



# EUROPEAN SOFTBALL FEDERATION

## PRESIDENT'S NOTICE

### QUARTER REPORT, ISSUE 11

April 6, 2020

TO: ESF National Federations

Dear friends,

As always, I would like to take this opportunity to update you on our activities and operations with the intent to keep you informed of what is being done within Softball Europe.

#### **Current situation:**

Society and civilization in general are facing an unprecedented challenge today, which we have never faced in our life before. It is most logical, that all national governments are enforcing restrictions to stop the invisible enemy, which the [Coronavirus](#) surely is. Nevertheless, we will overcome this challenge, when we all face this challenge responsibly. Responsibly to ourselves, responsibly to others.

This unexpected situation also has a positive side, as we have to deal with our future, which is a big challenge. Let's use this unique situation to create a stronger place for us our space stronger, to use the current way of solidarity as the value for future strong Europe.



#### **Competitions 2020:**

As many of you and other Organizations, we use videoconferences as the tool of managing our business. On April 1<sup>st</sup> we had Softball Europe Board Meeting with just one urgent topic –the Softball Europe Calendar 2020. This meeting was called just after the WBSC videoconference with Regional Confederations about calendar 2020.

I was pleased to learn from the videoconference that the WBSC intends to play all scheduled World Cups 2020 this year, most likely during November or December. We will have another videoconference regarding calendar 2021 very soon, as European Championships are qualifiers for World Cups.

I have heard from some of our Member Federations such as Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Israel, Bulgaria, France and the Czech Republic of course, as to how they are preparing the season. This information was very important in order to make decisions about our 2020 Calendar. We try to perform our duty to the best of our ability in order to create the opportunity to play this season and to keep the dreams of our players alive as much as possible and to send positive signals. Although we do not know when our borders will reopen, we need to be prepared.



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Plantin en Moretuslei 120, 2018 Antwerp, Belgium  
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It is clear now that we will not be able to play all our 2020 softball events and we have need to prioritize our tournaments based on their importance and timing. We have divided our events in three categories:

The tournaments with the highest priority – all European Championships, which are qualifiers for World Cups 2021 (WECh, MECh and U15 WECh). [We decided to keep those events and to postpone the date.](#)

We decided to cancel the other international events under the Softball Europe umbrella with intent to allow you, National Federations, adequate time to run your own competitions this year. It was very hard decision for me personally, since I feel it is my duty to create time and a place for our sport to play, and now we are facing cancellation. I believe that this decision will help you with your own competitions as much as possible.

### **Outcomes from WBSC Europe Congress:**

WBSC Europe, ESF and CEB General Congress was held in Vilnius, Lithuania on February 8, 2020. As I mentioned to you in the formal invitation it was really an important session, especially for 2 reasons.

We opened the discussion on two very important topics, foreign players on European teams, in club teams and naturalized players for national teams. This topic became even more serious and relevant when team rosters for European Championships – both softball and baseball – and Olympic Qualifiers were published. Vice President Petra Arends has been given the task by the WBSC Europe Board to create a special working group from our European members with the objective to prepare options and proposal how to deal with this issue. As far as I know the group is being created at this time and we will now have time to discuss about this important issue.

The second important topic at the Congress was finalization of WBSC Europe Constitution. Let me thank all of you for your co-operative attitude in the process and the approval of Constitution, as we faced some intervention just a week prior to the beginning of the Congress. I fully understand the effort of transformation of the whole organization including their regional confederations, but it needs to be done based on mutual cooperation by both parties. I had the opportunity to discuss these issues with the leaders of other Regional Confederations at the U18 Men's World Cup in New Zealand including the WBSC SD Chairman to explain the European position. The final and approved [WBSC Europe Constitution](#) including [Code of Divisions](#) are on our website.



I want to touch two more things, which happened at the Congress too. In 2014, the position of ESF Communications Director was established to increase the (non-existing) level of media coverage of European Championships, Cups, and softball activities in Europe. Back then, Helena Novotná from the Czech Republic was appointed. At the ESF General Congress in Vilnius, Lithuania, Helena Novotna stepped off her position and Elda Ghilardi was named the new

[Communications Director](#). Thank you Helena and good luck Elda.

Next, let me welcome new members of [Softball Europe Hall of Fame](#). Welcomes four new members; two players - Rebecca Soumeru and Jesper Panduro, and two ESF TCs Libby Moss and Bob Kessler. The new members' induction into the Hall of Fame was announced at the ESF Congress in Vilnius, Lithuania, on February 8th, 2020. The celebrational induction will take place during the year on the field at some of the Softball Europe events.



### **ESCA agreement with NFCA:**

The European Softball Coaches Association and the National Fast pitch Coaches Association have reached a partnership agreement in an effort to both share and increase the knowledge of coaches throughout Europe starting immediately. More information how to get benefits find [here](#).



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### U18 Men's World Cup:

The U18 Men's World Cup was played as the first softball World Cup 2020 with two European teams taking part in the tournament: the Czech Republic and Denmark. The tournament was played at Colquhoun Park in Palmerston North, New Zealand, from February 22<sup>nd</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>. This event was really great for the Czech Republic and Europe, as the Czechs got the bronze medal. The [Czech bronze](#) at the U18 Softball World Cup is **historical!** This is the **first time ever** that a European team stood on the podium at a World Softball Championship, junior or senior, male or female. The historical bronze medal from U18 World Cup is great news for Czech Softball and for Softball Europe. The Czech pitcher [Jakub Osicka](#) was awarded the best pitcher of the tournament. This also confirms the improvement of European softball on the world level.



*If you have any questions, suggestions, feel free to contact me anytime.*

Best regards,

Gabriel Waage  
Softball Europe President

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