



## **SOFTBALL ASIA**

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### **MINUTES OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> SOFTBALL ASIA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EXCO MEETING (02/2018-2022))**

**Date:** 14 October 2020

**Time:** 10.00am

**ONLINE** via Zoom

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- |     |                          |                                       |
|-----|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Dato' LOW Beng Choo      | President                             |
| 2.  | Ms. Taeko UTSUGI         | 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President        |
| 3.  | Ms. Susan ZHANG Xuan     | Vice President                        |
| 4.  | Ms. KIM Eun Young        | Vice President                        |
| 5.  | Mr. Jean Henri LHUILLIER | Vice President                        |
| 6.  | Mr. Jimmy FONG Song Kuan | Vice President                        |
| 7.  | Mr. Kosol YIMPAIBOON     | Vice President                        |
| 8.  | Ms. Sally LIM Swee Gaik  | Secretary-General                     |
| 9.  | Mr. CHANG Chia Hsin      | Secretary-General (Chairman's Office) |
| 10. | Mr. Hiromi TOKUDA        | Advisor                               |

#### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

- |    |                        |                                 |
|----|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Mr. Yutake MIYAKE      | SA Coaching Committee Chair     |
| 2. | Ms. TAN Chia Mien      | SA Scoring Committee Chair      |
| 3. | Mr. CHANG Sy-Chau      | SA Scoring Committee Co-Chair   |
| 4. | Mr. SEE Kok Wooi       | SA Technical Committee Chair    |
| 5. | Ms. Heidi IP Ching Kit | SA Technical Committee Co-Chair |
| 6. | Mr. Paulo TABIRARA     | SA Umpire Committee Co-Chair    |

#### **IN ATTENDANCE ALSO**

- |    |                           |                                     |
|----|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | Mr. Tomoaki OKAMOTO       | Japan SA Executive Director         |
| 2. | Mr. Hiroyuki YOKOTA       | Japan SA Secretary-General          |
| 3. | Mr. Tomohiro HISAKA       | Japan SA Secretariat                |
| 4. | Ms. Taeko ONO             | Japan SA Secretariat                |
| 5. | Ms. Justine TSAI Yi-San   | Deputy Sec. Gen. Chinese Taipei SA  |
| 6. | Mr. CHOI Il-Hyun          | Korea BSA Softball Division Manager |
| 7. | Mr. WOO Jisuk             | Korea BSA Staff/Interpreter         |
| 8. | Mr. NARAWUT Haji-abdullah | SBA Thailand Council Member         |
| 9. | Mr. Tony MARIADASS        | SA Media Officer                    |

#### **ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES**

- |    |                  |          |
|----|------------------|----------|
| 1. | Mr. PAN Yi Chuan | Chairman |
|----|------------------|----------|

## 1. **IN MEMORIAM**

The Softball Asia (SA) Executive Committee (EXCO) observed a minute of silence in memory of the late Mr. Albert Chia, who was a SA – Singapore umpire who passed away on 07 September 2020. He served SA and Singapore Baseball Softball Association (SBSA) with full commitment and dedication, with his last SA assignment being the Softball (SB) competition in the South East Asian Games Philippines 2019. SA sent a letter to his mother to convey our condolences, and a wreath.

## 2. **ROLL CALL**

- 2.1 SA Secretary-General Ms. Sally Lim did the Roll-call and confirmed that a quorum was present. SA President Dato' Low Beng Choo (**Low**) called the Meeting to order and thank everyone for taking time to attend this online Meeting.
- 2.2 She said that with the many challenges and uncertainties that everyone was facing during the current Covid-19 pandemic, it was important for the EXCO to keep in contact to discuss ways to move the organisation and SB in Asia forward.

## 3. **CHAIRMAN & PRESIDENT'S WELCOME REMARKS**

- 3.1 SA Chairman Mr. Pan Yi Chuan apologised for being absent from this Meeting and a video of his welcome address was played. A brief of the text of his address was as follows;

*“Good day to all the EXCO Members, thank you all for attending this online meeting. The current Covid-19 outbreak has caused many international and domestic competitions to be postponed or cancelled. Many countries are facing huge difficulties and impact caused by the global pandemic. Only very few countries in Asia are able to continue with their softball and other sport activities.*

*I hope that through your online discussions today, everyone can put forward recommendations and reach a consensus on the future Softball Asia's international events. Softball Asia should also discuss on how to ensure the health and wellbeing of our Softball athletes and officials, and allow them to return to active participation in our international and domestic events in a safe and secure environment.*

*I wish you all a successful discussion and meeting. My best wishes for all your good health, and everyone, stay safe and strong.” PAN Yi Chuan*

- 3.2 SA President Low stated it was good to see everyone, although only online, well and safe in the current circumstances. She also welcomed WBSC Executive Ms. Aki Huang, and recorded SA's deepest appreciation to Ms. Huang, who was based in Rome, Italy, and had to get up so early in the morning (6 hours behind, at about 3.00 a.m.) due to the time difference for this meeting. SA President Low said Ms. Huang helped set-up and coordinate this Zoom online meeting. All EXCO Members also expressed their thanks to Ms. Huang.
- 3.3 SA President Low congratulated Mr. Yutake Miyake, who is the Chair of the SA Coaching Committee, on his recent election as the new Japan Softball Association

(JSA) President. She then requested the EXCO's consent to allow a short PowerPoint and video presentation on the SA-JSA joint project on Coaching Webinars. She said that the EXCO would discuss the matter in more depth later under Item 9.1 of the Agenda. She then invited Mr. Miyake to give his presentation on the Coaching Webinars project.

- 3.4 Mr. Miyake thanked SA for the congratulatory wishes and proceeded to make the presentation. He gave a brief outline of the Coaching Webinars planned and explained that the whole project would be prepared by the JSA team of coaches and JSA staff to save on costs if compared to engaging a professional company for the production, which was much more expensive. Since the production is by "amateurs", Mr. Miyake requested the kind understanding, support and patience in the roll-out of the project videos.

**Project: SA – JSA Coaching Webinar Joint Project**

**Objective:** To increase the promotion and development of SB skills and knowledge in Asia, particularly during the current global Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, where physical seminars/courses may not be conducted, and many are subjected to movement restrictions.

**Team:** The Team would comprise of the JSA coach-instructors who conducted the WBSC-Asia Coaching Certification Seminar in Penang, Malaysia in January 2020, namely:

- Mr. Yutake Miyake as Head/Coordinator of Project.
  - SA Coaching Committee Chair & JSA President.
  - Was PE teacher in Niijima Gakuen High School.
  - Former SB Athlete – National champions: High school (HS) in All Japan HS Championship (3x champion, 5x 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 8x 3<sup>rd</sup> place); College in All Japan College Championship (4x in his 4-year tenure) & All Japan National Championship; Company for 20 years & 22x champion team.
  - Former National SB Athlete – 4x World Championships (highest rank: 4<sup>th</sup>).
  - Former Coach of Japan National Junior Team to World Championships 3x (highest rank: 3<sup>rd</sup> place).
  - WBSC SB Hall of Fame award 2005.
- Mr. Toshihiro Kuriyama
  - Vice Chair of JSA Coaching Committee since 2010.
  - Current Deputy Chief of Competitive Sports Division, Gifu prefectural government office & General Manager of Ogaki Minamo Softball Club (JWSL Div 2).
  - Coach of several high school SB teams since 1990.
  - Head coach of Ogaki Minamo SB Club since 2010.
  - Former Coaching at Guatemala SB (Oct. 2017) & France SB (Sep to Jun 2019).
- Mr. Hirotaka Kadomatsu
  - Instructor for JSA Coaching Certification Seminar.
  - Current teacher in Kumamoto Commercial High School (HS).
  - Former SB athlete – National champion in All Japan College

- Championship 1984.
- Coach – HS National Championships – 4x.
- Head coach 21x in National Championships.
- Awarded Excellent Teacher award by Minister of MEXT (2010); All Japan High School Athletic Federation Longevity Service Award (2012), Japan Sport Association Excellent Coach Award (2016).
- Mr. Subaru Takahashi
  - Skills coach for Japan College team.
  - Current Associate Professor, Nippon Sport Science University.
  - Former HS & college SB athlete – HS Champion 1999-2001 in All Japan Championships; College Champion 2002 & 2003 in All Japan College Championship.
  - Former Japan National Junior SB Athlete to World Championship 2001 – silver
  - Former coach & head coach of NSSU Men’s team (2006-2014) (2x champion, 1x 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 2x 3<sup>rd</sup> place at College Championship & 2<sup>nd</sup> (2009) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (2011) places at All Japan National Championship.
  - Former coach & head coach of NSSU Women’s team (2015-2019) (3x Champion, 1x 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 1x 3<sup>rd</sup> place at College Championship)
  - Coaching staff of Japan National Teams: Men (Gold in 2011 World Championship), Women (2017 World Championship) & Junior Men (Bronze in Junior World Championship 2014).
  - Supervising many books / DVDs

Method: 20 Video footages – each 30 minutes.

- Session 1 (in November 2020)
  - Pitching skills for beginners+: 2 – 3 sessions
- Session 2 (in December 2020 – January 2021)
  - Pitching skills for intermediate & advanced: 2 – 3 sessions
  - Hitting, Défense, Baserunning for various levels: 2 – 3 sessions
- Session 3 (in February – March 2021)
  - More advanced content, with feedback from Sessions 1 & 2
- Video distribution method and linked UR to be determined
- Webinar sessions after each Session to be conducted by JSA Coach-instructors for feedback and interactive questions-answers segment with participants.

(A short video sample (by coach Mr. Kadomatsu) was played for the EXCO Members viewing.)

3.5 Mr. Miyake stated that the JSA team would do their best in the project and expressed hope that the Webinars would give encouragement to athletes, coaches and other officials to continue with promotion and development of SB in Asia. He also requested the support and cooperation of all SA affiliates to make the project a success.

- 3.6 SA President Low thanked Mr. Miyake and his team for the presentation and efforts and said that the matter would be discussed further under Item 9.1 of the Agenda.
- 3.7 She then requested the EXCO Members to give brief overview and share his/her experience of the current situation in his/her respective countries/territories in handling SB activities during the current pandemic.
- 3.7.1 **Japan** (update by Mr. Miyake (JSA President, and Mr. Tomoaki Okamoto (JSA's new Executive Director [ED])).
- Everyone in Japan, including JSA, as with others worldwide, was facing very challenging times.
  - Japan Women SB league started in September 2020.
  - Japan Men SB league scheduled to start in November 2020.
  - All other SB tournaments in 2020 were stopped and postponed to March 2021 and beyond.
  - SB events and activities were slowly getting back to play but everyone had to comply with standard operating procedures (SOPs) and requirements set by health authorities to guarantee athletes/officials' health and safety.
- 3.7.2 **China** (update by Ms. Susan Zhang, Secretary General of Chinese SA (CSA))
- China was also going through challenging times.
  - CSA managed to complete 2 top competitions, namely, the National Championship & Champions Trophy tournaments. She was in fact on-site at the competition venue.
  - The next tournament is the National Junior Championship, starting tomorrow.
  - For the 2 top competitions, CSA changed to a new system of competition by using the "fully loaded" format. CSA received positive feedback on the new format from athletes, spectators and media, and it generated more excitement and greater media interest.
  - Other key national level competitions have been cancelled but they encouraged provisional tournaments.
  - The National Slow-pitch league started last month, and was going smoothly, with the finals to be held in December 2020.
  - Because of the lockdowns and movement restrictions, CSA has organised lots of online activities, such as for umpiring, scoring & scouting education programmes, to continue interest and engagement.
  - CSA was in contact and working with the education department and schools, to promote & conduct SB activities in schools, such as mini baseball and softball, and Baseball5.
  - CSA is in close communication with the Hangzhou Asian Games 2022 Organising Committee (HAGOC 2022). Construction works on the new baseball-softball competition venues have started and were expected to be complete in October 2021. HAGOC 2022 had contacted SA to appoint the Technical Delegate for the AG 2022. They would contact SA later on proposals for the competition structure and other matters.

3.7.3 **Korea** (update by Ms. Kim Eun Young, Vice President of Korea BSA (KBSA) and Mr. Woo Jisuk, KBSA staff.)

- Ordinarily, KBSA has 3 tournaments a year for SB but this year, it could only manage to complete 2 of those due to the pandemic, that was one in June 2020 and the other in September 2020. The 3<sup>rd</sup> tournament has been cancelled for this year and would be held under next year's programme.
- Next month (November 2020), the Korea Women SB league was planned.
- The top competition in Korea by the KSOC, that was, the Korea National Championships 2020, has been cancelled for this year.
- KBSA is working with the education and school authorities to promote SB, T-ball and Baseball5 in schools.

3.7.4 **Chinese-Taipei** (update by Mr. Chang Chia Hsin, Secretary General and Ms. Justine Tsai, Deputy SG, of CTSA.)

- Taiwan has been very fortunate and CTSA has been able to hold all its SB tournaments according to regular schedule.
- For example, the Taiwan Women SB Professional League regular season had run smoothly and completed the preliminary round competition last weekend, and the finals would be held this coming weekend.
- CTSA would also be holding the induction ceremony for the WBSC SB Hall of Fame Inductee 2020, former athlete, Chin-Ling Chang Chien this coming weekend.
- They hope everyone would stay safe and healthy; and hoped to meet in person soon. They also hoped that international tournaments would resume soon next year.

3.7.5 **Philippines** (update By Mr. Jean Henri Lhuillier, President of ASA-Philippines.)

- Currently in Philippines, the governing body managing the pandemic crisis was the IATF, which did not allow physical (in person) training for all sports, including in SB, and all tournaments, from grassroots to national levels, for this year had been postponed.
- As such, ASA-Phil was conducting a lot of online activities for coaches and athletes on physical conditioning, and mental training/coaching, to bring all of them together, including, for colleges, national teams, etc.
- There were daily activities, and weekly online Zoom meetings to bring together the national teams, including the National Junior team.
- ASA Phil also took the opportunity during the lockdown, to improve their digital presence, such as improving its website. It not only grew its Facebook presence, but also launched its Instagram presence. The online presence was getting very popular, and ASA Phil was very pleased with the increased following, example, almost 200,000 likes on Facebook, which was fantastic.
- He hoped the situation would improve to enable SB to return to a safe environment.

3.7.6 **Hong Kong – China** (update by Mr. Jimmy Fong presented for HKSA.)

- Hong Kong – China stopped all league games since February 2020. All

physical activities stopped until last month when it became less strict about 2 weeks ago, but there were still under strict Government released guidelines. He hoped that they would be able to re-start SB activities next month (November 2020).

- Only the All-Universities tournament mid-year proceeded but had to be stopped with the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of Covid-19 cases.
- Physical training was restricted – the national team was training in 3 – 4 groups, each with 3 – 4 persons in a group.

3.7.7 **Singapore** (update by Ms. Tan Chia Mien, presented for Singapore BSA.)

- SBSA managed to start their Men & Women SB fast-pitch leagues in February 2020. The Women's tournament was completed but not Men's tournament, which had to stop.
- Between March – June 2020, the National teams were training online. In June 2020, SBSA managed to discuss with the Sports Singapore authority to work out physical training sessions in small groups of not more than 5 persons each group.
- The plan was to resume larger scale physical training sessions and have some form of tournament soon. Perhaps, starting with slow-pitch as it has less or no physical contact, before moving to fast-pitch events.
- SBSA had been busy last few months and just held its AGM and elections over the weekend, where Ms. Foo Pei (SBSA President) and her team were re-elected for another 2 years.
- SBSA was working with authorities on the construction of the new SB field in Jurong.
- SBSA was also working with schools to promote and explore introducing Baseball5 in the Physical Education (PE) curriculum.
- SBSA was planning to grow its programmes in 3 areas, namely, for coaches, scorers and umpires. The coaches who participated in the WBSC-SA Coaching Seminar in Penang early this year (in January 2020) were in SBSA's Coaching Commission and were helping out with the coaching project, planned for first week of December 2020.

3.7.8 **Malaysia** (update by Mr. See Kok Wooi, President of Softball Association Malaysia (SAM.))

- The schools SB tournaments at the district and State levels were held in early March. Then there was lockdown in Malaysia and no outdoor sports activities, such as training and tournaments, were permitted; as such, the national level schools' tournament was cancelled.
- There have been no other SB activities since due to the movement control orders in Malaysia, and it was until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

3.7.9 **Thailand** (update by Mr. Kosol Yimpaiboon, outgoing President of SBA Thailand (SBAT) and Mr. Narawut Haji-abdullah.)

- SBA Thailand just held its AGM and elections, and a new President, Mr. Yotsakrai Phainanitpornwas, was elected; his name had been sent to the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) for approval. The process would take about take 2 – 3 weeks and after the SAT approval was obtained, the new President would appoint his team of new SBAT EXCO members.

Meanwhile, the outgoing SBAT President and his team would continue until the new team came in.

- SBAT managed to complete the Thailand Masters SB tournament in the first week of October 2020, where the Kasetsart University emerged as champion.
- The next tournament would be the Thailand Championship. There would be 2 levels, the Youth U18 and Open categories. The Youth tournament would be held in November 2020, followed by the Open tournament in December 2020.
- SBAT was still committed with its plans to host the Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB in Thammasat University.

#### **4. MINUTES OF 1<sup>ST</sup> EXCO Meeting (1/2018- 2022) held on 20 November 2019**

- 4.1 SA Secretary General informed that the Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> SA Exco Meeting held on 20 November 2019 in Sakai – Japan (during the WBSC Congress period there) had been sent out earlier to the EXCO Members.
- 4.2 Ms. Tan requested for an amendment to the Minutes, that is, to the name of Ms. Koh Hwee Miem, who was Treasurer (and not Vice President) of SBSA, in the Attendance List of the Minutes.

#### **Proposal:**

*To consider and approve the Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> EXCO Meeting held in Sakai City, Japan on 20 November 2019, subject to the amendment to the position of Ms. Koh Hwee Miem as SBSA Treasurer in the Attendance List, which proposal was proposed by Mr. Lhuillier and seconded by Mr. See.*

#### **DECISION**

**Subject to the amendment to the position of Ms. Koh Hwee Miem as SBSA Treasurer in the Attendance List, the SA EXCO unanimously approved the Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> EXCO Meeting held in Sakai City, Japan on 20 November 2019.**

#### **5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING**

- 5.1 There were no matters arising from the Minutes raised by the EXCO.

#### **6. REPORT ON WBSC SOFTBALL REVIEW WORKING GROUP**

- 6.1 SA President Dato' Low informed the EXCO Members as follows:
- 6.1.1 Due to the global pandemic, WBSC was reviewing all its activities and events. She said that currently, there are about 12 – 18 WBSC World Cups and other world-level events a year, and almost all have had to be postponed or cancelled.
- 6.1.2 The WBSC has formed 2 Working Groups (WGs) with the task of the review, that is, 1 WG for Baseball (BB) and 1 WG for SB, with one



representative from each continent for each of the WG, and she was appointed onto the SB WG, to represent Asia.

- 6.1.3 The respective WGs are to review the respective WBSC events/tournaments and to make recommendations on how to make a return for the WBSC events, taking into consideration the athletes' safety, well-being and welfare are of paramount importance. She stated that the WGs are only working groups which make recommendations, and do not over-ride the mandate of the WBSC Tournaments/Competitions Commissions and that all WG recommendations have to be presented to the WBSC Executive Board (**EB**) for consideration and decision.
- 6.1.4 Currently, the SB World Cups (**WCs**) are on a 2-year cycle, and the WBSC SB Division had decided to reduce the number of qualified teams from the Continents, for each of the WCs for the Men and Youth tournaments. She has informed the WG that Asia has never supported the 2-year cycle and want to return to the 4-year cycle WCs for the following reasons:
- (i) The reduced number of teams affected Asia's teams (as fewer would be able to qualify to participate); and
  - (ii) SA could not cope with the WBSC WCs 2-year calendar as SA was having problems getting hosts for the Asia qualifiers due to frequency and costs of having the Asia qualifiers.
- 6.1.5 There have been discussions in the SB WG on the following:
- (i) The possibility to bring back the 3-year or 4-year cycle for the SB WCs to replace the current 2-year cycle;
  - (ii) The possibility of a new format for the SB WCs, that is, at 2 levels; one as the Preliminary Round, where teams are placed into smaller Groups of, example, 4 – 6 teams, to play a preliminary round robin competition, each group could compete in a different host city/country, to select the top teams from each group to play in the following Super Round or Finals. This format was in use in the WBSC Premier 12 Baseball tournament and worked successfully.
  - (iii) This new format may attract more host cities as the cost for hosting the group of fewer teams was greatly reduced. The WBSC could also save costs by using more local technical officials from within or nearby to the host city/country, for lesser travel costs. The new format would also open up the possibility of the WBSC expanding the number of teams per continent eligible to qualify to play in the WBSC WCs Preliminary Round.
  - (iv) There were some concerns that moving back to the 4-year cycle may result in one generation of young athletes missing out on playing in an age group international tournament due to age limitation. The WG considered this and would look at planning a calendar on a staggered basis to allow as many young athletes as possible to participate in their age group, whether at continental or at world level, as not all age group

tournaments would be held in the same year.

(v) All matters were still at the discussion stage.

6.2 She requested the EXCO Members to let her have any views and proposals that they wish to put to the SB WG for discussion and consideration. After discussion, the EXCO unanimously reiterated their support for the WBSC WCs to go back to a 4-year cycle, and to be played in 2 levels, namely, the Preliminary Group Round for an expanded number of teams, followed by a Super Round Finals for the top teams.

### 6.3 **WBSC U18 Women Softball World Cup in Peru**

The EXCO Members from Japan and Chinese-Taipei raised concerns about their teams participating in the upcoming U-18 Women SB in Peru, which has been postponed to March 2021 due to the ongoing uncertainties caused by the rising number of infections globally as well as restrictions on international travel and quarantine requirements imposed by Government health authorities.

6.3.1 Mr. Chang informed that Chinese Taipei would prefer that the tournament be postponed to September 2021 or later in that year. Ms. Zhang informed that China would have a problem with the tournament dates in September because the China National Games were scheduled for that period, and the athletes would only be available for the WC from October to December 2021 as the preferred period.

6.3.2 SA President Low informed that the WBSC had sent a survey to all the qualified teams, including the 4 from Asia (3 qualified – Japan, Chinese-Taipei and China, with 1 wild card – Philippines), to inquire whether the teams would participate in the WC in March 2021. She asked the respective EXCO Member from those participating teams, whether they have responded to the WBSC survey.

6.3.3 Japan and Chinese Taipei informed that they have responded to stated that they were not certain in view of the current uncertainties. China informed that they responded to state they would participate if the situation improves. Philippines informed that they had yet to respond and would do so soon.

6.3.4 She explained that the WBSC was informed by the host, Peru Softball, that the Government approved funding to host the tournament was available only until March 2021, and as such, the host had no choice but to postpone that WC to latest March 2021; otherwise, the host would have to re-apply for funding to host the tournament. She said that re-applying for funding could be a problem as in the current pandemic circumstances, Governments are putting money into fighting the pandemic and to revive the economy, and not into sports; sports was not a priority during this critical time.

6.3.5 She said that the WBSC was monitoring the situation not only in the host country but also in all the participating countries, and would keep all those concerned duly informed. She requested the qualified teams to inform her of their preferred dates if the tournament is further postponed.

## 7. **SOFTBALL ASIA CONGRESS 2020**



- 7.1 SA President Low reminded everyone that the SA Congress for this year was originally scheduled to be held in Kala Lumpur – Malaysia in December 2020, and that there would be no elections to be held. However, she said that the Malaysian borders were closed until 31 December 2020, and no international travel permitted into the country except for special and urgent reasons. She said even for those permitted into Malaysia, both citizens and non-citizens, there was a 14-day mandatory quarantine requirement. As such, she asked for the views of the EXCO Members about having the Congress online.
- 7.2 There was discussion that even if postponed until next year, it was still uncertain as to whether a physical Congress could be held. The majority of the EXCO Members agreed to have the Congress this year online.
- 7.3 SA President Low informed that the SA Secretariat would send out some proposed dates for the Congress and that she intended to have another EXCO Meeting before the Congress. She also said that if the global situation improves to allow for unrestricted international travel and physical meetings, she could always invite the SA EXCO and representatives of the SA Members back to Kuala Lumpur for another physical meeting, perhaps when Malaysia hosts the Baseball5 Asia Cup.

**Proposal:**

*To consider and approve for the Softball Asia Congress for 2020 to be held online by way of a videoconference at a date in December 2020 to be determined by the SA Secretariat.*

**DECISION**

**The SA EXCO approved, by a majority, for the Softball Asia Congress for 2020 to be held online by way of a videoconference at a date in December 2020 to be determined by the SA Secretariat.**

**8. ASIA CUP TOURNAMENTS IN 2021 & QUALIFIERS FOR WORLD CUPS**

SA President Low informed the EXCO Members that SA sent out a Participation Survey to all SA National Federation-Members to inquire if they would participate in the Asia Cups scheduled to be held in 2020 – 2021, and SA has received feedback only from only 6 NF-Members, namely, China, Japan, Hong Kong – China, Korea, Philippines and Chinese Taipei; the other SA NF-Members did not respond.

**8.1 Asia Cup Men SB**

8.1.1 She informed that at the request of the host, New Zealand, the WBSC has agreed for the WBSC Men SB World Cup in Auckland, New Zealand to be postponed to **19 – 27 February 2022.**; and that Asia has 2 slots.

8.1.2 She informed that of the 6 NFs who responded to the SA Participation Survey, 4 indicated their interest to participate in the Asia Cup Men SB, namely, Hong Kong – China, Japan, Philippines and Chinese Taipei, and as

such, SA still needed to have a qualifier to qualify the 2 Asia teams eligible for the WC.

8.1.3 At this stage, there was still no other host for this Asia Cup qualifier and that the tournament may have to be held in Malaysia, and could be held in the late part of 2021, possibly October 2021 onwards.

8.1.4 Mr. Chang informed that Chinese Taipei was working on establishing the Senior, U23, and U15 Men Softball teams with a view of participating in the Asia Cups and WCs.

## **8.2 Asia Cup U23 Men SB**

8.2.1 SA President Low informed that the WBSC 1<sup>st</sup> U23 Men SB World Cup would be held in Santiago de Estero, Argentina in **October 2021**. She explained that the WBSC agreed with the host, Argentina Softball, to postpone to the October 2021 period because the WBSC was informed that the approved funding was available only until then in 2021.

8.2.2 She informed that of the 6 NFs who responded to the SA Participation Survey, 4 indicated their interest to participate in the Asia Cup U23 Men SB, namely, Hong Kong – China, Japan, Philippines and Chinese Taipei, and as such, SA still needed to have a qualifier to qualify the 2 Asia teams eligible for the WC.

8.2.3 Since the WC would be in October 2021, the Asia Cup qualifier would have to be held in the early part of 2021, to give the qualified teams reasonable sufficient time, 2 – 3 months, to prepare for participation in Argentina. She said that as it was already October 2020, SA and the host may only be able to give the participating teams only about 2 – 3 months' notice of the Asia Cup tournament, which is a very short notice, as the dates could not be confirmed even at this time due to the current uncertainties. All the EXCO Members were requested to take notice.

8.2.4 At this stage, as there were no other host, the Asia Cup may have to be held in Malaysia, possibly in May – June 2021, before the Tokyo Olympics period.

## **8.3 Asia Cup U12 Mixed Team SB**

8.3.1 She informed that the new dates for the U12 Mixed Team Softball World Cup is 24 – 29 August 2021 in Taichung, Taiwan, and Asia has 1 slot, excluding host (Chinese Taipei).

8.3.2 She informed that of the 6 NFs who responded to the SA Participation Survey, 2 indicated their interest to participate in the Asia Cup U12 Mixed Team SB, namely, Hong Kong – China and Chinese Taipei; whereas China, Japan, Korea and Philippines indicated they would not participate. As such, SA may not need to have an Asia Cup qualifier since Chinese Taipei, as host of the WC was entitled to participate, and there was 1 slot for the other team, namely, Hong Kong – China. However, SA would send a final notice to the SA NF-Members to confirm that there was no other team interested to

participate in the Asia Cup qualifier.

#### **8.4 Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB Asia Cup**

8.4.1 SA President Low informed that of the 6 NFs who responded to the SA Participation Survey, 4 indicated their interest to participate in the Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB, namely, Hong Kong – China, Japan, Korea and Chinese Taipei.

8.4.2 Mr. Yimpaiboon confirmed that SBAT was still interested to host the Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB in 2021. SA President requested him to request the newly elected SBAT EXCO to send a fresh proposal to SA with new dates and other logistics.

#### **8.5 Baseball5 Asia Cup (Mixed Team: Open & U18 Categories)**

8.5.1 SA President Low informed that Baseball5 was developing and growing very fast globally in view of its inclusion in the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) Dakar, and Asia needed to catch up to remain competitive. She added that with the postponement of the YOG Dakar from 2022 to 2026, there was more time for the WBSC to plan the WCs for Baseball5. The Asia Cups for Baseball5 has also been postponed to 2021, with dates to be determined.

8.5.2 She informed that the WCs for the Baseball5 were to be hosted by Mexico, and had been postponed to 2021, to dates to be confirmed. She said that with the uncertainty of the WCs dates, it was difficult for SA to plan for the Asia Cups. She also informed that the WBSC was looking into splitting the 2 WC events into separate WCs, 1 WC for Open category, and 1 WC for U18 category.

8.5.3 She stated that Baseball5 was getting very popular, and the WBSC has written to Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) to include Baseball5 in the Asia Indoor Games 2021 (Bangkok – Chonburi Thailand) and Asia Youth Games 2021 (Shantou China).

8.5.4 She said that the WBSC was monitoring the global pandemic situation and would keep all concerned posted of developments.

#### **8.6 Asia Cup U15 Women SB**

8.6.1 She informed that in view of the packed events calendar for the WBSC in 2021, the WBSC 1<sup>st</sup> U15 Women Softball WC has been pushed to 2023.

8.6.2 Upon SA President's query, Ms. Zhang confirmed that the CSA was still interested to host the Asia Cup U15 Women SB but that it could be in a different host city from Pingtan, Fuzhou-Fujian (which had agreed to host the 2020 competition).

### **9. ASIA SEMINARS**

#### **9.1 SA-JSA Coaching Webinars**

9.1.1 The details of this joint SA-JSA project were as presented by SA Coaching

Committee Chair, Mr. Miyake, in Items 3.4 and 3.5 of these Minutes. The EXCO Members agreed to, and supported the SA-JSA Coaching Webinars as presented.

9.1.2 SA President Low informed that SA had applied to the WBSC for the Continental Grant, including for the sum of USD5,000.00 for the Coaching Webinars, and waiting for the approval and funds from the WBSC. She requested JSA and Mr. Miyake to send to SA, the written proposal and a budget for the project. She thanked JSA, Mr. Miyake and his team for their commitment and all the efforts and time.

9.1.3 Mr. Miyake thanked the SA for its support for the project and informed that he and JSA would send in the proposal and budget for the project for SA's consideration.

**Proposal:**

*To consider and approve the Softball Asia – Japan Softball Association (JSA) Joint Project of Coaching Webinars and the payment of the USD5,000.00 to JSA from the WBSC-SA Continental Development Grant for the project.*

**DECISION**

**The SA EXCO unanimously approved the Softball Asia – Japan Softball Association (JSA) Joint Project of Coaching Webinars and the payment of the USD5,000.00 to JSA from the WBSC-SA Continental Development Grant for the project.**

**9.2 WBSC – SA Baseball5 Technical Seminar postponed to 2021.**

SA President Low informed that, as with all other events, the planned WBSC-SA Baseball5 Seminar for Technical Officials in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, scheduled in April 2020, has been postponed to new dates to be determined due to the pandemic.

**9.3 Other SA Seminars for Technical Officials, Umpires and Scorers**

SA President requested SA Umpiring Co-chair, Mr. Paulo Tabirara, and SA Coaching Committee, Ms. Tan Chia Mien, to look into respective proposals for the continuing education and information-knowledge sharing for the umpires and scorers in Asia, such as the Coaching Webinar being planned by the SA Coaching Committee, and to submit his/her respective proposals to SA for consideration. She said that the WBSC Commissions were also looking into similar projects for WBSC, to which they could refer.

**10. WORLD GAMES BIRMINGHAM – WOMEN SOFTBALL COMPETITION**

10.1 SA President Low reminded the EXCO Members that the World Games Birmingham, USA has been postponed from 2021 to 9 – 13 July 2022. She requested the 3 Asia teams selected to participate, namely, China, Japan and Chinese Taipei, to ensure their preparations and not to withdraw as it was not easy to secure the 3 slots for Asian teams. She stated that the WBSC would be taking that event as the WBSC

world-level tournament in place of the WBSC Women SB World Cup, which would not be taking place in 2022.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **11.1 Distribution of Used SB Equipment**

11.1.1 SA President Low briefed EXCO Members that SA was able to obtain 20 sets of “starter kits”, comprising of used equipment for distribution to the NFs at development level. She stated that the equipment was from “old stock” from the International Softball Federation (ISF) office in Plant City, which has since been closed. She added that although the kits were of used equipment, they were still in fairly good condition, which could be used for development projects in schools.

11.1.2 She informed that SA obtained applications from 3 SA-NF-members, namely, Malaysia (5 sets), Pakistan (20 sets) and Thailand. She also added that the WBSC SB Division had requested that 5 sets be given to India SB as India had been participating in the previous ISF World Championships when that event was an “open” tournament for any team to participate (no need for continental qualifier).

11.1.3 After discussion, the EXCO Members agreed for 5 sets of the “starter kits” be given to each of the NFs of India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Thailand.

11.1.4 She informed that the WBSC had also approved the sum of USD7,500.00 for 2020 for equipment, and that SA had requested some more “starter kits”. She added that when SA received approval and delivery of those kits, she would request for further applications for those kits, and report back to the EXCO for consideration.

#### **Proposal:**

*To consider and approve the distribution of 5 sets each of the Softball “starter kits” obtained from the WBSC Softball Division to the following National Softball Federations:*

- *Softball Association of India.*
- *Softball Association of Malaysia.*
- *Softball Federation of Pakistan.*
- *Softball Association of Thailand.*

#### **DECISION**

**The SA EXCO unanimously approved the distribution of 5 sets each of the Softball “starter kits” to the following National Softball Federations:**

- **Softball Association of India.**
- **Softball Association of Malaysia.**
- **Softball Federation of Pakistan.**
- **Softball Association of Thailand.**

## **11.2 Asian Games 2022, 2026 & 2032**

SA President briefed the EXCO Members as follows on the Asian Games 2022, 2026 and 2032:

### **11.2.1 Asian Games Hangzhou 2022**

- She stated that she was confident the preparations for the Women SB competition for the 2022 Asian Games Hangzhou would proceed smoothly as the coordination was in the good hands of the CSA, who were in close communication and cooperation with the HAGOC 2022.
- She said the SA would look into appointment of the Technical Delegate soon. She also requested Ms. Heidi Ip to assist in technical matters as she is the Co-chair of the SA Competitions and Technical Committee, and being based in Hong Kong – China, was close by to Hangzhou.

### **11.2.2 Asian Games Nagoya 2026**

- SA President Low informed that on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020, she had a videoconference meeting with JSA President Mr. Miyake and other JSA officials, and one item discussed was the working together of SA, with the JSA and Baseball Federation of Japan (BFJ), as well as Baseball Federation Asia (BFA), to lobby for the inclusion of both Men and Women Softball, as well as Men & Women Baseball, in the Asian Games Nagoya 2026.
- She said that she had suggested the formation of a Joint SA-BJA-JSA-BFJ Task Force for this purpose, and looked forward to working with all stakeholders on the matter.
- She also requested SA Advisor, Mr. Tokuda, to assist in the Task Force's efforts since Nagoya is his home-base. Mr. Tokuda confirmed that he would be happy to continue in that role as he has started some ground-work.
- Mr. Miyake confirmed JSA's support and commitment to do their best for the close collaboration between JSA and BFJ, and work with SA and BFA to realise the mission for the inclusion of both Men and Women SB as well as Men and Women BB in the Asian Games Nagoya 2026.

### **11.2.3 Asian Games 2030**

- SA President informed that there were 2 bid cities for the Asian Games 2030, namely, Doha – Qatar and Riyadh – Saudi Arabia, and that both bid cities had contacted the WBSC / SA and BFA as regards the inclusion of Men BB and Women SB in the 2030 Asian Games in their respective bids.
- She said she has been in communication with the WBSC President and Office, as well as BFA, on the joint effort to ensure that both BB-SA



remain in the Asian Games 2030 and all have been in communication with both bid cities. She added that the WBSC, BFA and SA also had a joint videoconference call with the Riyadh bid city officials.

- She said that a lot of effort has to be put in as both bid cities / countries do not yet have any formal NF for BB-SB, and there is no strong BB-SB presence in that region (Middle East).

### **11.3 JSA Query on Asia Cup U23 Men**

- 11.3.1 JSA ED Mr. Okamoto asked to clarify the dates and location for the Asia Cup U23 Men SB tournament.
- 11.3.2 SA President replied that as there was no other host at this stage for that event, it was likely that Malaysia would be asked to host it and that it would be held on “all-grass” competition fields.
- 11.3.3 She also stated that as the WBSC WC U23 Men was scheduled to be held in Argentina in October 2021, SA would have no other choice but to hold the Asia Cup U23 qualifier sometime in the earlier part of 2021, likely April – July 2020, to give time of at least 2 – 3 months to the qualified team to make the necessary preparations to travel to Argentina for the WC.
- 11.3.4 She said that due to the timing, SA may only be able to give the participating teams for the Asia Cup U23 Men less than 2 – 3 months advance notice of the Asia Cup as the current uncertainties makes it not possible to decide the definite dates and venue for that Asia Cup.
- 11.3.5 She said that Malaysia was still not able to decide on dates and exact location for that Asia Cup as the Malaysia borders were still closed by the Malaysian Government to international travellers (except for necessary and special cases) until 31 December 2020.

### **11.4 Establishment of the WBSC Integrity Unit**

- 11.4.1 Mr. Miyake congratulated SA President Low, who is also WBSC Secretary-General, on her recent appointment by the WBSC as the Head of the WBSC Integrity Unit. He said that he realised that the position came with heavy duties and responsibilities, and that JSA and he would like to extend full support and cooperation to her in that new role as integrity were very crucial in governance and leadership.
- 11.4.2 SA President thanked Mr. Miyake and JSA for their congratulatory wishes and for their support.

### **11.5 KBSA Query on Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB**

- 11.5.1 Ms. Kim asked for clarification on the dates and location of the Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB in 2021 and stated that Korea would prefer dates during the Universities’ semester break, between July – September 2021.

11.5.2 SA President Low informed that the SBAT has informed that it was still interested to host the Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB but the dates have not been fixed. She said she would need to contact SBAT to discuss further as there was a new President just elected last week.

11.5.3 Mr. Yimpaiboon confirmed that SBAT was still committed to host the Asia Cup Asian Universities Women SB tournament and that preparations were still in progress. He informed that he had submitted the budget for the hosting of that event to the Sport Authority of Thailand (SAT) and was waiting for approval. He said that the budget included cost for the conversion of 1 SB field to a skinned diamond, with another (2<sup>nd</sup>) grass field in the Thammasat University. He stated that the proposed venue was the same as that used for the Asian Games Bangkok 2008 SB competition. He added that the initial dates for that Asia Cup was February 2021 but with the current situation, those dates were no longer practical, and that the new dates would be decided in consultation with SA.

11.5.4 SA President Low requested Mr. Yimpaiboon and the SBAT new EXCO to put in a fresh proposal for the hosting of that event.

## **11.6 Media and SA Website**

SA Media Officer, Mr. Tony Mariadass requested all EXCO Members to remind the NFs to submit short reports and updates of all events and activities to enable him to post the news and information on the SA's revamped Website ([www.asiasoftball.com](http://www.asiasoftball.com)). He also reminded JSA to keep him posted of the progress of the proposed SA Coaching Webinars so that he may post news of it on the SA Website.

## **11.7 General**

11.7.1 The EXCO Members conveyed "Happy birthday" and best wishes to Ms. Kim as it was her birthday.

11.7.1 The EXCO Members requested to have periodic online meetings during the current pandemic situation to enable them to stay in contact to understand and get updates on the different parts of Asia, and to discuss SA matters accordingly.

11.8.2 SA President Low thanked all EXCO Members for attending the Meeting. She reiterated SA's deepest appreciation to WBSC's Ms. Huang for her decided and committed assistance to help SA set up this Meeting and attending to the technical aspects for such a smooth meeting.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other matters arising, the meeting was adjourned at 11.30 am with a vote of thanks to the Chair of the meeting.

### **Minutes confirmed by:**



*Beng Choo Low*

**BENG CHOO LOW**  
**President, Softball Asia**

**14 October 2020**

