that the aim was to have coaching experts working with the children. He added that those 300 teachers and coaches could transfer their experience and influence even more coaches, and thus potentially reach out to more children.

He also referred to the proposal of the ECOC to organise a Coaches Convention for the top coaches, for which he was not in favour, since there was already a Coaches Platform in the FIVB for the top coaches. With all the upcoming big sports events in 2021, it would be a busy year for the top coaches and he expressed his concerns about organising a meeting with them, even if technology would solve logistics issues. Therefore, he reiterated the need to prioritise the Convention for the teachers and coaches of children.

Mr BORIČIĆ also spoke about the educational material proposed by the ECOC and expressed his support on that. Referring to the video report prepared for the FIVB Congress by the CEV Office in collaboration with Infront, he asserted that through its partnership with Infront, the CEV was in a very strong position to produce educational and promotional material.

Mr ROPRET took the floor and said how pleased he was that the first Coaches Convention was considered a success and communicated how optimistic they were in the Slovenian Federation about organising the second one. He promised to deliver an even better Convention.

Mr BORIČIĆ mentioned that the priority was to figure out the complexities created by the coronavirus restrictions. Solutions were needed in order to be able to accommodate a physical presence Convention of 300 people.

Mr Geert DE DOBBELEER suggested that in the context of collecting data, it would be interesting to also collect data on teachers and coaches in the member federations, since they played a crucial role for the good level of the sport. In addition, with Volleyball being a popular sport among women, he believed it would be interesting to know how many women coaches existed across the federations.

Referring to the proposal brought by Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI in the Marketing Working Group regarding the collection of data, Mr BORIČIĆ disclosed that in the meeting of the CEV Executive Committee, held on the previous day, they had accepted to collaborate with a company not related to Volleyball. He commented that the CEV needed the knowledge and experience of outside experts in order to collect data for so many aspects of the sport: data on players, clubs, federations, competitions, spectators, etc. Having the right solid data on Volleyball would be greatly beneficial for the member federations. Having grasp of the volume of investment and involvement of Volleyball across Europe would strengthen their position within their own country. Having the right numbers and figures would serve as a negotiation tool and a way to inspire the respect that Volleyball deserved.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI thanked the CEV President for mentioning the hard work they were doing in the Marketing Working Group and proposed to use the term CEV Volleyball data platform when referring to the new data collection project.

Mr LEITNER expressed his support for that project. He recounted that several years ago he had seen a CEV statistic about how many players there were in Europe and some basic quantitative information and mentioned as an example the experience of the Austrian Federation. When they hired a professional data and media observer agency, they had much more success on the marketing front and managed to sell their National Team games and Beach Volleyball Tour in better terms. Any marketing company with a professional approach would base its decisions and strategy on that kind of data. He affirmed that once the data came on the CEV table, it would be possible to link it to very good strategies.

## Decision

On the proposals from the ECOC, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided:

- to focus the Coaches Convention on physical education teachers and age-group coaches and to increase the participants;
- to utilise the FIVB **Coaches' Platform** for the interaction among senior coaches;
- to continue with the creation of educational material on the CEV Campus.



## Proposals from the European Cups Commission

Mr BORIČIĆ detailed that in various meetings held with clubs, federations and several other important stakeholders, they discussed that while their investment to participate in the international cups was substantial, they only played very few matches. Discussions followed on changing the format, increasing the number of teams per pool, etc. Such a move would lead to having more guaranteed matches for top clubs in the CL. Mr BORIČIĆ clarified that he did not wish to put any pressure on the clubs. He had also received requests to eliminate weaker clubs from the international cups. He suggested to keep the same format for 2021 and then to cooperate with the clubs, in order to discuss potential changes for the 2022-2023 season. He then opened the floor for discussion.

Mr ARENA agreed with the proposal and he remarked that the National Federations had already been informed that there would be a potential change in the format for 2022. Informing everyone beforehand was important, so as to prepare them for the changes. Mr BORIČIĆ affirmed that the intention was to keep everyone up to date and to start cooperating for the next season by gathering all the proposals and reaching a final common solution.

Furthermore, Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his concerns about the feasibility of the ECC proposal to allow the Champions League winner use a different floor colour. As for allowing the Champions League winner to use a special badge on their uniform during the upcoming season, he suggested to start discussions with the experts to reach a solution. Moving to the proposal of utilising the LED lighting system in Champions League, he noted that it would not be possible to use it from the 1st Round by explaining that category 1 and 2 clubs that would typically participate in 1st Round tournaments would struggle with such an investment.

Subsequently, Mr ENDRES took the floor to speak about the ECC proposal on the ranking points. He explained that according the CEV Regulations, if a team withdrew from a competition, the previously collected bonus points would be deleted. However, the CEV Board had decided in 2020 to not impose any financial or disciplinary sanctions to teams that had to withdraw due to Covid-19. Giving an example of Champions League, where teams played in tournament format, Mr ENDRES described a case where a team would play the first tournament and collect several points and then, due to Covid-19 cases or restrictions, it was not able to play the second tournament. According to the CEV Regulations, that team would lose its points for the whole season. Therefore, the ECC had proposed that the teams should maintain the points for the matches they played.

## Decision

In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided:

- to approve the ECC proposal that teams maintain the collected ranking points for the matches they played in season 2020-2021, despite a potential later withdrawal;
- to give the CL winner the right to use a special badge (layout delivered by the CEV) on the uniform during the upcoming season;
- to maintain dedicated CEV trophies for all three European Cup competitions;
- LED to be used in CL by all clubs starting from 4th round;
- No changes to be introduced in the format of the 2021/2022 European Cups season, but dialogue with all stakeholders to be continued in the ultimate goal to increase value of events.

## Proposals from the European Legal Commission

Mr BORIČIĆ started by praising the very good work performed by the European Legal Commission (ELC) and the proposals it had submitted for good governance, improvements of the Legal Framework and of the structure of CEV. He noted that he had proposed to the ELC President to examine all the points in the CEV Statute and Regulations for potential necessary changes.

In addition, judging from his experience from the last presidential elections, he expressed his concerns about the obligation of withdrawal of the CEV President two months prior to the elections, in case the



President also ran as a candidate in that position. He opined that such a clause would put the President in an inferior position compared to the rest of the candidates and, what is more, did not benefit the regular workflow of the Institution. He declared that himself would not be a candidate for the next mandate, but he believed that the elected President or any CEV Board member should serve until the last day of their mandate.

Furthermore, he remarked that a lot of the principles applied in political entities did not suit the needs of sport institutions, since the dynamics were different. He proposed to the ELC President to examine the possibility of potentially eliminating the withdrawal obligation. He invited the rest of the CEV Board members to also look into that issue and suggest potential solutions.

### Decision

In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the activity plan and priorities set by the ELC:

- Good governance;
- Improvement of the Legal Framework;
- Structure of CEV.

### Proposals from the European Medical Commission

Moving to the European Medical Commission (EMC), Mr BORIČIĆ wished to endorse their proposals on performing a post Covid-19 study, a research on heart rate variability training and an anthropological research on children in the scope of the School Project. He suggested that the CEV Board could decide with which company they would cooperate in order to collect the necessary medical data for EMC to use in its research. The EMC could also liaise with the respective medical departments of the national federations in order to collect data on how they dealt with the Covid-19 pandemic, whether they organised competitions with spectators or not and get a general picture of how they handled the situation.

### Decision

In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the following proposals submitted by the EMC:

- Post COVID-19 study;
- Heart Rate Variability Training Research;
- Anthropological research of children in cope of School Project.

### Proposals from the European Refereeing Commission

Mr BORIČIĆ listed the proposals submitted by the European Refereeing Commission (ERC) to increase the cooperation with female referees, to educate referees and to focus especially on the training of Snow Volleyball referees, and to collect data for the evaluation of referees and the results of challenge requests. Once again, he noticed the ever-increasing need for data collection on several aspects of the sport. One of the proposals he was reluctant about was having international referees in all National Federations. He expressed his concerns on that, since in some National Federations other more essential aspects of the sport were barely developed and he argued that this would not necessarily constitute a priority, whereas forming teams, getting more players and coaches would seem more important.

### Decision

In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the following proposals submitted by the ERC:

- Education of Referees and Referee Delegates – Volleyball, Beach Volleyball and Snow Volleyball.



- Development of Snow Volleyball referees as well as work on the regulations for assignments of those referees.
- Keep the focus on talented referees.
- Support the development of female referees in cooperation with FIVB.
- Increase the collection and use of Data for evaluation of Referees and results of Challenge requests, with a new inclusive tool developed in cooperation with CEV Office.

## Proposals from the European Sports Organising Commission

Regarding the proposals from the European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC), Mr BORIČIĆ pointed out that they were received only one day prior to the meeting. Mr BORIČIĆ commented that the commission comprised many new members, with many experienced experts among them. He pointed out that Europe was facing problems in terms of the calendar with the European Championship in 2023. The Olympics qualifications would take place on that year and the FIVB requested that the Continental Championship should start at the beginning of August 2023, which was not a convenient time for Europe. He had a discussion with the FIVB President, Dr Ary S. Graça Fº, in order to apply some flexibility on that regard and they had reached an agreement.

As for the proposals, he invited the CEV Board members to examine them carefully and to send their comments, ideas and input at a later stage. Mr BORIČIĆ intended to hold one more meeting with the ESOC President in order to find a new format of working.

## Working Groups

### Athletes Working Group

Mr Lubomir GANEV, CEV Board of Administration member in charge of the Athletes Working Group, proposed the following:

President: Pawel ZAGUMNY (POL)

Secretary: Nadia CENTONI (ITA)

Members:

Sam DEROO (BEL)

Ekaterina GAMOVA (RUS)

Maja OGNJENović (SRB)

Florian SCHNETZER (AUT)

Tsvetan SOKOLOV (BUL)

He commented that they tried to achieve a proper gender balance and to include a representative from Snow Volleyball. He also added that there were two more available positions to be potentially filled in the future.

## Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the composition of the Athletes Working Group.

### Development and Cooperation with Zonal Associations Working Group

Mr BORIČIĆ informed that Mr Özkan MUTLUGİL had already been appointed as the President of the Development and Cooperation with Zonal Associations Working Group. He announced that the CEV Board member in charge for that Working Group would be Mr Jalil JAFAROV and that Mr MUTLUGİL had proposed the following composition:



President: Mr Özkan MUTLUGIL

Members:

Andrii LJOPA (UKR)  
Kare MOL (NOR)  
Peter MOREL (DEN)  
Erlind PELLUMBI (ALB)  
Nicolas SAUERBREY (FRA)  
Gary STEWART (IRL)  
Magnus TAUSEN (FAR)  
Igor VUSUROVIĆ (MNE)

Mr BORIČIĆ stated that the aim was once again to have a mix of profiles for the composition of the Working Group and include also people coming from federations that needed development and they could offer CEV valuable knowledge and information.

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the composition of the Development and Cooperation with Zonal Associations Working Group.

### Marketing Working Group

Mr BORIČIĆ suggested the appointment of an additional member for the Marketing Working Group, Mr Pavle PIRC (SLO), and reported the full composition of the group:

President: Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI

Members:

Zoran AVRAMOVIĆ (SRB)  
Lubomir GANEV (BUL)  
Peter KLEINMANN (AUT)  
Pavle PIRC (SLO)  
Peter SPRENGER (NED)

### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of an additional member of the Marketing Working Group.

### Snow Volleyball Working Group

For the Snow Volleyball Working Group, Mr BORIČIĆ suggested Mr Peter KLEINMANN as President and Mr Lennart NEOVIUS as the CEV Board member in charge for the Working Group. He added that the aim was to promote Snow Volleyball in all Zonal Associations. He proposed the following members:

President: Peter Kleinmann

Members:

Darius CERKA (LTU)  
Jan-Erik MOEN (NOR)  
Marek PAKOSTA (CZE)  
Stefano SCIASCIA (ITA)  
Tosho STOYANOV (BUL)

### Decision

In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the composition of the Snow Volleyball Working Group.

## Development of Snow Volleyball

Mr BORIČIĆ shared his concerns about the challenges of Snow Volleyball, pointing out that the road to make Snow Volleyball an Olympic Game would have to go through the FIVB. However, he was concerned because it seemed that during the FIVB Congress the attention was mainly focused around Indoor and Beach Volleyball. He was convinced that in order to see some progress, the new sport needed a lot of support, promotion and investment. He praised the efforts of the Austrian Federation and noted that the President of the Austrian Olympic Committee, Mr Karl STOSS, who was also the President of a commission working on new sports for the Olympic Games, seemed willing to support Volleyball. He divulged that he had a discussion with the FIVB President after the FIVB Congress, who had confirmed that he was ready to take actions to promote Snow Volleyball and prepare projects for the future. He was confident that Mr LEITNER could also contribute with his experience, knowledge and networks to the whole effort. He also referred to the successful Snow Volleyball Night event in 2018 organised in PyeongChang, South Korea, which had been a great promotion for the Sport.

Mr LEITNER took the floor and expressed his determination to motivate the National Federations about Snow Volleyball, pointing out that it was a very interesting and new territory for business. More than 50% of Europe is comprised of winter countries with a lot of mountains and snow. Most of them have winter touristic resorts which gather a lot of wealthy people. He remarked that promoters were interested in organising Snow Volleyball events every month, because apparently they saw a successful business model in that sport. The touristic towns in the Alps, the Carpathian Mountains, in Caucasus and many more areas are quite prosperous. He argued that Snow Volleyball was a simple product, without any huge costs and they had shown quite an interest in it. Therefore, apart from the big picture of one day having Snow Volleyball featuring in the Olympics, he was convinced there was a very good opportunity in the National Federations level, which he tries to share wherever possible. Following the CEV President's idea of using investor's money for the promotion of Volleyball events, he claimed that they could use the money of those touristic places, who had shown a very professional attitude in the promotion of the events.

Mr NEOVIUS shared that in their efforts to also promote Snow Volleyball in other areas other than the top level, they saw an opportunity during the pandemic, when indoor sports activities were restricted. There was snow in Scandinavia and people were able to play their beloved sport outdoors. He recognised that there was a genuine interest to play that sport. Therefore, he recommended promoting National Championships as soon as it would be possible in terms of Covid-19 restrictions.

Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his hope that the CEV Board members in charge of the Snow Volleyball Working Group would be able to sit together and make a future plan for many activities; how they could organise competitions, what kind of material support they would need, as well as support in terms of coaches specialised for that sport. He also stated that in many European countries, the conditions were favourable for both Beach and Snow Volleyball, therefore the coaches could continue working also during the winter. He then recounted how Beach Volleyball players were considered to be coming straight from Indoor Volleyball. Afterwards, when the structure of the sport was changed, they became expert professional Beach Volleyball players, specialised for that particular discipline, with a different technique and training. He added that some Beach Volleyball players would potentially be interested in starting to also play Snow Volleyball. Lastly, he emphasised the importance of introducing Snow Volleyball in the Olympics, because it would also give the opportunity even to the smallest federations to have access to the Olympic Games.

## CEV Beach Volleyball Think Tank

Mr LEITNER started by thanking Mr Thorsten ENDRES and Mr George GAGALIS from the CEV Office, as well as Mr Michel EVERAERT and Ms Emma LABRADOR for their contribution during the meetings. They proposed a scope of work, they set up the involvement of people and resulted with a strategic document, whereby the Beach Volleyball Think Tank would be split into three sub areas: 1) How to involve National Federations, chaired by Ms LABRADOR; 2) How to motivate clubs and set up a good club structure in Beach Volleyball, chaired by Mr Tomislav ŠMUC, President of the EBVC; and 3) How to

improve and build the premium product, especially with Infront as a professional partner, who could provide guidance, how to improve Beach Volleyball on the commercial front as a business case.

He believed that there was a lot in place. The classification pyramid with European Championships, with the star systems, with the Zonal tournaments and the National tours. He pointed out, however, that no one perceived Beach Volleyball European structure as one product. He noted that there were scattered individual tournaments in several cities of Europe. He reported that for all the Beach Volleyball activities from top level to the Zonal level, the media value, on paper, was 100 million EUR, and that was something that had to be brought up to the big corporations, the big sponsors. To do this, he opined, a partner like Infront was needed. Proposals were also made on whom to involve. The aim was to use the knowledge and development of the past and think into the future. He believed that the Beach Volleyball Think Tank would constitute a valuable strategic panel. He thanked the President for having supported the process and added that it was the right moment for Beach Volleyball.

Ms Emma LABRADOR, CEV Vice-President, reported that she had been working along with Mr EVERAERT in relation to the National Federations. The idea was to build a sort of structure to make sure that the National Federations were aware of the ways the CEV could assist them, on how they could participate, from the big ones to the small ones and on how the CEV could increase the participation. First discussions had already been conducted and she was satisfied with the progress of that project.

Mr EVERAERT affirmed that it was a very good idea and a necessary initiative. He agreed with Mr LEITNER that with Infront on board it was the best opportunity to take that step, form one structure and involved more National Federations. Another important aspect, in his opinion, was the development of the clubs. He mentioned that in increasingly more countries, clubs that used to play on a recreational level were becoming big entities. For example, in The Netherlands, the Volleyball organisation with the biggest turnover was a Beach Volleyball facility. He believed that the CEV should give them a chance and get them involved in the CEV events and competitions. He recognised that there were a lot of opportunities and that innovation and invention was needed in order to exploit them.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked them and expressed his hope that experience and ideas from the various countries would be put on the table in the Beach Volleyball panel. He proposed to appoint Ms Emma LABRADOR as the CEV Board of Administration member in charge for the Beach Volleyball activities in the small countries, in order to provide help, to send the right messages and facilitate cooperation for Beach Volleyball. He described that in the past the small countries of Europe were under a political institution, organising European Championships for 15 small countries, when the actual participation was from five countries maximum, and sometimes they even struggled to find three countries. With such a small participation, these could not constitute proper activities for the sport. He argued that just being members of institutions without actively being involved and participating and contributing did not bring any value. He said that he was pleased that some small countries had already started being more active. Recognising that the organisation of senior competitions might be difficult for that moment, he stated that the goal was to organise age group European Championships in countries that never had such events. He also referred to the fact the many small countries were reluctant to organise an event, due to lack of money. However, he reported that while many Balkan countries featured in the 10 poorest countries in Europe, most of them were organisers for senior and age group European Championships. He argued that lack of money was not enough to hamper the initiative to organise activities. What was needed was people, good leadership and hard work.

### Marketing & Data Strategy

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI took the floor and started describing how crucial it was for CEV as a professional sports institution that wished to be part of the new digital era to collecting data from all aspects of the sport, even the court. He described how most people and especially younger generations were very attached to their smartphones and were increasingly interested as fans for more data and information around the sport. He also argued that the CEV should also seek ways of monetising these data, which were becoming very valuable. Collected data should be translated into graphics and statistics, and used

across fans, national federations, clubs and any kind of sport entity related to Volleyball. The technology to mine the data was available, new things came up almost every day from the companies in that field.

Another important point he made was that the CEV should be in a position to know everything about Volleyball data but had not enough information on fans. He stated that it was a crucial point and many sports were already working towards that direction. He had coined the term “e-fans”, referring to the sports fans during the pandemic, who could not be physical spectators, and said it was essential to gather information on them, mentioning that many sports and other industries were using information about their clients and exploring the possibilities to monetise it. He recognised that it was a huge task and deemed it a very worthy investment. Without it he believed that the CEV could not equally compete with other sports organisations in the market. He added that the Marketing Working Group members were very competent and was very happy that CEV was willing to look into and work hard towards that direction.

Mr ENDRES added that the following steps in that project were to recruit an external expert, as indicated by the CEV President, who would develop together with the CEV a concrete Business plan regarding the data approach, which would subsequently be presented to the CEV Board of Administration for a final evaluation. A three month timeline and budget of approx. 30,000€ had been required.

Mr BORIČIĆ added that along with the decision to hire an external expert, the CEV Board would also have to agree to a written proposal regarding the financial investment to be made by the Institution. Mr NEOVIUS informed that he had been working with data collection professionally and in Volleyball, and in the computer systems development field. Therefore, he expressed his willingness to contribute to that project.

## Decision

In the absence of comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the recruitment of an external data expert to develop a business plan regarding the data approach.

## Association of European Team Sports

Furthermore, Mr BORIČIĆ pointed out the CEV cooperation with the Association of European Team Sports (ETS), with which they exchanged a lot of useful information. The CEV Leadership wished to establish a cooperation on team sports together with the European Union. Mr ENDRES briefed the rest of the CEV Board members on the monthly meetings held with ETS mainly for the European Sport Model, that became increasingly important. He referred to the fact that Basketball Champions League was an outside institution. Football was facing some issues, since the professional clubs wished to form a commercial entity and there was a lot of strong lobbying from their side. Mr ENDRES stated that all the team sports together were much stronger in lobbying for the European Sport Model. He reiterated what Mr BORIČIĆ had said that clubs hold a fundamental position in sports. He affirmed that the aim of all these sports institutions was not to only earn money with the top events, media rights and sponsoring. They also take on the duty of shaping and developing the sport and supporting grassroots level activities. In that respect, all the members of the ETS were very close and shared a common vision towards the politicians, especially during the pandemic, since physical activity emerged as increasingly vital for the societies.

# 6.Competition Matters

## CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2021

Mr BORIČIĆ informed everyone that the host of the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2021 would be the city of Verona in Italy, on 1 May 2021. He thanked the Italian Federation and especially the CEV Senior Vice-President, Mr Renato ARENA, because they had put a lot of hard work and effort. He



recognised the difficulty of organising a big event during the pandemic. He also thanked Mr Giuseppe MANFREDI, who was also a candidate for the presidency of the Italian Federation.

He then proposed already to organise the next CEV Board meeting in Verona, in the framework of that event, one day before the Super Finals on 30 April 2021.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to organise the CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2021 at Verona (ITA), on 1 May 2021.

#### CEV European League 2021

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked the National Federations of Slovenia and North Macedonia for committing to organise the CEV Volleyball European Silver League 2021 Final Four Women and Men Competitions respectively.

As the hosts for the CEV Volleyball European Golden League 2021, Final Fours had been already appointed, he thanked once more the National Federations of Belgium and Bulgaria for stepping in to organise the Men and Women Final Four respectively.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal for the CEV Silver League 2021 Final Four organisers: Slovenia for Women and North Macedonia for Men.

#### CEV Continental Cup 2021

Mr BORIČIĆ announced that thanks to the National Federation of The Netherlands, a big problem had been solved, by stepping in to organise the CEV Beach Volleyball Continental Cup 2021. He highlighted how important it was to have an organiser for the Olympic qualification tournament.

Having been appointed as organiser for both competitions already in 2020, the Dutch Volleyball Federation applied to host the postponed CEV Continental Cup Final in 2021 under specific condition and the U22 Beach Volleyball European Championship in 2022.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint the National Federation of The Netherlands as organiser of the CEV Beach Volleyball Continental Cup 2021 and CEV U22 Beach Volleyball European Championships in 2022.

#### CEV EuroVolley 2021

Regarding the CEV EuroVolley 2021, the Jury President for the Men's Competitions would be Mr Renato ARENA. For Women's Competitions, the Jury President would be Mr Lubor HALANDA.

#### Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to appoint Mr Renato ARENA as Jury President for the **CEV EuroVolley 2021 Men's Competitions** and Mr Lubor HALANDA as Jury President for the **CEV EuroVolley 2021 Women's Competitions**.

Furthermore, in line with the approved prize money for the Champions League Finals, Mr BORIČIĆ proposed the following changes in the prize money for CEV EuroVolley 2021:

Increase from 750,000 to 1,000,000 EUR per gender:

- Winner: from 400,000 to 500,000 EUR
- 2nd place: from 200,000 to 250,000 EUR
- 3rd place: from 100,000 to 150,000 EUR
- 4th place: from 50,000 to 100,000 EUR

Mr BORIČIĆ clarified since the prize money was increased for the CEV Champions League Volley, the CEV Leadership wished to bring the prize money of EuroVolley 2021 at the same level.

## Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to increase the prize money for CEV EuroVolley 2021.

## CEV EuroVolley 2023 & 2025

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the concept of increasing the fee for the competition, by also involving funding from the national governments and even managing to return part of that investment to the National Federations. He stated that the concept had been working great and shared that for 2021 the income was 6 million EUR. For 2023, the proposal was to set the total income to 9 million EUR, 4.5 million EUR for each gender. He then announced the federations that had expressed an interest in hosting the 2023 competitions. For Men: Italy, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Ukraine and Israel. For Women: Belgium, Slovenia, Austria, Estonia and The Netherlands.

Since 2019 the number of hosts for CEV EuroVolley was eight countries and it had made a great difference. The Federations have recognised the big interest in hosting such an event. Volleyball has reached an entirely different level in Montenegro and North Macedonia. Wishing to showcase the difference EuroVolley had brought to the host countries, Mr BORIČIĆ mentioned the example of North Macedonia, where the government had supported the Volleyball Federation with 14,000 EUR annually. After the successful participation in the CEV EuroVolley 2019 men, and recognising the big value of that event, the federation expressed an interest in organising many more events and they had full support by their government, broadcasters, etc. He concluded that with hard work great success could be possible. He also mentioned success stories from several countries, where the EuroVolley events had brought a real change in the concept and perception of event hosting and of Volleyball in general.

## CEV Volleyball Age Group Championships

Mr BORIČIĆ talked about a proposal from Italy, to re-introduce the U23 European Championship age category in national teams. He recounted that the U23 category had started several years before and despite the initial enthusiasm, the participation was very low. In that matter, he also added that an important condition would be to allow players to participate only in two age categories. For National Federations of Category 1, 2, 3, the players would be allowed to play in three categories, since they generally did not have so many competitions.

Without wishing to apply any pressure or get any commitments, Mr BORIČIĆ asked the CEV Board members for their comments, and most of them agreed that it would be a very good idea and a perfect solution, in order to involve their players in the national teams. Mr BORIČIĆ pointed out that in some countries players between the age of 20 and 23 did not have the opportunity to play and therefore many talents disappeared. He proposed that the CEV Office prepare a survey to be sent to all the National Federations, in order to explore the interest and collect solid feedback for a potential further

consideration of the matter. Based on the answers, if there would be more than eight countries registered to this category, Mr BORIČIĆ suggested that they could consider the possibility of forming a European Championship for the following season. In case the participation would be lower than eight countries, the proposal would be to create a European Cup, so as to encourage the National Federations that already had that kind of Championship to organise it under the European umbrella.

### European Championships Munich 2022

Mr BORIČIĆ recapped that in the very first meeting organised in Luxembourg in 2019, regarding the participation of Beach Volleyball in European Championships 2022 event, the conditions proposed were not favourable for Volleyball and they were not accepted. After two subsequent meetings, they achieved to ensure 1.2 million EUR support to be part of the Beach Volleyball European Championship in Munich 2022.

Mr ENDRES informed everyone that the preparations were running and the Beach Volleyball Competition was due to take place in the frame of the European Championships Munich 2022 on 15-21 August 2022, in Munich (GER). Despite the pandemic and the restrictions, Mr ENDRES affirmed that everything was going according to the plan. An interesting point that had to be mentioned was that the first edition of that event had taken place in 2018 in Germany and Scotland. The European Athletics was the strongest sport in that event. The participating federations were stakeholders in the European Championships. He noted that the European Athletics enjoyed the exclusivity for the TV broadcasting in the evening. The European Broadcasting union raised a request and pushed so that Beach Volleyball could potentially also be broadcasted in the evening. This created a big discussion among the sports federations. He reported that they had finally managed to convince the European Athletics that Beach Volleyball created an added value for the event and they ensured a guaranteed broadcast. The main goal of participating in such a multi-sport event was to increase the media awareness for the Beach Volleyball European Championship. Finally, Mr ENDRES remarked that Infront was also involved in that discussion and they were all very satisfied with the added value that the involvement of the European Championships would bring to Beach Volleyball.

Mr BORIČIĆ highlighted that the result had been a great success, considering the difficulty involved in organising a championship for Beach Volleyball.

Since the CEV had a big contract with Infront and the European Championships were a European Broadcasting Union (EBU) event, Mr EVERAERT inquired on how they had managed to resolve that and who would be selling the media rights. Mr ENDRES replied that EBU was the sole agency managing the rights for that event and that there was an internal agreement, whereby the value of the media rights was internally redefined.

## 7. European Olympic Committee

Mr BORIČIĆ informed everyone that the European Olympic Committee (EOC) General Assembly and elections would take place in Athens (GRE). There would be two candidates, the acting EOC President, Mr Niels NYGAARD from Denmark and a new candidate from Greece, Mr Spyros CAPRALOS. Mr BORIČIĆ noted the importance of maintaining a good communication with the EOC. He had established a very good relationship with the late President Janez KOCIJANČIČ, who was positive in supporting and recognising the importance of Volleyball. Mr BORIČIĆ also referred to the issue that had arisen with the European Youth Olympic Festival (EYOF), who did not wish to include Volleyball. After the location change of the event, the new host city was not in a position to organise Indoor Volleyball matches, but thanks to the efforts of the Slovakian Federation and the President of the Croatian Olympic Committee, Mr Zlatko MATEŠA, they managed to keep Volleyball in EYOF.

In addition, he informed that the Olympic Committee was planning to remove Volleyball from the Small Nations Games 2023 taking place in Malta. He remarked that the reason was that for the small countries it was very expensive to organise Indoor Volleyball matches. Mr BORIČIĆ had proposed to classify Volleyball as one of the five basic sports in the European Olympic Committee. He shared the efforts and the negotiations made in order to establish that and remarked that usually the host cities wished to choose the sports that were the cheapest in terms of organisation. He asserted that with the 2023 European Games being held in Krakow, Volleyball was secure, since Poland is a major Volleyball country. He emphasised that Volleyball needed support from Olympic Committee in instances where it was being left aside. He concluded that they were in the road to finalise that.

Mr EVERAERT asked for a clarification on what would be finalised and Mr BORIČIĆ explained that the goal was to establish Volleyball (all disciplines) in the European Games. Mr EVERAERT confirmed that Beach Volleyball was a relatively cheap sport to organise and shared the information that the EOC had a big problem finding organisers. Mr BORIČIĆ stated that the CEV proposal had been accepted by the previous EOC President and that after the EOC election they would address the issue again. As for the smaller countries, understanding the difficulties of forming Indoor Volleyball teams, he noted that the goal was to establish at least Beach Volleyball.

As for the European Youth Olympic Festival, Mr BORIČIĆ declared that the goal was to establish Volleyball as a permanent sport, since it was the first multi-sport competition for young athletes; a wonderful opportunity to introduce young athletes in the world of sports. Therefore, he repeated that the basic proposal, which had been already accepted by the previous President, was to ensure the presence of Volleyball (all disciplines) for the European Games and EYOF and keep Beach Volleyball for the Games of the Small States of Europe.

Mr EVERAERT expressed his concerns about fitting European Games in the calendar, but Mr BORIČIĆ assured him that there would be no problems. Since the European Games were not an official CEV competition, teams could choose if they would like to participate or not, or even send a second best team.

Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON reiterated the importance of putting pressure in order to include Beach Volleyball in Small Nations Games 2023 taking place in Malta. He expressed serious concerns in case Malta missed the chance to have Beach Volleyball. As for the Northern countries, he reported that they were planning to work on a solution. He agreed with the view of Mr BORIČIĆ that the participation of small countries was needed and he disclosed that they had prepared an U19 competition with 11 teams, but it had been postponed several times due to Covid-19 restrictions. He once again pointed out that Volleyball and Beach Volleyball should be established as core sports in those competitions. He expressed his gratitude towards the CEV President for supporting that cause.

Mr BORIČIĆ divulged that the Maltese Olympic Committee was not very favourable in regards to Volleyball. The CEV had already started to put pressure on that matter through the EOC. Mr ARENA was also involved in that effort along with the Maltese Volleyball Federation, in order to keep Beach Volleyball in Malta.

Mr ARENA said that he had been lobbying with the EOC and the association Sport Malta. Even though initially Volleyball was out, they progressively started discussing about it and the latest information received from the Maltese Volleyball Federation was that they were considering including two additional sports. A final decision could be reached by September or October 2021 and in the meantime they would continue with the lobbying.

## 8. Financial Matters

### Financial situation after 2020

Mr Eric ADLER, CEV Vice-President & Treasurer, presented an overview of the financial situation after 2020. The process of closing accounts would continue until April 2021. Looking at the general numbers, the financial situation was at the expected levels. He congratulated everyone for that, since 2020 had been a pandemic year, where there had been many fluctuations and coming out of it with a relatively good result, it would be something everyone could be proud of. Auditing would take place in April and May 2021, after closing the accounts. Both external and internal Audits would be working. The final result of the auditing would be received by June 2021. After the auditing, there would be a meeting of the European Financial Commission. In the meeting they would go through the audit results, update the 2021 Budget and start planning the 2022 Budget.

### CEV Office building mortgage

He then referred to the CEV Office building, owned by the CEV, and for which the CEV had taken a mortgage. In April 2021, it would be the 10 year point of the 20-year mortgage. During those years, the CEV Board had looked into possibilities of paying off the mortgage and had been taking decisions on that along the way. After reaching the 10-year point, the bank would renegotiate interest rates and make a new proposal. At the same time, the CEV was given the possibility to pay off the rest of the mortgage without any penalty. The proposal of the bank would be available by end of March 2021. Since he was not able to already present a proposal during the CEV Board meeting, he asked the rest of the CEV Board members to trust him and the CEV President to be delegated with the competence to decide on that matter by beginning of April 2021.

### New potential partnership with sponsor

Mr BORIČIĆ wished to also disclose a confidential information that the CEV Leadership had started a negotiation with a big private equity and investment advisory company. They had conducted a first meeting and the company had shown an interest in Volleyball. Therefore, Mr BORIČIĆ estimated that in the following months, a new partner could join Volleyball. They would be able to share details at a later stage, closer to reaching an agreement. He informed that he had already spoken about it with Infront President and CEO, Mr Philippe Blatter. In the following ten days, they would hold new discussions on a new support from Infront and on the possibility of Infront joining that venture. He trusted that they could achieve a real change for the future of Volleyball in Europe and expressed his hope that very soon the CEV would be able to make some steps to be stronger. Based on that, he explained that he was very optimistic also for the building project.

Mr LEITNER inquired what was the amount of the remaining mortgage. Mr ADLER reported that the original principle was two million EUR. As of 15 February 2021, the amount was 1,209,462.49 EUR. He added that currently the mortgage had a fixed rate of 4%.

### **Decision**

The CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided to delegate to the CEV President and Mr ADLER the competence to decide on the renegotiation of the CEV Office building mortgage.

### CEV Executive Committee and CEV Board of Administration allocations

Mr BORIČIĆ started by recounting that at the beginning of his first mandate as CEV President, an allocation was given only to the President and he wished then to also extend it to the Vice-Presidents. At that moment, the CEV had a stronger financial position, therefore he deemed it correct to extend an

allocation to the rest of the CEV Board of Administration members, as a token of respect and recognition.

In order to do that, they wished to estimate how the change of investment and potential they had brought to Volleyball in the recent years was depicted in terms of numbers of investment from the CEV part:

- CEV Volleyball Challenge Cup Prize Money:
  - In the past: 75,000 EUR      Currently: 300,000 EUR
- CEV Volleyball Cup 2021 Prize Money:
  - In the past: 100,000 EUR      Currently: 520,000 EUR
- CEV Volleyball European League Prize Money:
  - In the past: 156,000 EUR      Currently: 1,150,000 EUR
- CEV Champions League Volley Prize Money:
  - In the past: 1,200,000 EUR      Currently: 4,850,000 EUR
- CEV Champions League Volley Winner for both genders:
  - In the past: 60,000 EUR      Currently: 1,000,000 EUR
- Total investment in CEV Champions League Volley:
  - In the past: 1,500,000 EUR      Currently: 6,200,000 EUR
- Investment in "Marshall Plan": 11,500,000 EUR
- Volleyball Age group organisers support:
  - In the past: 25,000 EUR      Currently: 100,000 EUR

Based on the new dynamic, Mr BORIČIĆ remarked that there was a possibility to increase the allocation already in 2019 and 2020, but they chose not to. Therefore, he considered that it was the right moment to introduce the new allocations. As of 01 January 2021, he proposed the following allocations:

- Allocation for CEV President: 12,000 EUR for 13x per year
- Senior Vice-President and Treasurer: 6,000 EUR for 13x per year
- Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs: 3,000 EUR for 13x per year
- Members of the Executive Committee: 2,000 EUR for 13x per year
- Members of the CEV Board of Administration: 8,000 EUR yearly

## Decision

In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the allocations proposed for the CEV President, the CEV Senior Vice-President and Treasurer, the Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs, the CEV Executive Committee members and the CEV Board of Administration members.

Mr BORIČIĆ wished to give a small recount of the many changes brought to the prestige and value of Volleyball in the last years and draw attention to the fact that even though the income of CEV was increased, the accounts remained the same. Therefore, all the new money coming in Volleyball was invested back to it, but with specific development steps, inciting action and initiative from the part of the National Federations.



## 9. Proposals from Board members

### Update on European Union matters

Mr Geert DE DOBBELEER wished to give an overview of the project the CEV was involved in together with the European Union. He referred everyone to the presentation showing the four CEV-EUR projects: For two of the projects, the CEV School Project and the EuroAsia Coaches Cooperation, the CEV was taking the lead. For the other two projects, the POINTS project and Green Sport Hub Europe, the CEV would act as a supporting partner. Those projects were handled by the CEV Office.

He went on to describe further the School Project, stating that it was a project with the aim of growing the Volleyball community and the first ever EU funded project in Volleyball, supported by the Erasmus+ fund for Sport. He pointed out that for the future, the Erasmus+ fund would become more and more important. The maximum amount that could be provided was 400,000 EUR and the CEV had ensured a budget of 360,000 EUR for that project. He said that several National Federations were partners in the project and noted that there was an important connection with research, since there were two Universities involved – Sport University of Cologne (GER), Hacettepe University of Ankara (TUR) – as well as the European Observatory of Sport and Employment (EOSE) in Lyon (FRA). He added that the School Project translated the CEV's vision to have a bigger Volleyball community with kids in all regions across Europe.

Moving to the EuroAsia Coaches Cooperation, he considered the connection with the Asian Volleyball Confederation very important and express his satisfaction on the project's progress. Two coaches seminars were planned, one in Europe and one in Thailand. The budget was about 220,000 EUR and the CEV was also investing around 60,000 EUR. He also announced that due to the ongoing pandemic, the project was going to be prolonged for at least six months. What they tried to do was bring together coaches from Asia and Europe, a selection was made –supported also by the European Coaches Commission– and they were able to establish a connection and exchange information through the two seminars. This project also provided a way for the CEV to show to the coaches in Asia what Volleyball really meant in Europe and vice versa. The two seminars were going to be rescheduled, hopefully from October 2021 onwards, but the exact dates were not yet defined. He remarked that the CEV was also taking the lead in that project.

Next, he spoke about the POINTS project –single points of contact for sports integrity– that was about good governance. Mr DE DOBBELEER stated that the leading partner in that project was the EOC EU Office and that there were 18 partners among which was the CEV and the IOC, the Interpol, FIBA Europe, the European Athletics, etc. He noted that in the framework of that project, there had been a meeting on human rights, gender equality, match fixing, EU level recovery plan, etc. He affirmed that the CEV as sports Institution could not stay at the side and definitely needed to stay connected to such actions and support the concept of single point of contact for integrity within the European federations.

Lastly, for the Green Sport Hub Europe project the leading partner was Surf Rider. More specifically, with this project they provided the know-how and learning tools on how to work together and deliver "greener" events. There was a budget of about 40,000 EUR for the CEV. Mr DE DOBBELEER highlighted that the most important point was that they measured, they tracked and they tried to improve the various events on the greener side of the line. Finally, he added that the main aim of the CEV was to have the opportunity to connect with other federations and experts in various fields.

Next, Mr EVERAERT recognised that there was a lot of money involved in those projects, but remarked that a lot of work was needed in order to apply for those subsidies, therefore he wished to know what was the success ratio regarding the application stage the CEV had made. He expressed his concerns about that, judging from the success ratio in other funds, which had been rather low, while in Erasmus+ it was about 60%.

Mr ENDRES explained that the CEV had made one application some years ago with an external agency which was not successful. However, ever since the cooperation with the EOC Office in Brussels had been

strengthened, all the applications had been positively evaluated. He affirmed that there was a tight bond between the CEV and the EOC Office. The CEV was represented by Mr KARANOVIC and in the past by Mr ARENA and Mr MUTLUGIL, and thanks to all those people it had maintained a high reputation in the EU. They were continuing to lobby on that level and increase the respect and the awareness of European Volleyball in the European Institutions.

Mr EVERAERT suggested that the CEV be more ambitious and join forces with federations when applying for such programmes. He mentioned the example of the Volleyball Federation of the Netherlands who had applied together with the Federations of Belgium, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Norway and they had a positive result, so they were looking also at other possibilities in that direction. He saw a big opportunity in uniting forces for certain areas of interest, stating the CEV already had the right product. There could be a common effort of the National Federations together with the help of the CEV.

Mr BORIČIĆ started by describing the evolution of the relation between the CEV and the EU. He noted that the EU was a huge administrative organisation. Even though there had been a rough start, since Volleyball was not recognised as a top sport, after a meeting they conducted in order to share the common concerns and approach, the cooperation started and it was proceeding very well. He mentioned the example of Serbia, where, despite the diversity in ethnicities, religions, political views, they had achieved to create a united Balkan Volleyball Association, which functioned like one team. He praised the good work performed by Mr KARANOVIC, under the auspices of Mr ENDRES, Mr ARENA and Mr MUTLUGIL. He also mentioned that there was a big investment from the part of the EU towards physical activities and as a professional sports Institution, the CEV could apply for support.

Next, he argued that it was important to create a lobby within the EU as well as other international institutions to help with the promotion of European Volleyball. He suggested that they could create the concept of "ambassador", a person involved in big international institutions who would be favourable towards Volleyball and would be willing to lobby for support, and mentioned three examples. Mr Krasen KRALEV, the Bulgarian Minister of Youth and Sports, who was willing to represent the CEV within the EU and promote CEV's projects. Mr Zlatko MATEŠA, the President of the Croatian Olympic Committee, who was also a dedicated fan of Snow Volleyball and wished to be the ambassador of Volleyball in the EOC. Having served as Croatia's Prime Minister for five years, Mr MATEŠA could employ his skills in political communication and approach. Mr BORIČIĆ then also mentioned Mr Karl STOSS, the President of the Austrian Olympic Committee, who could be the Volleyball ambassador in the International and the European Olympic Committee in order to support the CEV.

Mr ARENA noted that even though the first endeavour with the EU project had not worked out, they had an opportunity to get acquainted with the way the EU was working. He proceeded to explain that the EU budget for sports was very big, but it did not go directly to sports. The EU did not approach directly sport entities, but various kinds of institutions, starting with Universities. He shared the difficulties encountered when trying to approach those EU projects. After his experience, he suggested to the CEV President to start with the concept of lobbying so as to ensure funding for sports.

Mr BORIČIĆ reiterated the challenges in trying to get projects approved from the EU. He proposed to Mr DE DOBBELEER to get in touch with Mr Zoran AVRAMOVIĆ regarding the Green Sport Hub Europe project and with Mr GANEV, in order to get in touch with the Bulgarian Sports Minister. He affirmed he was pleased that Mr DE DOBBELEER was the CEV Board member in charge for the communication with the EU. He invited everyone to share their contacts and networks around the EU, that could potentially be helpful for Volleyball.

Mr LEITNER praised the idea of building lobbies for Volleyball around international institutions and further proposed to build a team of lobbyists, a "Volleyball team", with six or twelve "players" with a diverse mix of profiles. He agreed that the EU was a gigantic structure with different power dynamics and suggested to have a good look into certain blocks in the EU. He invited everyone to think of individuals they could nominate and make them feel like a team, with Mr DE DOBBELEER as the "coach", meeting in Brussels. He was convinced that such an effort would be beneficial merely from the exchange of information and it would bring to the table a lot of opportunities.

Mr EVERAERT agreed with the idea of lobbying but argued that the approach should be twofold. That is, having the lobbying that would aim the big funds dedicated to sports, but also approaching on the more basic level of ensuring subsidies by merely submitting a compliant application to the EU. He suggested, therefore, to even build a team that would focus on that. Mr BORIČIĆ highlighted that lobbying should be backed by strong and solid projects.

Mr ADLER also expressed his support for the lobbying and the other suggestions. He said that he was really positive about the projects presented by Mr DE DOBBELEER, because he was able to perceive some synergy with the Marketing Group. He recounted a story about the School Project in Denmark many years before, when they were looking for sponsors. What was interesting was that their long term sponsor was an insulin company. He specified that insulin was used for diabetes patients. One of the main causes of diabetes is the lack of physical activity. He divulged that the company was very eager to take on the sponsoring. For them it was not a question of appearing in the LEDs in tournaments, but rather a question of being able to say that they are helping young people be physical so that they do not get diabetes, even though the company lived off of diabetes.

Therefore, he pointed out that since the CEV had officially started working with the EU, he shared that he had been talking to Board members of various companies who had divulged that lately more and more companies were measured on social engagement –along with their degree of green engagement. Based on that, he could see a lot of opportunities coming up. Recognising that those would not be the standard sponsors, but those who, from a marketing perspective, might also be able to support something like the School Project. Hence, being part of the EU system, could have a positive influence when starting to look at alternative ways of funding. He suggested that the CEV could open up to new ideas of alliances that would emerge from the CEV-EU cooperation and from the Marketing project.

Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING praised the work being performed around the EU projects. She analysed that as the CEV built a portfolio it would be important to include some of the other funded projects that sat within the Volleyball family. She mentioned for example projects involving the Austrian Federation with which there was a running project and involved the Italian Volleyball League, Croatia and several other federations. Therefore, she pointed out that the several running projects could be added to the EU portfolio and which could make the CEV, in relation to the ambassadors, much more of a representation within Europe.

Mr DE DOBBELEER noted that the EU projects running were very clear with well-defined parties and that had to be respected until the end of those projects. However, knowing that the Erasmus+ would create even more possibilities and provide more budget in the future, he believed that it would be a good opportunity to see in which areas and projects the CEV could take the lead, and which National Federations can be partners. Ms FLEMING clarified that she referred to other EU funded projects that had Volleyball entities as their partners. She mentioned, for example, that the Austrian Volleyball Federation had the Go<sup>2</sup> to Project. She specified that it involved European federations and that she wished to bring them into the mix, so as to have a bigger portfolio and include all of the projects.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked everyone for their contribution and added that it was important to function as one team and not as isolated islands. Especially in the effort to collect data, as proposed by the Marketing WG, any piece of information could be considered important and could be placed in the centre.

## 10. CEV European Volleyball Gala in 2021

Mr BORIČIĆ remarked that the CEV European Volleyball Gala of 2021 had been appointed again to the Volleyball Federation of Slovenia, as a token of appreciation for their hard work, their initiatives and for being very active in all respects. He thanked Mr ROPRET and his team. He disclosed that, along with Mr ROPRET, they had spoken with the Mayor of Ljubljana, Mr Zoran JANKOVIĆ, who had said that they were very happy to be hosting the CEV European Volleyball Gala in 2021 and they were waiting to welcome everyone on 1 October 2021.

Mr ROPRET said he was also very happy to have again the opportunity to host that event in his federation, after the cancellation in 2020. He expressed his gratitude for the strong support he received from the Mayor of Ljubljana and his hopes to deliver a successful event. He confirmed that he was very strongly dedicated to organising the event with the physical presence of the participants.

## 11. Any other business

### European Volleyball Ambassadors

Mr Lubor HALANDA, Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs, informed that after the Slovak Parliamentary elections in 2020, the newly elected Minister of Foreign Affairs was a good friend of his and he proposed to nominate him as Volleyball Ambassador.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked him for his proposal, he invited everyone to turn to their powerful contacts that were related to Volleyball, especially if they were former Volleyball players, and bring forward names that could be nominated Ambassadors. He claimed that this would be an action that would very much benefit the prestige and the attention given to Volleyball.

## 12. Next Meeting

Mr BORIČIĆ proposed to organise the next meeting on 30 April 2021 in Verona, Italy.

He also announced that the Hungarian Volleyball Federation, which would be celebrating their 75 year anniversary, had asked to host the CEV Board Meeting on 19 December 2021 in Budapest, Hungary. The proposal was accepted by everyone.

Mr NEOVIUS noted that the Swedish federation would also be interested in hosting a CEV Board meeting around September 2021. Mr BORIČIĆ said that he could send a written proposal and that they would discuss on a solution.

## 13. Closing of the Meeting

Mr BORIČIĆ offered a small welcome gift to the newly elected CEV Board members. He thanked everyone for the very fruitful discussion. He noted that the CEV was not a political institution and was very pleased that they spoke concretely with many interesting proposals. He also expressed how proud he was that despite the pandemic, the CEV managed to organise championships in 14 countries. He said that it was a sign that European Volleyball was alive and kicking!

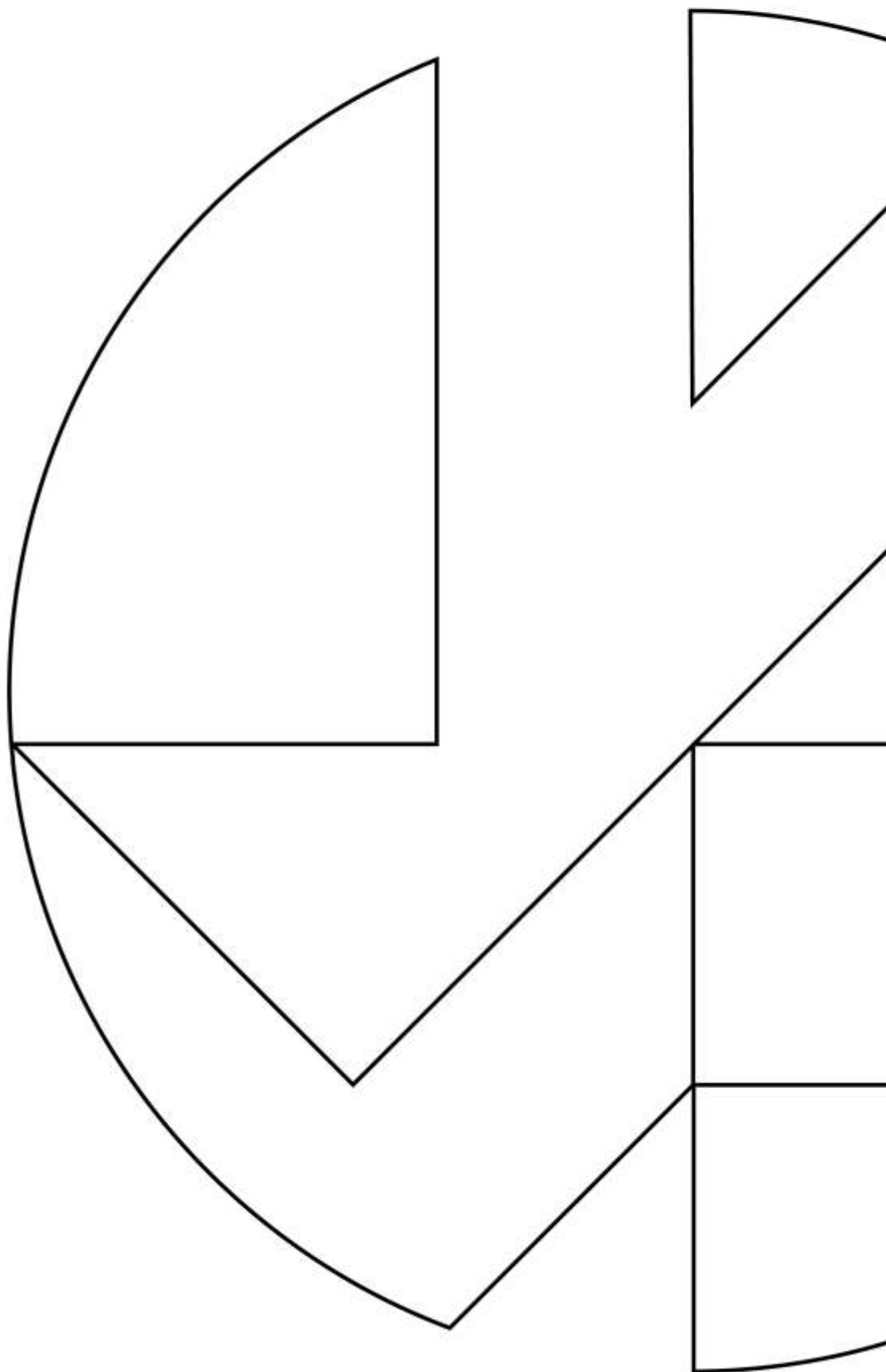
Board of Administration Meeting held at the Novotel Hotel Kirchberg in Luxembourg (LUX)  
26 February 2021

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RCS Luxembourg F1135 · 488, route de Longwy, L-1940 Luxembourg  
Phone: +352 25 46 461 · Fax +352 25 46 46 40  
info@cev.eu · cev.eu



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**



# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting  
held online

27 November 2020



**Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball**





Place: Online

Date: Friday 27 November 2020

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President in charge of Administrative Affairs
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director

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# 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the CEV President, officially opened the meeting, welcomed the CEV Board of Administration members and sent his wishes for good health and quick recovery to those affected by Covid-19. He recognised it was a critical moment for the sport and was sure that the Volleyball community would be expecting improvements and innovations in Volleyball. That was his main goal: to achieve something good for the Volleyball society in the near future.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

## 3. Approval of Minutes

### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held online on 07 July 2020

### Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held online on 16 October 2020 in Vienna (AUT)

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration acknowledged the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held online on 07 July 2020 and unanimously approved the Minutes of the CEV Board of Administration Meeting held on 16 October 2020 in Vienna (AUT).**

## 4. The Future of European Volleyball

### Appointment of CEV Commissions mandate period 2020 - 2024

Mr BORIČIĆ presented the proposed compositions for the Commissions:

### **European Beach Volleyball Commission (EBVC)**

President – Tomislav ŠMUC (SLO)

Secretary – Joep van IERSEL (NED)

Members:

Bojana BOGIĆEVIĆ-DUKIĆ (SRB)

Oğuz DEĞİRMENCI (TUR)

Henrique GOMES (POR)

Laos LUKAS (EST)

Ruta MILLERE-CELMINA (LAT)

Olga NOWAKOWSKA (POL)

Linos PETRIDES (CYP)

Athanasios RERRAS (GRE)

Marina SHCHERBAKOVA (RUS)

Branislav VLAHOVIĆ (MLT)

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Beach Volleyball Commission.**

### European Cups Commission (ECC)

President – Roman STANISLAVOV (RUS)

Secretary – Ellen PETERS (GER)

Honorary President – Maria Helena van den BERG (OOMS) (NED)

Members:

Sándor HOBOTH (HUN)

Nargiz ISMAYILOVA (AZE)

Wojciech KASPRZYK (POL)

Andria LEZHAVA (GEO)

Đula MEŠTER (SRB)

Cvetko PAJKOVIĆ (MNE)

Valentin POMAKOV (BUL)

Marek PROKEŠ (SVK)

Massimo RIGHI (ITA)

Harald ROTTER (AUT)

Giorgos STEFANIDIS (CYP)

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Cups Commission.**

### European Coaches Commission (ECOC)

President – Philippe BLAIN (FRA)

Secretary – Thomas BRO-RASMUSSEN (DEN)

Members:

Ferhat AKBAŞ (TUR)

Krzysztof FELCZAK (POL)

Remko KENTER (NED)

Tommy KIRTZ (LUX)

Marco Nazzareno MENCARELLI (ITA)

Tuomas SAMMELVUO (FIN)

Sergey SHLIAPNIKOV (RUS)

Zoran TERZIĆ (SRB)

Gert VAN DE BROEK (BEL)

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Coaches Commission.**

## European Financial Commission (EFC)

President – Eric ADLER (DEN)

Secretary – Guy JUWET (BEL)

Members:

Valentina BIFFLIN (CRO)

Jacob Hendrik BOOM (NED)

Ewa GRZEGORCZYK (POL)

Ferruccio RIVA (ITA)

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Financial Commission.**

## European Legal Commission (ELC)

President – Alain FISCHBACHER (SUI)

Secretary – Plamena STOYKOVA (BUL)

Members:

Kornilia APOSTOLAKI (GRE)

Domenico D'ALESSIO (ITA)

Peter GLANZER (AUT)

Rogério Pedro OLIVEIRA (POR)

Maria Luisa PEREZ GRASA (ESP)

Sergiu STEFANESCU (ROU)

Anna TRUCKO (POL)

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Legal Commission.**

## European Medical Commission (EMC)

President – Manfred HOLZGRAEFE (GER)

Secretary – Zoran NIKOLOVSKI (CRO)

Members:

Fernando AVILA ESPANA (ESP)

Mirela BOROVAC (SUI)

Erdal HANCI (TUR)

Vusala KAZIMOVA (AZE)

Jacek Leon KRUCZYNSKI (POL)

Mile MAJSTOROVIC (SLO)

Havard VISNES (NOR)

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Medical Commission.**

## European Refereeing Commission (ERC)

President – Zorica BJELIĆ (SRB)

Secretary – Arturo DI GIACOMO (BEL)

Honorary President – Luciano GASPARI (ITA)

Members:

Hans ALMKVIST (SWE)

Avelino AZEVEDO (POR)

Geir DAHLE (NOR)

Georgios GEORGOULEAS (GRE)

Grzegorz JACYNA (POL)

Peter KONČNIK (SLO)

Jarmo SALONEN (FIN)

Oana SARB (ROU)

Cor van GOMPEL (NED)

Aziz YENER (TUR)

Andrei ZENOVICH (RUS)

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Refereeing Commission.**

## European Sports Organising Commission (ESOC)

President – Wojciech CZAYKA (POL)

Secretary – Libenzio CONTI (ITA)

Members:

Periklis BAKODIMOS (GRE)

Gabriela BULGARIU (ROU)

Dragutin ĆUK (SRB)

Mikhail FRISHMAN (AZE)

Nicolaas HOEBEN (NED)

Zsolt LUDVIG (HUN)

Mykhailo MELNYK (UKR)

Mikhail PODLOZNYIY (RUS)

Gottfried RATH-ZOBERNIG (AUT)

Tomáš SINGER (SVK)

Jörg ZIEGLER (GER)

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the European Sports Organising Commission.**

After completing the appointment of all the Commissions, Mr BORIČIĆ elaborated on the choices made for the Commission members. He referred everyone to the presentation of the Commission candidatures across the National Federations and he explained that the aim was to show trust and recognise the



work of many people. There were a lot of candidatures for ESOC, ERC and ECC. He noted that countries like Poland, The Netherlands, Russia, Italy, Serbia, Turkey usually have more activities and have submitted more candidates. He added that the goal was to also show appreciation to countries that had put a lot of work but had submitted only one candidature, so in that case the candidature was accepted. One example was Sweden, that had done a great job, and the candidate was accepted as an appreciation for their hard work.

## **Working Groups**

Moving to the appointments of the Working Groups (WG), Mr BORIČIĆ described that the goal was to bring together professionals, Volleyball politicians and experts from outside of the Volleyball family. He highlighted the importance of external support from big companies in order for Volleyball to move forward, mentioning as an example the external legal experts. He pointed out that that was how a true institution should be established and then encouraged everyone to share their ideas and proposals. Starting with the Marketing WG, he admitted that every Working Group was important, but Marketing WG could have a big impact.

## **Marketing**

President – Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI (POL)

Members:

Peter KLEINMANN (AUT)

Peter SPRENGER (NED)

Zoran AVRAMOVIC (SRB)

Lubomir GANEV (BUL)

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed composition of the Marketing Working Group.**

## **Snow Volleyball**

President – Peter KLEINMANN (AUT)

The rest of the members to be appointed at a later stage. Some of the current Board of Administration members were former members of the Snow Volleyball WG. Mr BORIČIĆ stated the intention to strengthen the Snow Volleyball WG, in general, from places where top events could be organised so as to increase the value of this sport.

## **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed appointment of the Snow Volleyball Working Group President.**

## **Development and cooperation with the Zonal Associations**

President – Mr Özkan MUTLUGIL (TUR)

Mr BORIČIĆ started by praising the great work performed by the Development Department in the CEV Office in Luxembourg, which was keeping close relationships and cooperation with the European Union. He said he was very pleased with the achievements of the Development Department that far, and he

was convinced that there was a lot of potential in this area. He referred to his visit in Sofia (BUL) and his meeting with the newly elected Board of Administration member, Mr GANEV and the Bulgarian Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr Krasen KRALEV, the latter affirming his intention and keenness to lobby for European Volleyball. Mr BORIČIĆ highlighted how essential it was for Volleyball to start lobbying in the EU for development projects.

Mr Michel EVERAERT, CEV Board of Administration Vice-President, asked whether they could propose members for that WG. Mr BORIČIĆ encouraged everyone to send their proposals as soon as possible. He went on to analyse that the Working Groups were covering different parts of Europe in order to develop various kind of activities relevant to each country, bringing up the example of Moldova and Ireland: two countries that needed a different approach. He explained that both countries need support from the CEV but on a different level. He noted that the CEV Leadership should make sure to recognise the potential of each federation and that the CEV needed people involved to bring all kinds of proposals to the CEV Board of Administration. Subsequently, the Board would decide on how the CEV could help the National Federations. In the next CEV Board of Administration meeting they would decide on the definite composition of that group.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed appointment of the Development and cooperation with the Zonal Associations Working Group President.**

## Athletes' WG

President – Lubomir GANEV (BUL)

Mr BORIČIĆ stated how important he considered the Athletes' WG, but not just for showcasing athletes as members without any contribution. He divulged that the previous composition did not produce a lot of work due to other professional obligations. He proposed Mr GANEV being in charge for this Working Group, as one of the top players in the world in Volleyball history. He invited everyone to assist Mr Ganev in preparing a proposals for the next CEV Board of Administration meeting. He asked Mr GANEV if he accepted the nomination, to which Mr GANEV replied that he would be honoured to take such a role.

## Infront Steering Committee

Chairperson – Eric ADLER, CEV Board of Administration Vice-President & Treasurer

Members:

Renato ARENA, CEV Board of Administration Senior Vice-President

Thorsten ENDRES, CEV Managing Director

Aurèle WEYENETH, CEV Head of Digital & TV

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed appointment of the Infront Steering Committee.**

After completing the appointments of the Commissions and Working Groups members, Mr BORIČIĆ underlined the fact that in the new mandate the active contribution of all the members would be of the utmost importance. Examples of past cases of members not contributing anything even after many years were to be avoided. He stressed that although the commissions and working group members are in principle appointed for the mandate period until 2024, but if someone would be inactive or not contributing, he or she could be dismissed at any time. He announced that for the next Board Meeting all Commission Presidents would be expected to submit their strategic activity plan proposal for the following four years, to be discussed openly.

## **Future strategy and priorities / CEV Think tanks**

Mr BORIČIĆ spoke about the various areas of activity to which each Board member could make their contribution and send their proposals, according to their expertise, background knowledge and connections. As one tool to combine the expertise of external experts, professionals, stakeholders and officials, he proposed the introduction of the CEV think tanks, where potentially the following key priorities could be discussed: Top Events, Volleyball, Beach Volleyball, Snow Volleyball, Development, Marketing, TV & Communication, Data, Technical Innovation, CEV Structure and governance.

Mr BORIČIĆ had already started assigning people certain think tanks. Mr ADLER would be involved in the TV and Communication activities, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI would be in charge of Marketing, Mr ARENA in charge of Top Events, Mr Gernot LEITNER, newly elected CEV Board of Administration member, would be in charge of Beach Volleyball, Mr Lubor HALANDA, CEV Vice-President, would be in charge of administrative affairs. Mr BORIČIĆ then pointed out that the success of the think tanks could not rely solely on the leading person. The contribution of everyone was of utmost importance. He mentioned, for example, that Mr EVERAERT and Mr ARENA were also experts on Beach Volleyball, and that teamwork was essential to help solve problems.

For the communication with the EU, newly elected CEV Board of Administration member, Mr Geert De DOBBELEER, residing in Brussels, would be able to be involved frequently in activities with the EU. He also said that Mr Lennart NEOVIUS, newly elected CEV Board of Administration member, would be suitable to have Snow Volleyball as his focus area. They all thanked the President and said that they would be honoured to take up such a role. Mr BORIČIĆ repeated that they should all work as one team, supporting the leading person.

### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed appointment of the leading persons for the various topics.**

## **5. FIVB Cooperation**

### **Update FIVB Board meeting**

Mr BORIČIĆ referred to the online FIVB Board meeting he had attended on 02 and 03 November 2020. He informed everyone that the next FIVB Congress could be virtual at the beginning of February 2021 and that they were waiting for a written confirmation on that from the FIVB. He disclosed that a new commercial partnership would be presented in February 2021.

Mr BORIČIĆ also referred to the message of Mr Thomas BACH, the IOC President, in which he stated that clubs activities were the heart of the sport activities in Europe. Without them it would be difficult to achieve a good level in the sport. Mr BORIČIĆ highlighted the importance of such a statement.

### **International Calendar**

Regarding the calendar the FIVB presented, Mr EVERAERT reported that he was surprised to find out through unofficial information that for 2022 the World Championship for Women was scheduled one week earlier than expected. He said that they had tried everything to move it to a week earlier, but it seemed impossible and wanted to point it out also for the rest of the teams taking part.

Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI asked if the FIVB-CEV meeting was already planned, to which Mr BORIČIĆ replied that he would first meet in presidential level with the FIVB President, in order to define more clearly and

definitely their agreement. He then drew attention to the fact that certain member federations were working directly with the FIVB and not informing the CEV about decisions taken. He invited everyone to share any information they had on that with the CEV Office, which was constantly in contact with all 56 federations.

Mr BORIČIĆ also referred briefly to the issues raised by several National Federations regarding the planning of the Volleyball Nations League 2021 (VNL) as well as the National Championships season. He underlined the importance of the CEV being involved in decisions and not only being informed about them. He explained how crucial it was to share information and updates of the meetings and urged everyone to do the same.

In general, he stated that he wished to keep a good cooperation with the FIVB, characterised by mutual understanding and respect. He wished to go further on a partnership with the FIVB, since the FIVB President had stated so many times that Europe was the leading continent in Volleyball and they wanted to support it.

Mr ARENA referred to the International calendar commenting that despite holding meetings with the FIVB and agreeing to certain proposals, the calendar would be changed again afterwards. He affirmed that for European Volleyball the year before the Olympic Games would be very important. Many activities had accumulated in that year. He reiterated Mr BACH's statement on the importance of clubs saying that many leagues had not managed to finish their championship due to the lockdowns and they had suffered substantial financial loss. Clubs in Italy, France and Germany had lost sponsors, their budget had been reduced by 50-60%. He affirmed that the clubs were the core of the sports economy and were making it possible to also have national team activities. He asserted that the CEV should defend the clubs and engage into serious discussions with the FIVB, recognising the important financial aspect, but insisting that the most important aspect would always be to go forward with the sport. He finished his statement by saying that the CEV needed to help the clubs, so that Volleyball would go back to the top level and highlighted that it was crucial that the FIVB would understand the importance of clubs competitions.

Mr DE DOBBELEER commented that when observing the International calendar, one could easily understand the enormous impact of the VNL and admitted that it was putting a lot of pressure on the clubs competitions. He expressed his agreement with Mr ARENA's view. He was convinced that it was not the best competition for the national teams and suggested to review its system.

### **International Transfers**

Mr BORIČIĆ reported that several serious changes were proposed to make the system more robust towards potential legal claims in regards to free movement of players. He mentioned the proposed solidarity fund in which part of the ITC fee would go in the future and commented that it would have a significant impact on the CEV budget.

He also informed everyone that he was the leading person of a new Working Group that had been created in FIVB with regards to that issue, where the impact and the potential implementation would be discussed. He affirmed his intention to work further on that.

Mr NEOVIUS asked for a clarification regarding a new rule in the FIVB Statutes that had caused a bit of uncertainty. Mr BORIČIĆ suggested that Mr NEOVIUS send a question in writing on behalf of the Swedish Federation or the NEVZA, the CEV Office would look further into it and then have a reply at the next CEV Board of Administration meeting.

### **Future Development Strategy**

Mr BORIČIĆ disclosed that a meeting with the FIVB President had been scheduled, at presidential level, in order to understand the future approach of the FIVB and raise several topics, including the International Calendar, the ITCs, etc. He wished to discuss how to work together, using synergies and creating a sustainable system from the National, the Zonal, the Continental to the World level.

His proposal was that all activities should be coordinated and that all National Federations should involve the CEV in their communication and projects towards the FIVB. He also proposed that the CEV Development WG should establish a solid cooperation with the respective FIVB Development entity and start sharing all the information and the support provided to the countries.

## 6. Competition Matters

### **European Championships organised in 2020**

Mr BORIČIĆ was very proud that the CEV had been among the few European Confederations to be able to organise so many Age Group European Championships as well as events at Senior level in 2020, despite the surge of the pandemic. The CEV together with the National Federations of Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Montenegro and Turkey managed to deliver eight European Championships in Volleyball and Beach Volleyball. Furthermore, the Federations of Austria, France, Lithuania and Slovenia organised a 1 star Beach Volleyball event.

He thanked all the organisers for their hard work and commitment and suggested that the CEV should support all the organisers in 2020 with an additional financial contribution on their extra costs, and invited Mr ADLER to present the concrete proposal.

### **Extraordinary support towards organisers**

Mr ADLER referred everyone to the CEV Board of Administration decision in July 2020 and proposed that further additional support for the required hygiene measures to all organisers of events in 2020 should be discussed. The CEV had requested from all the organisers to provide final reports and documentation regarding the extraordinary costs incurred during the tournaments due to Covid-19 (tests, transportation, cleaning, sanitary material, etc.) Based on those reports and following discussions with the CEV President, a proposal had been devised:

- Volleyball under-age ECH: 30,000 EUR single organiser & 45,000 EUR for 2 co-organising NFs
- Beach Volleyball:
  - 10,000 EUR for each ECH
  - 2,500 EUR for single gender and 5,000 EUR for double gender 1 star event
  - 20,000 EUR additional support to LAT for compensating the damages and costs caused due to the heavy storm and flood on top of Covid-19.

Mr THORSTEINSSON asked about the total impact the proposal would have on the budget and Mr ENDRES replied that the total amount was 207,500 EUR.

Mr NEOVIUS expressed his satisfaction on that sensitive and thoughtful initiative and commented that for each promoter it showed that the CEV was recognising challenges that promoters faced in the current context of the pandemic.

Mr BORIČIĆ added that the purpose of the support was to show that the CEV wished to be close to the organisers when they faced problems and show some respect for the hard work that they had done.

### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed extraordinary support to organisers of events in 2020.**



## **CEV EuroVolley 2021**

### **Contingency Plan qualifiers**

Mr ENDRES informed everyone that further to the CEV Board of Administration decision, the CEV Volleyball Department, Mr Roko SIKIRIĆ and his team, had held, until that day, 102 online meetings with all the participating National Federations, in order to discuss and find, whenever possible, mutual solutions on how the qualifications matches for the CEV Top Events in 2021 would be played. Initially, the period of the tournaments had been scheduled for August/September 2020. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, only one pool managed to play. He explained that it had been mutually decided to switch from the "home and away" format to tournaments, in order to create safety and security to all the participants. For the remaining 24 tournaments, the negotiations were ongoing and expected to have two Men pools and one Women pool finalised by January 2021 and play four pools for Men and three pools for Women in May 2021.

In order to allow the eight co-organising federations of the EuroVolley, as well as all the participating teams, at least a minimum of three months of promotional time, a deadline had been set to complete the qualifications by 16 May 2021. That deadline would allow sufficient time for the European League and also provide a minimum time to promote the EuroVolley event, to bring as many spectators as possible.

He remarked that the postponement of the EuroVolley Qualifiers had impacted the Drawing of Lots (DOL) for the EuroVolley events, which was initially anticipated to take place at the end of January or beginning of February. He finished his update by recognising that it was not the ideal situation because everyone would prefer a long promotional period prior to the EuroVolley event, in order to attract fans from all over Europe. However, under the current situation that was the only possible solution.

Mr ARENA referred to the frequent request during the discussions with the National Federations, to postpone from January to May. However, he pointed out that it would be very problematic for the eight EuroVolley co-organisers if the Qualifiers would not be completed by May 2021. Therefore, he proposed to provide more flexibility and not limit the options to either January or May, but to allow the teams to compete whenever they could have the opportunity, so as to increase the chances of finalising everything in time for the deadline.

Mr BORIČIĆ argued that the focus should not be on when the National Federation could play, but on how to guarantee the safety and health of the athletes, by not rushing them to play in unsuitable conditions. He agreed with Mr ARENA's proposal to provide freedom to the National Federations to also play earlier than May, in an attempt to protect the athletes.

Mr LEITNER thanked Mr ENDRES for the explanation of the situation and referred to an issue raised by a pool in the Women's competition asking to finalise their competition a week later than the set deadline, namely on 23 May 2021.

Mr ENDRES was aware of that issue and argued that it would be very crucial to stick to the deadline to allow sufficient time for the promotion of CEV's flagship event to the greatest possible extent. He remarked that even though solidarity and sticking together were concepts frequently evoked, often people were only focusing on the individual interests. He highlighted that respecting the efforts to promote that event was of utmost importance for European Volleyball. That would be an instance of everyone sticking together and not only raising personal wishes. Otherwise it would not be possible to reach a final proposal.

He also referred to the decision of the FIVB Board of Administration to finish all National Championships by 18 April 2021. Based on a presidential agreement between President BORIČIĆ and President GRAÇA, it had been possible to grant several federations not involved in the Nations League an extraordinary permission to play a bit longer, always under the condition to release their National Team players in



case there would be National Team matches. He highlighted that for the CEV the priority was the EuroVolley, so he reiterated that the latest deadline would be on 16 May 2021.

Mr BORIČIĆ analysed that in the interest of European Volleyball, the international value should be put higher than the national, since the EuroVolley and the SuperFinals were the best products of Volleyball. He claimed that the CEV Board of Administration members should strive to defend and protect the international value of Volleyball. Recognising the difficulties imposed by the pandemic, he remarked that in many cases certain federations would merely insist on what was good for them. He believed that if everyone made a step back, a solution could be found.

He also explained that in 2021 the postponed Olympic Games would also take place, and this would inevitably impact the value of EuroVolley. He described how that event increased the prestige of Volleyball in the previous hosting countries and inspired even more federations to take the decision and organise an event, since for the first time after so many years there were increasingly more candidacies for the future events in 2023 and 2025. Something was changing in Volleyball and everybody should respect the value created.

Mr EVERAERT stated that just like Mr LEITNER, at the beginning he was not involved in the whole process of fixing that problem raised with the pool and added that the managers had not reached a solution either. He emphasised how crucial it was to stick together on that issue and to send out a unified message to the rest of Europe. He was convinced that people should not only root for their own country's interests; Volleyball should come out of the crisis stronger.

Mr BORIČIĆ advised against opening any kind of media war against each other on that issue. He invited all Board members to be strong and brave and come up with proposals, even if they do not serve 100% their individual interests. He then reminisced of the time when he was the President of the Serbian Federation and faced similar problems for the organisation of the Qualifications for the European Championship. He recognised that there were many conflicting interests involved, especially when dealing with professional players and clubs. However, by maintaining a resourceful and positive attitude and accepting that not all problems could be solved, even in that context, compromises could be found.

Mr LEITNER took the floor and stated that he merely wished to present the position of the aforementioned countries, in case it could be endorsed, recognising that it was totally clear to him why it could not be accepted.

Mr BORIČIĆ wished to add one more point. He confirmed on the good cooperation established with so many countries who were very active. He opined that in a context of a solid cooperation, one small conflict could not jeopardise the whole setting.

## **Contractual situation**

Mr ENDRES wished at that point to update all the Board members on the contractual situation with the eight co-organisers for the EuroVolley. Starting with Women's competitions, for Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania the contracts were signed and first instalments were paid. Serbia had already paid in full the 1.2 million EUR, according to the amendment introduced in 2020, since they wished to pay earlier because of the governmental support they had received. A signature was pending for Croatia, but that was mainly a formality. The CEV President had already scheduled a meeting with the Croatian Federation President, which was postponed due to Covid-19 restriction, but the contract was expected to be signed soon. All contracts had already completed the negotiation stage.

Moving to the federations hosting the Men's Competitions, the Czech Federation had signed and paid the first instalment. Poland and Finland had signed too and the invoices for the first instalments were being issued. The only pending situation was with the Estonian Federation, which had not signed the contract. They had requested to include in the contract the potential financial support from the CEV, i.e. the money that the CEV was aiming to give back to the federations. Mr ENDRES stated that he wished to draw attention to that issue and have a common understanding among all the Board members on whether the request should be accepted or not.

He referred to the fact that when Mr BORIČIĆ had started the initiative to bring more money for the sport from the authorities, that was aimed to bring additional money from outside to Volleyball. That money should not be taken away from the national federation. The CEV Board had the freedom to decide how that money would be collected from the government, how it would be used and invested again in the sport. He divulged that there would be a proposal presented later on but he clarified that the said financial contribution was not included in any other Organiser Agreement.

Mr BORIČIĆ wanted to provide some further explanations on the matter. Initially, when he had approached the governments and asked them to pay a fee for the European Championship event to the CEV, the aim was to use that money for the fee and not the national budget for the national federation; everyone had accepted that term. That fee was included in the contract with the National Federation. He underlined the clear separation of that fee from the intention of the CEV to support its member federations on a different level. He highlighted that there should be clear terms in the contract between the National Federation, the CEV and the respective government.

## Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously decided not to include the financial support in the organiser agreement signed with the EuroVolley organisers.**

## General update

Mr ARENA took the floor in order to provide an update and general information regarding the organisation of EuroVolley 2021. He started by admitting that it had been a very special year due to all the travel restrictions and the general situation globally and more specifically in Europe. The CEV was working in cooperation with the National Federations on the preparations.

Starting with the Women's Competition, he reported that the preparations were well underway. Two online and one physical meeting had already taken place. Various upcoming meetings between the Events Department of the CEV Office and the organisers. Generally, a common approach was being applied. He disclosed that he had a good feeling about that group of organisers, he felt they were all operating as one team. The match calendar was approved and promotional activities and discussions had already started. The Drawing of Lots (DOL) would take place in Belgrade (SRB) after the Qualification tournaments would be finalised. Eventim, the company with which the CEV collaborated after the relevant tender, was helping in the ticketing and they would start after the DOL. He informed everyone that it was a general decision taken with all the organisers. The CEV Office had already started to conduct some site-visits in the different countries where the competitions would take place.

Moving to Men's Competitions, Mr ARENA said that they had two online meetings. In comparison to the Women competitions organisers', he remarked that there was more of an individual approach among the organisers. He reported that CEV tried to explain how important it was to operate all together. He believed that one more meeting would be necessary so as to get everyone on the same line. The match calendar was pending, especially for the Czech Republic and Poland. There was an exceptional agreement to have three matches on the first competition day.

No promotional plan had been received, except for a proposal by the Polish Federation, who wished to start with the local promotional activities. He commented that the suggestion was accepted, but he emphasised that it was important to also receive the promotional plan, so that the CEV could work closely with the organisers in order to prepare the international promotional plan. He discerned a different approach in the Men's competitions organisers, but he recognised that some of them had no previous experience in organising such events, so they needed to get aligned. Therefore, he felt that a physical meeting would be crucial in order to establish the correct approach.

Regarding the DOL, Mr ARENA reported that it would be held in Finland after the Qualification. The proposal for ticketing would start after the DOL.

Mr BORIČIĆ recognised that it was not an easy task to coordinate eight different federations, eight countries. However, judging from the previous experience that was excellent, he was sure that the CEV could pull through.

He went on to propose the Jury Presidents for the competitions. For the Men's competitions he proposed as Jury President Mr ARENA and for the Women's competitions Mr Lubor HALANDA.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposed Jury Presidents for the competitions.**

### **Financial support CEV EuroVolley 2021 organisers**

Mr ADLER took the floor and spoke about the financial support to be granted to the CEV EuroVolley 2021 organisers. A total of 1,2 million EUR had already been budgeted, but the proposal was to raise it by 400,000 more due to the special circumstances and to what was expected for the following year. The payment part would be done proportionally once the contractual instalments had been paid. The investment would be coordinated by the CEV Office and under the supervision of Mr ARENA.

Mr BORIČIĆ went on to break down the numbers regarding the support. The organisers that paid a fee of 1,2 million EUR would get back 300,000 EUR. This would not be in cash. 150,000 would go to the general development of Volleyball and another 150,000 would serve as an additional investment –along with the investment from the hosting country, the city, the federation– in the international promotion and upgrade of the event in the two countries where the Finals would take place, i.e. Poland and Serbia. The Bulgarian and Czech Federations paid 800,000 EUR and would be receiving a total support of 200,000 EUR. 100,000 EUR would go to development and another 100,000 EUR in the budget to promote the event. For those federations that would only be organising one preliminary pool, the fee was 500,000 EUR. The support that the CEV would like to give would amount to 100,000 EUR in development and 50,000 in promotion.

Mr ARENA took the floor in order to explain that the investment in the promotion of the event that had just been mentioned was something completely different from the local promotion of each country. The investment would go on a common promotional project between the CEV and all the co-organisers of EuroVolley 2021.

Mr THORSTEINSSON thanked Mr ADLER and the CEV President for the detailed breakdown of the investment, in order to be able to have a clear image of how it would affect the budget. He praised them for their decision to invest part of the income coming to CEV in the federations, pointing out that it was something that was not done in the past. He believed it was very important especially for the smaller federations, since they could maybe see a chance to be inspired to organise something along with the support of their government. He stated that it was a very positive message to pass on.

### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the financial support towards the CEV EuroVolley 2021 organisers.**

### **CEV EuroVolley 2023 & 2025**

Going further with the EuroVolley 2023 and 2025, Mr BORIČIĆ informed everyone that they had been working to increase the organiser fee. For the Men's competitions in 2023 the candidates were Italy, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Ukraine. Interest had also been shown by Slovakia and Spain. For the Women's competition in 2023 the CEV had received a letter of intent from Austria and Israel and some

interest had also been expressed by Belgium, Spain, Estonia and Sweden. He stated that the candidacy submission would not be closed before clarifying all the conditions.

### **CEV Champions League Volley Super Finals 2021**

Moving to the CEV Champions League Volley 2021 SuperFinals, Mr ARENA took the floor to inform everyone about it. The SuperFinals of 2019 had been organised in Berlin (GER), there was an agreement to continue, but after the surge of Covid-19 cases and the pandemic development in Germany, they stated that they were not in position to go through with it. The CEV had already launched a tender for all 56 federations with a deadline of 15 December 2020. In case there would be no applications received, the proposal was to organise the SuperFinals in a neutral venue. The aim was to play on the 1st of May 2021 and they were working on two scenarios: playing with or without spectators. He admitted that it was difficult during the time of Covid-19, but he believed it was essential to send out a strong message, because as he had emphasised earlier, the clubs were really important. He invited the rest of the CEV Board of Administration members to use their network in order to potentially find an organiser and a venue. He also underlined the big potential of promotion and marketing of the sport that the SuperFinals event had.

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked the German Federation, the league organisation, the club Berlin and the city of Berlin for their valuable contribution in 2019, since it was the first time for that event, where everybody recognised that there was something new going on in Volleyball. He acknowledged the difficulties that were hampering the organisation of the event in 2021, but he nevertheless wished to express his gratitude for their work and support. He admitted the difficulties of creating a spectacular show without spectators. Despite that, he also urged everyone in the CEV Board of Administration to put their efforts in finding a solution.

### **CEV Volleyball Under-age Championships**

#### **Future organisers**

For the next point, Mr BORIČIĆ said that it was a great honour and privilege for him to inform everyone on the intention of the Scottish Federation to organise the CEV U19 Volleyball European Championship 2024, Women. He affirmed how big of a progress it was to organise a European Championship in the United Kingdom and thanked Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING, CEV Vice-President, for her contribution.

Ms FLEMING said it was also for her a great honour and privilege to be able to support the European family. She divulged that everyone was very excited for that project, they had already started preparing and they were also looking for a partner

Mr BORIČIĆ also announced that for the Age Group European Championships of 2022 and 2023 the candidacies were already full, which meant that many federations were very eager to take the plunge and organise something. He reminded the Board members of the situation in the previous years, where it was so difficult to find organisers and expressed his hope that one of the next first-time organisers would be Iceland and Faroe Islands and also Cyprus and Greece. He declared that they wanted to share Volleyball in all the corners of Europe. He affirmed that the CEV was in a position to help the organisers

#### **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the Scottish Volleyball Federation as co-host of the CEV U19 Volleyball European Championship 2024.**

## European Ranking

Moving to the European ranking, Mr ENDRES addressed the Board and informed that further to the CEV Board decision earlier in 2020 and due to Covid-19, the second and third qualifications rounds were cancelled for the various Age Group European Championships. Consequently, the ranking system defined in the CEV Volleyball Competitions Regulations did not apply. Therefore, exceptional amendments were proposed for 2020 for the various Age Group Championships. Namely, the U19/U20 and the U17 and U18. He highlighted that it was important to be consistent across the Championships, so as to apply the same conditions for all categories. For those teams that played the final round, the teams would get the ranking points according to their position in the final ranking. For those teams that qualified for the 2nd Round but had not been selected, according to the ranking, to play the final round, they would all be treated equally. Since they had not played the qualification, nor the 2nd Round, they would all get the same number of points, the average points that would have normally been allocated in the 2nd Round. The teams that had qualified, according to the European Ranking, to the Final Round but were not able to join the championship due to national authorities' restriction, they would be treated as the other teams that had not qualified.

There was only one exception for the teams that had travelled to the Final Round, who were physical on-site at the venue, but they were eliminated due to the national law of the hosting federations, and they could not play the championship. They would be considered as the last ranked teams of the respective championships. Mr ENDRES commented that with the presented proposal they applied the ranking system as stipulated in the Regulations with some adaptations, making sure to keep the same principle for everybody according to the situation they had faced. Thus, no one had any advantage or disadvantage. The ranking points would reflect the sportive results on the courts, and when the matches could not be played, all the teams would receive an equal treatment. Then he kindly asked the CEV Board to vote for the approval of the proposal.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to modify the allocation of European Ranking points for the Age Group European Championships 2020 required due to the cancelled qualifications.**

### Contingency Plan CEV U16/17 ECHs 2021

Mr ENDRES continued with the two proposals for the CEV U16/17 European Championships 2021. The Final Rounds to be played in July 2021, U17 Men to be held in Tirana (ALB) on 10-18 July 2021 and the U16 Women to be held by Bulgaria and Slovakia was to be held in the same period. All the Zonal Associations were supposed to play the 1st Round of Qualification until 31 January 2021. He informed that the Zonal Associations had sent feedback, that due to the existing Covid-19 restrictions they were not able to make it until 31 January 2021. He referred everyone to the working file provided along with the agenda, where the two options were presented. He invited everyone to consider approving the proposal B. It would provide more flexibility to the Zones by extending the Qualification deadline until 14 March 2021 and then if the 2nd Round Qualification would have to be postponed, that would allow to make the decision on the court. However, if the Zone would not be able to play by 14 March 2021, then from these zones the quota spots via the European Ranking would be qualified to the 2nd Round. He explained that it would provide similar conditions to everybody. The first priority would be to play on the court, and if that was not possible, then teams would be qualified based on the European Ranking. If the 2nd Round Qualification would be impossible due to Covid-19 restrictions, the teams that had qualified to the 2nd Round would fill, according to their ranking, the spots for the Final Round.

Mr EVERAERT expressed his concerns about meeting the deadline of 14 March for that age category, given that in many countries the restrictions would carry on and the months preceding the deadline would be in the mid of the school season.



Mr BORIČIĆ assured him that there was no intention to put any pressure to anyone and the discussion remained at the level of proposals. Recognising that there could not be any guarantees of what would happen in spring 2021. He elaborated by mentioning that in 2020, at some European Championships, big important Volleyball countries, like Italy, Russia, Germany, were missing due to restrictions. Even so, the games did not stop and he reiterated how important it was to keep playing even with fewer participations. Mr EVERAERT said that he was covered with that approach.

Mr HALANDA took the floor and informed the CEV Board that MEVZA was planning to organise an Age Group Qualification tournament in January 2021, even if all of the teams would not be able to participate.

Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his understanding about the several difficulties that would hamper the participation of teams and the organisation of tournaments, which sometimes went beyond the Covid-19 restrictions. He stated that they would operate in a spirit of freedom, without intending to proceed to sanctions or suspensions. He recognised the additional difficulties when dealing with underage athletes, whose parents did not want them to travel in these circumstances.

## **Decision**

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the contingency plan for the CEV U16/U17 Volleyball European Championship 2021.**

### **CEV European League 2021**

Mr ENDRES informed everyone that 37 National Federations had shown interest and in total there were 47 teams interested in participating in the European Golden and Silver League 2021. Impressed by the numbers, Mr BORIČIĆ expressed how pleased and proud he felt that in the current context 47 teams were willing to continue playing. He announced that there were already two organisers: Belgium for Men's competitions and Bulgaria for Women's competitions. He reminded everyone that the National Federations that had committed to organising an event in 2020 and were not able to do so, were given priority in the selection of organisers for 2021. The two aforementioned federations confirmed their willingness to carry through with their plans. He expressed his gratitude to all 37 National Federations and especially to Belgium and Bulgaria.

Mr DE DOBBELEER affirmed how proud he and his federation felt about hosting the Final Four tournament. He mentioned that there had been discussions on the dates connected to the Challenger Cup of that competition and that they had a contract with the city of Kortrijk (BEL). He expressed his hope that these events would be held with the presence of spectators, something which would help with the financial balance.

Mr GANEV expressed how pleased his federation was to have the chance to organise the Final Four tournament of the European Golden League, one of the two big European events in 2021 to be organised in Bulgaria. He affirmed that they would do their best to deliver a successful event with or without spectators.

### **CEV EuroBeachVolley 2021**

Mr BORIČIĆ announced that Mr Hannes JAGERHOFER had made a proposal for the organisation of the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2021. Mr BORIČIĆ shared a few details about Mr Hannes JAGERHOFER, the key Beach Volleyball person in Klagenfurt (AUT) for many years. Mr JAGERHOFER had worked with Red Bull and managed to organise a great event in Vienna with the Austrian Federation. He had also worked with the FIVB. Mr BORIČIĆ had proposed to hold a meeting with Mr JAGERHOFER, the President of Austrian Federation, Mr Gernot LEITNER, Mr Peter Kleinmann and Mr ENDRES. He then gave the floor to Mr LEITNER.



Mr LEITNER thanked the President as well as Mr ENDRES for the very constructive meeting with the promoter. He deemed the proposal by Mr JAGERHOFER outstanding, considering the challenging times.

Mr BORIČIĆ also announced that Mr KLEINMAN had already contacted the local and national authorities and that they had ensured a great support from the Austrian government.

Mr ENDRES reported that the tender had been conducted and the CEV had requested a total fee of 300,00 EUR (200,000 EUR in Prize Money and 100,000 the organising fee). The deadline had been postponed twice and no application had been received. Then ACTS Group proposed to organise the Beach Volleyball Championship, by respecting the CEV organising conditions and agreeing to pay the prize money. Mr ENDRES noted that there was a small condition, with which the CEV had agreed. In case spectators would not be allowed on-site, the prize money would be paid 50/50 by ACTS and CEV. There would be a partnership approach, meaning that the CEV and ACTS Group would organise the event together. It appeared that the company was in a position to organise the event. They accepted to respect the existing agreements with CEV partners in marketing, betting and Mikasa, and some small additional organizational features that they submitted with their final version of their proposal.

Mr ENDRES shared a picture of the stadium the company had proposed to use, which was a Covid-19 conforming solution, consisting of separate lounges, respecting distancing rules without compromising the festive sportive atmosphere. He then advised the CEV Board to accept this proposal for the appointment of the EuroBeachVolley 2021 in Vienna on 11-18 August 2021.

Mr LEITNER wanted to give a message to the Board members; the strategy of gathering money outside of the core Volleyball budget was a very successful example with the ACTS Group. They had a good cooperation in the past with the CEV and the FIVB and with the National Federations, they helped raise enormous amounts of funding from the government for the big events and it would come out as an important message. The experience could be shared with any other National Federation on how to lobby at a governmental level in order to ensure funding. He considered ACTS as a good choice in that way.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the partnership with ACTS Group and the appointment of the Austrian Federation as the host of the CEV EuroBeachVolley 2021 in Vienna.**

## CEV Continental Cup 2021

Mr BORIČIĆ disclosed that apart from some small interest no organiser had been confirmed and invited the Board members to share any information they had on the issue of the Olympic Qualification Tournament 2021. He affirmed the good value of the competition for the players and for the organiser.

## CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour 2021

## General update

Mr ENDRES started by describing that the Covid-19 pandemic was creating a difficult situation at the ski resorts and announced that until then there was only one event confirmed for the upcoming season. However, he stated that the CEV Office was in close contact with many federations, promoters and resorts in order to achieve as many events as possible on national, zonal and European level. The department had conducted a webinar with the Snow Volleyball Coordinators of 29 National Federations, where they got a very positive signal. They raised some interest and hopefully through close cooperation something could be achieved.

## Contingency & Support Plan

Similar to what the CEV had done for the Volleyball and Beach Volleyball events, Mr ENDRES presented the proposal to exceptionally introduce some incentives to organisers and teams for the upcoming European season, in order to lower the financial burden and potentially maintain a certain number of events. The proposal consisted of an exceptional allocation to all of the European Tour events in the upcoming season of 2,500 EUR to the organiser, a travel allocation of 300 EUR to the participating teams and the exceptional waiving of the licence fee for 2021. In the expectation of 4-6 events, the overall amount would be a bit more than 60,000 EUR, which was already budgeted, thus not having an extra impact on the Budget and potentially motivating an organiser to host an event.

Mr BORIČIĆ added that making Snow Volleyball part of the Olympic Games would be one of the important points in his discussion with the FIVB President. He mentioned that the FIVB was very satisfied with the several Snow Volleyball Tournaments organised by the CEV. He drew the attention on the risk of losing a very important advantage unless they stepped up the negotiations and lobbying. He stated that he was reassured by Mr LEITNER, since he was in very good terms with the people of the Winter Olympic Games in China and he was convinced that it would be possible to make a bigger and stronger case towards that goal. He also reported that thanks to the Austrian Olympic Committee in the Winter Olympic Games in South Korea many people were surprised to discover how Volleyball could be played on the snow. He said he was committed to continue that effort. He was impressed by the fact that Georgia, despite not being one of the strongest federations, was the only one willing to host a Snow Volleyball Tour so far. He suggested that the promotion of Snow Volleyball should also operate on a Zonal Association level, to motivate the federations in the snowy parts of Europe to become more active.

Mr LEITNER informed everyone that the well-known Snow Volleyball promoter, Chaka2 was preparing four tournaments, which were ready and financed. However, there were big issues, especially in Italy and Austria related to the unclear situation around the reopening of the ski resorts. As soon as the ski resorts would open, the promoter would confirm the tournaments. Based on information he had recently received, he expressed his hope that they would be able to host 2-3 events in 2020.

Mr NEOVIUS explained that also the Swedish Championship was affected by Covid-19 and they were trying to solve that. He wished to revisit the issue of what they could organise in Sweden and in Finland. He divulged that he was waiting for feedback after an inquiry he had made on the prospects of developing a plan and organising events. He added that there were also discussions on organising a mid-summer event, since there was a mid-summer skiing season in the Northern countries.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the contingency plan for the CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour 2021.**

## Hygiene Protocol (quick testing)

In an attempt to enhance further the safety and security of all the participants during the CEV events, Mr BORIČIĆ proposed to perform, on top of the PCR test that everyone would provide from their country of origin, rapid tests for all team delegation members and officials: one upon arrival and another one 48 hours later. The cost for the additional testing up to May 2021 would amount to approx. 110,000 EUR.

Mr EVERAERT reported on another testing option, which would be faster and cheaper and wondered whether it would be better to wait of that option before making the aforementioned investment. Mr BORIČIĆ welcomed the proposal of Mr EVERAERT and emphasised that Volleyball needed the best tests that would also be recognised by official sport authorities and invited Mr EVERAERT to send a written communication on that issue, so that the CEV Office would look into it. Mr DE DOBBELEER confirmed they had been using the rapid tests on the highest level competitions and they had been very efficient, giving a result in 15 minutes and having a unit cost of 6.00 EUR. However Mr ENDRES mentioned that the market price had increased recently due to the rise in demand.

Mr LEITNER noted that they had many Covid-19 cases during the early weeks of their first divisions resulting in the postponement of many games. Therefore, the Austrian Federation decided that each club would go through the rapid test on the day of the game or the evening before the game and it had been a successful step. He mentioned that the Austrian Government was covering the full cost. Mr LEITNER noted that the next step would be to think about the spectators in the long term and if quicker and cheaper tests would come in the market it would be a very positive development.

Mr ARENA opined that the quick tests were a work in progress, he believed that many companies would come up with many new solutions. He agreed with the proposal to amend the Hygiene Protocol and insert the condition of performing rapid tests in a period of 48 hours, expressing the certainty that the company that would provide the tests could be chosen at a later stage, after comparing the available possibilities.

After hearing the various comments, Mr BORIČIĆ was eager to gather all the available information regarding the tests and research further. Mr ENDRES agreed with Mr ARENA on first deciding on the amendment of the Hygiene Protocol. He proposed to have a temporary solution to cover the upcoming tournaments in December 2020 and then they could re-evaluate the best available cost-effective option for the subsequent tournaments in 2021. Mr BORIČIĆ noted that the choice of the tests should be based primarily on guarantees from official authorities and not only on cost.

### Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to amend the CEV Hygiene Protocol so as to include the condition of rapid testing during CEV events.**

## 7. Financial Matters

### Calculation of interests towards NFs

Mr ADLER commented that Covid-19 had been the protagonist in all the points of the agenda discussed that far, and the Finance aspect would be no different. The extraordinary situation of the pandemic had a huge impact on funding and thus the financial situation of the federations. He mentioned cases of federations that had organised events and their governments held back their funding. Normally, the CEV would charge interests for unpaid debts, but Mr ADLER believed that the CEV should not operate in that manner. He proposed to not calculate the interests that had accumulated until the day of the meeting. He disclosed that it had not been the first time that the CEV Board had made such a decision. He clarified that the suggestion regarded an exceptional exemption of the interest rates. The amount that had been accumulated by the interests from seven National Federations that had organised tournaments was around 79,000 EUR. He deemed that the initiative of the federations to step up and decide to organise an event during 2020 should not be a hindrance to them, especially since the government funding had stopped.

Mr BORIČIĆ commented that based on his experience, when the CEV had shown support to some federations, they would always appreciate it and come back with bigger contributions. He also mentioned that the goal of CEV was to support Volleyball and not act as a financial institution by suspending its debtors, referring to the example of Norway that had not been suspended and had some of the best Beach Volleyball athletes in the world.

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal for an exceptional exemption of the national federation interests as of today.**

## **ExCom allocation**

Mr ADLER announced that based on the previous CEV Board of Administration decision, a monthly allocation to all the members of the Executive Committee would be paid:

- President 7,000 EUR
- Senior Vice-President and Treasurer: 3,500 EUR
- Vice President in Charge of Administration: 1,200 EUR
- Vice Presidents: 800 EUR

Mr ADLER added that it was important to announce this allocation to everyone as a means of good governance and transparency.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously re-confirmed the monthly allocation for the members of the Executive Committee.**

## **Allocation Commission Presidents & Secretaries (including Legal Chamber)**

Mr ADLER went on to announce that, based on previous CEV Board of Administration decisions, there would be an annual allocation for Commissions and the Legal Chamber to be paid as of 2021 for the newly appointed Presidents & Secretaries:

- President: 2,000 EUR
- Commission Secretary / Legal Chamber Vice-President: 1,500 EUR

He mentioned that in the past the Legal Chamber had not been included in these allocations, but since it had performed a great deal of work, they wanted to include it in that mandate.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal for the annual allocation for Commissions Presidents and Secretaries and the Legal Chamber President and Vice-President.**

## **8. Proposals from Board members**

### **Advertisement on uniforms**

Mr Metod ROPRET started by saying how pleased he was to be involved in the project regarding the additional sponsors on the uniforms. He was very positively surprised and very pleased with the proposals on the table.

Mr GANEV had an additional proposal. He explained that the logo of the second sponsor was usually located on the sleeves. However, he noted that during the matches several players would pull up their sleeves, thus resulting to zero visibility for the second sponsor. He also mentioned that several National Teams played with a sleeveless jersey. Therefore, the proposal was to let the teams decide where they would place the logo of the second sponsor: either on the sleeve or on the shoulders. In that way they would also cover the cases of teams using sleeveless jerseys, who could put the logo on the shoulders. He suggested to first discuss the matter within the CEV and afterwards officially submit the European proposal to the FIVB.

Mr BORIČIĆ reaffirmed the importance of the issue and drew attention to the fact that for the European Competitions the CEV could take the decisions. The FIVB had different rules for uniform advertising. With the upcoming Olympic Games, every National Federation would have to produce a new uniform with no advertisement. Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his concerns on whether some National Federations would be in a position to produce several different types of uniforms. He suggested to unify into one the proposals from Slovenia and Bulgaria and to discuss with the FIVB on that matter on the basis of opening a new era of supporting the National Federations.

Ms FLEMING inquired whether Mr GANEV had consulted also competent Commission on the idea of the sponsor positions, to which Mr GANEV replied that they had raised the issue at the FIVB but without sending any official proposal. He went further elaborate a bit on his proposal, explaining that the federations that were not willing to produce several sets of uniforms could choose to stay with the existing system. He commented, though, that the National Team Uniforms were used from May to October. Therefore, in most cases, the federations would inevitably have to produce several sets of uniforms for such a long period.

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal from SLO and BUL to amend the advertising positions and number of partners on uniforms and to change the CEV Volleyball Competition Regulations accordingly. The proposal shall be also submitted to FIVB for potential implementation for FIVB competitions.**

## Marketing proposal

In his attempt to examine why there were no big sponsors in Volleyball, Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI made his research and proposed that, especially in the context of the pandemic and the new technologies, the focus of the marketing strategy should be the fans. He believed it was an aspect of Volleyball that had been neglected, when it could prove a valuable marketing product for Volleyball apart from the Top Events. He proposed to organise a workshop, potentially in Warsaw (POL), with the people of CEV and outside experts from the fields of sport and media and new technologies so as to define a way of action. He disclosed that a similar project on using data to better present them to the customers was already running in Poland.

Mr BORIČIĆ expressed his agreement stating that Volleyball needed people outside of Volleyball to help Volleyball. He asked Mr PRZEDPEŁSKI to send a concrete proposal on the workshop he proposed with all the technical details in order to study and discuss it further.

## Merchandising and building brand equity proposal

Mr ARENA was the next to take the floor to present his proposal on brand development, building brand equity and creating CEV merchandising; the next step for adding value to the CEV Top Events. He reported that he had conducted a meeting with a company in Italy. He noted that CEV needed high quality materials, focus only on the CEV logo, online marketing campaigns, and a line of products created exclusively for the CEV. He specified that the CEV would not store any stock of merchandise, but needed to take royalties for it. The company he met with had sent a general project and Mr ARENA expressed his hope that this would open a future discussion.

Summarising all the ideas that were expressed, Mr BORIČIĆ recognised the importance of each proposal and noted that synergies should be created in order to form a unified concrete proposal and be able to approach external experts with specific projects. He added that he wanted to also get the Board members in contact with the CEV Office and have an open discussion, and afterwards present everything to the CEV Board of Administration, before taking any decision.



## 9. CEV European Volleyball Gala in 2021

Mr BORIČIĆ announced that since the CEV European Volleyball Gala of 2020 had been postponed, the Slovenian Federation reconfirmed their willingness to host it in 2021. Mr ROPRET affirmed the strong commitment and dedication of the city of Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, and of the Mayor of the city, Mr Zoran JANKOVIĆ, to organise the event in 2021.

## 10. Any other business

### **Confidentiality commitment**

Mr BORIČIĆ disclosed that there had been two instances of Vice-Presidents sharing confidential information during the election period, something that showed a lack of respect towards the Institution. These cases had risked to destroy commercial partnerships and the image of the Institution. Based on that incident in Europe, the FIVB introduced the confidentiality agreement requirement. Therefore, in case of a leak of information, a person would be either suspended or be held accountable before a court and would have to pay for the damages incurred to the Institution.

Mr BORIČIĆ informed that such a document would be circulated also among the CEV Board of Administration members and explained that the main purpose would be to clearly define which information would be confidential and not to limit in any way the freedom of speech of the members. He specified that it would only regard discussions about contracts with third parties.

Mr LEITNER expressed his agreement, he recognised that in every election period the tension would be high and inquired whether there was a legal framework to protect the CEV against any breach of confidentiality. He remarked that any new agreement, like the one with Infront, needed sensitive handling of information and required the utmost protection.

Mr BORIČIĆ replied that since the CEV had only recently regained the ownership of its rights and was moving forward to achieve new important contracts, the need for such a confidentiality had also been fairly recent. He reiterated that the purpose was to protect the Board members by making them aware that information related to contracts with third parties would be confidential. There was no intention whatsoever to limit the speech of any member.

### **Decision**

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the proposal to introduce a confidentiality agreement among the CEV Board of Administration members.**

### **Cooperation with Special Olympics and Para Volley Europe**

Mr BORIČIĆ stated that he wished to include that point in the Agenda, since there had been pressure from some federations to accept the Institution Para Volley Europe as an official member of the CEV. He explained that the CEV wished to support the Institution at a level of general cooperation and support its activities as external organisation, but it could not be included in the CEV.

He then recounted his visit to Gibraltar, where he was happy to discover that the government had increased their support by building a sports centre for Special Olympics. Based on that he proposed to organise another tournament in Gibraltar at that new centre.

Ms Emma LABRADOR, newly elected CEV Board of Administration member, shared her excitement about that project, said that she had already been in contact with the Special Olympics team in Gibraltar and hoped that they would be able to organise something.



## 11. Next Meeting

Mr BORIČIĆ proposed to organise the next meeting at the end of January 2021 – if needed –, one week before the FIVB General Assembly. Depending on the development of the Covid-19 restrictions, he also proposed to organise a physical meeting in Luxembourg in the second part of February 2021 and invited everyone to share other potential suitable locations.

## 12. Closing of the Meeting

Mr BORIČIĆ thanked all the members, stating that this was only the beginning in their cooperation, expressed his wishes for good health and positive energy.

Board of Administration Meeting held online  
27 November 2020

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# Board of Administration

Minutes of the meeting  
held at the Marriott  
Hotel, Vienna (AUT)

16 October 2020



Confédération  
Européenne de  
Volleyball



Place: Marriott Hotel, Vienna (AUT)

Date: Friday 16 October 2020

Attendees	Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ	President
	Mr Renato ARENA	Senior Vice-President
	Mr Eric ADLER	Vice-President & Treasurer
	Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING	Vice-President
	Mr Lubor HALANDA	Vice-President
	Ms Emma LABRADOR	Vice-President
	Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI	Vice-President
	Mr Zdeslav BARAČ	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Geert De DOBBELEER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lubomir GANEV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Jalil JAFAROV	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gernot LEITNER	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Lennart NEOVIUS	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Metod ROPRET	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Eric TANGUY	Board of Administration Member
	Mr Gudmundur Helgi THORSTEINSSON	Board of Administration Member
CEV Office	Mr Thorsten ENDRES	CEV Managing Director
Excused	Mr Michel EVERAERT	Vice-President
	Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO	Vice-President
	Mr René HECHT	Board of Administration Member



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## 1. Opening of the Meeting by the CEV President

Mr Aleksandar BORIČIĆ, the re-elected CEV President, officially opened the meeting, welcomed and congratulated the newly elected and re-elected CEV Board of Administration Members. He started by reaffirming that the CEV is a sports institution and following the conclusion of the electoral campaign, we shall all focus on sports activities, rather than on political messages.

He invited all the CEV Board of Administration Members to commit to working much harder than ever before for Volleyball. He emphasised that the CEV Board of Administration was elected to represent European interests and requested that each Board Member leave aside their national interests and position during the discussion inside the CEV Board. The aim is not to bring forth individual proposals or opinions, but to discuss on a European level for a better future of Volleyball. Internally, the Board Members are invited to openly argue for the best possible solution. However, once a CEV Board of Administration decision has been taken, the members of the Board shall speak with one voice to the outside world.

Mr BORIČIĆ pointed out that there would be many instances where the Board Members would have to handle confidential information. This information shall not be disclosed by any member outside the CEV Board of Administration until the official communication has been made by the CEV.

Finally, he expressed his enthusiasm about the composition of the CEV Board of Administration and said that he was looking forward to a trustful and respectful cooperation in the interest of European Volleyball.

## 2. Approval of Agenda

### Decision

**In the absence of any comments or remarks, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the Agenda.**

## 3. Proposal of the President and the Secretary of the CEV Legal Chamber

### Decision

**On the proposal of the CEV President, the CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved to propose to the General Assembly Mr Laurent MOREUIL (FRA) as President and Ms Zoya TRIFONOVA (RUS) as Vice-President of the CEV Legal Chamber.**

## 4. Appointment of the Members of the Executive Committee

Mr BORIČIĆ proposed to the CEV Board of Administration the appointment of the following members to the Executive Committee:

- Mr Renato ARENA, Senior Vice-President
- Mr Eric ADLER, Vice President & Treasurer



- Mr Michel EVERAERT, Vice-President
- Ms Margaret Ann FLEMING, Vice-President
- Mr Lubor HALANDA, Vice-President in Charge of Administrative affairs
- Ms Emma LABRADOR, Vice-President
- Mr Mirosław PRZEDPEŁSKI, Vice-President
- Mr Stanislav SHEVCHENKO, Vice-President

## Decision

**The CEV Board of Administration unanimously approved the appointment of the CEV Executive Committee.**

## 5. Miscellaneous

Mr BORIČIĆ invited all the CEV Board of Administration Members to work and contribute to the CEV all year long, not only during the Board Meetings. He encouraged everyone to submit proposals and comments in writing to the CEV Office. He stated that the new CEV Legal Commission would have to work and revise the Regulatory Framework entirely, in order to reform it and bring it up to date, and adopt it to the current reality of a sport institution.

Mr Metod ROPRET, newly elected CEV Board of Administration Member, took the floor and proposed to change the regulations for advertising on uniforms by adding the possibility of one more partner. Mr BORIČIĆ confirmed that the written proposal had been already received and that the CEV Office was currently looking into the matter. He reminded once more all Board of Administration Members to leave out their national interests and to focus on the overall European interest when participating in the CEV Board of Administration.

He then took the opportunity to send his gratitude and appreciation to all the staff members of the CEV Offices for their hard work and dedication in changing the image of the CEV and delivering a great service to all stakeholders. He underlined that the CEV Offices are open and accessible for all the CEV Board of Administration Members and reminded his colleagues that the flow of information shall not only be one-way. It is also the responsibility of each CEV Board of Administration Member to maintain contact and to ask for information.

Mr Renato ARENA, re-elected CEV Senior-Vice President, addressed the meeting and thanked President BORIČIĆ for his trust and continuous dedication for European Volleyball, congratulated him and all members for being elected and sent his gratitude to all CEV staff members for their hard work. He further thanked Mr Özkan MUTLUGİL and Mr Maris PEKALIS for their valuable contribution and friendly cooperation during the past five years.

Then, Mr Gernot LEITNER, newly elected CEV Board of Administration Member, took the stand and congratulated the CEV President for the great achievements. He stated that he was honoured to have the opportunity to work in that team, which comprised a good mixture of experiences as well as cultural and geographical backgrounds.

Finally, Mr Geert DE DOBBELER, newly elected CEV Board of Administration Member, got the word and shared his excitement for working together with the rest of the Members of the CEV Board of Administration and the professionals of the CEV Office. He concluded that there is a lot of potential for achievements, highlighting the future data strategy.



## 6. Closing of the Meeting

Mr BORIČIĆ congratulated once more all the CEV Board of Administration Members and thanked them for their valuable contribution. He then closed the meeting in order to continue the General Assembly session.

Board of Administration Meeting held at Marriott Hotel, Vienna (AUT)

16 October 2020

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