



## UWW ORDINARY CONGRESS

Ajman Park, Shijak, Durrësi (ALB)

27 October 2024 - 9h00

### MINUTES

#### In attendance

#### Bureau Members (18) with voting rights in attendance:

- |     |                        |  |
|-----|------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Nenad Lalovic          | President                                    |
| 2.  | Theodoros Hamakos      | Vice-President                               |
| 3.  | Mikhail Mamiashvili    | Vice-President                               |
| 4.  | Akhroldjan Ruziev      | Vice-President                               |
| 5.  | Nataliya Yariguina     | Vice-President                               |
| 6.  | Namig Aliyev           | Bureau Member                                |
| 7.  | Zamel S. Al Shahrani   | Bureau Member                                |
| 8.  | Péter Bacsa            | Bureau Member                                |
| 9.  | Karl-Martin Dittmann   | Bureau Member & UWW-Europe Council President |
| 10. | Daniel Igali           | Bureau Member                                |
| 11. | Pedro Dos Santos Silva | Bureau Member                                |
| 12. | Pedro Gama Filho       | Bureau Member                                |
| 13. | Fouad Meskout          | Bureau Member & UWW-Africa Council President |
| 14. | Don Ryan               | Bureau Member                                |
| 15. | Daulet Turlykhanov     | Bureau Member & UWW-Asia Council President   |
| 16. | Rodica Yakshi          | Bureau Member                                |
| 17. | Ye Zhang               | Bureau Member                                |
| 18. | Arsen Julfalakyan      | Chairman of the Athletes' Commission         |

#### Secretary General

- I. Carlos Roy

#### Presidents of Continental Councils:

- |      |                     |                           |
|------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| II.  | Francisco Lee Lopez | President of UWW-Americas |
| III. | Ethan Lake          | President of UWW-Oceania  |

#### Excused:

- IV. Stan Dziedzic Vice-President



## National Federations (103) with voting rights in attendance:

### Africa (Total 19):

1. Algeria
2. Benin
3. Botswana
4. Burundi
5. Central Africa Republic
6. Egypt
7. Equatorial Guinea
8. Ghana
9. Kenya
10. Liberia
11. Madagascar
12. Morocco
13. Namibia
14. Nigeria
15. South Africa
16. Sierra Leone
17. Tanzania
18. Uganda
19. Zimbabwe

### Americas (Total 18):

1. Argentina
2. Bahamas
3. Barbados
4. Brazil
5. Canada
6. Chili
7. Colombia
8. Costa Rica
9. Guatemala
10. Jamaica
11. Mexico
12. Nicaragua
13. Panama
14. Peru
15. Puerto Rico

16. Uruguay
17. United States
18. Venezuela

### Asia (Total 27):

1. Afghanistan
2. China
3. Chinese Taipei
4. India
5. I.R. Iran
6. Iraq
7. Japan
8. Jordan
9. Kazakhstan
10. Kyrgyzstan
11. Korea
12. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
13. Macao
14. Malaysia
15. Mongolia
16. Nepal
17. Palestine
18. Qatar
19. Singapore
20. Syria
21. Thailand
22. Timor Leste
23. Tajikistan
24. Turkmenistan
25. Uzbekistan
26. Vietnam
27. Yemen

### Europe (Total 36):

1. Albania
2. Armenia
3. Austria

4. Azerbaijan
5. Belarus
6. Bulgaria
7. Croatia
8. Czech Republic
9. Denmark
10. Estonia
11. Finland
12. France
13. Great Britain
14. Georgia
15. Germany
16. Greece
17. Hungary
18. Italy
19. Kosovo
20. Lithuania
21. Moldova
22. Netherlands
23. North Makedonia
24. Norway
25. Poland
26. Portugal
27. Romania
28. Russia
29. Slovenia
30. Serbia
31. Spain
32. Switzerland
33. Slovakia
34. Sweden
35. Turkey
36. Ukraine

### Oceania (Total 3):

1. American Samoa
2. Australia
3. New Zealand

**TOTAL: 121**

## National Federations (5) attending as observer (without speaking & voting rights):

- Cambodia
- Hong Kong
- Philippines
- Latvia
- Tonga

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Note: The Congress was recorded.



Agenda

1. Welcome words and opening of the Congress
2. Adoption of the *Congress Procedure Rules*
3. Appointment of the Congress working bodies
4. Approval of the minutes of the UWW Ordinary Congress in Belgrade on 9 September 2022
5. Approval of the minutes of the UWW Extraordinary Congress online 24 June 2024
6. Report by the controllers of powers
7. President's report on the UWW activities since the 2022 Congress
8. Financial report by the statutory auditors OFISA - Adoption of the 2022 - 2023 financial reports
9. Update on UWW Strategy 2022-2026
10. Report by the Refereeing Commission
11. Update on Change of Nationality
12. UWW Pro Wrestling League & development of Pankration MMA
13. Report by the UWW Associated Styles Committee
14. Questions by the National Federations
15. Applications for affiliation to UWW
16. Elections of the Bureau Members
17. Miscellaneous & Closing of the Congress

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## 1. Welcome words and opening of the Congress

The UWW President, Mr Lalovic welcomed all delegates and gave the floor to Mr Sahit Prizreni, President of the Albanian Wrestling Federation for the first address and welcome words to the Congress delegates.

Mr Lalovic declared the Congress open.

## 2. Adoption of the Congress Procedure Regulations

Before submitting the *Congress Procedure Rules* to the congress for approval, the Secretary General, Mr Roy informed that one slight adjustments had been made following the amendment adopted by the Extraordinary Congress. The wording of the *Congress Procedure Rules* was adapted in that respect.

The *Congress Procedure Regulations* were **adopted** without any remark.

## 3. Appointment of the Congress working bodies

The Congress **approved** the working bodies as follows:

Writer of the Congress minutes:	Mr Carlos Roy
Proof-readers of the minutes:	French: Mr Fouad Meskout English: Mr Arsen Julfalakyan
Election Commission:	Mr Karl-Martin Dittmann (Chairman) Mrs Rodica Yaksi (Member) Mr Gilbert Modoux (Operator)

## 4. Approval of the minutes of the UWW Ordinary Congress in Belgrade on 9 September 2022

The minutes of the Belgrade Congress were **adopted** without any remark.

## 5. Approval of the minutes of the UWW Extraordinary Congress online 24 June 2024

The minutes of the online Extraordinary Congress were **adopted** without any remark.

## 6. Reports by the controllers of powers

The controllers of powers have identified the National Federations attending the Congress under representation:

Africa	19
Americas	18
Asia	27
Europe	36



Oceania	3
Bureau Members	18
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>121</u>

## 7. President's report on the UWW activities since the 2022 Congress

In his report, Mr Lalovic first came back on the success of the Paris Olympic Games and the Olympic Wrestling tournament. In that respect, he mentioned the great technical wrestling on the mat, the atmosphere in the hall, the attendance, the refereeing performance, as well as the success of the Wrestling House. He also wished that this footprint would leave a legacy for our sport in France. He mentioned that the image of our sport was excellent, including in the eyes of the IOC.

He came back on the qualifiers for these Games, which were highly attended. He thanked the federations for this success, although politics were always around. He said that, in accordance with the Olympic Charter and our Constitution, all our stakeholders and our athletes should be respected. The athletes were not guilty for the geopolitical situation. He evoked the eligibility criteria for AIN, which were slightly changed recently by the board. He said that he was aware that the eligibility criteria did not satisfy the all national federations.

He added that the politization of sports was the biggest threat at this moment, and that the situation will not evolve much in the future. Therefore, our neutrality is our biggest asset and we must protect it.

Since the 2022 congress, many decisions were taken, mostly on calendar, referee selection, technical aspects related to events and wrestling rules, governance, regulations and constitutional changes, finance and IOC recommendations on eligibility, to mention a few.

He thanked all Bureau members as well as the UWW staff for their help in all this work.

The President also noted the growing success of Beach Wrestling and the efforts by many federations to entered beach wrestlers.

He also said that during this period, new vision and mission statements were adopted. A sustainability charter was also adopted, and the policies for safeguarding athlete from abuse and harassment were reinforced. Three UWW safeguarding officers were trained.

The President reminded that the IOC session in 2023 made its decision regarding the additional sports and that Beach Wrestling was not considered. But it is in the program of the Youth Olympic Games in Senegal with gender parity.

The President also reminded that his position as IOC EB member runs until 2026, but his term as IOC Member runs until 2028. He also mentioned the IOC presidency, stating he did not put his candidacy forward, since he reckoned his mission was not over with UWW and he did not want to harm those with such ambition.

He said that currently the discussion of the IOC EB focused around the situation in the middle east.

The President also reminded his position as WADA's Executive Committee.

Mr. Lalovic then talked about the athletes' career and said that many of them turn to other sports after their career in Olympic wrestling. The idea of organizing a professional wrestling



league to allow wrestlers earn some money emerged from this observation. Several leagues had already been organized and we were able to observe them. This project was already being discussed by a working group. He said that we need to protect our members from those who “steal” these athletes without any contribution to the training and development. He added that such league would also help improve our image as a sport and attract new athletes and fans.

It was added that activity reports (departments and continental councils) were made available on the website ahead of the congress and that the continental presidents and UWW directors were available for any questions.

The President added that, for many years, there was full transparency on many aspects, in particular regarding finances. The objective was to be among the top international federations in terms of good governance.

No comment was made by the Congress.

The report of activities was adopted.

## **8. Financial report by the statutory auditors OFISA - Adoption of the 2022 and 2023 financial reports**

Mr Roy reminded that the financial report were made available on the website ahead of the congress. He passed the floor to the President for general comments on these accounts.

The President reminded that the accounts were audited by the Swiss company OFISA. As of 31 December 2023, the assets amounted to ca. 25,42 million Swiss Francs, compared to 32 million in 2022. Our equity reached 22,4 million. The income increased by around 700'000 Swiss francs between 2022 and 2023, while the operating expenses rose by 560'000 in the same period.

The UWW financial assets were heavily impacted by the 2022 stock market crash, but recovered part of the loss in 2023 with a net financial result of around 6450'000 Swiss Francs. Finally the annual loss totalled 5,18 million, compared to 7,39 million in 2022.

These larger losses in 2022 and 2023 were mainly due to our heavy investments in the digital transformation (as approved by the congress in 2021).

Also, the investments in the development had never been as substantial with 3,64 million spent in 2023.

Considering the Reports of the Statutory Auditor of 26 June 2024, and as no comments or questions were raised, the financial report for 2022 and 2023 were adopted by the Congress.

As an information on the budgets for the coming two years, the President said that the presentation will be modified so to distribute the Olympic incomes over four years, thereby showing a more accurate budget and financial situation.

The 2025 incomes are budgeted at 9,87 million Swiss Francs, with direct costs amounting to 5,875 million, resulting in a gross operating income of ca. 4 million. General expenses total 7,13 millions, leading to an operating loss of 3,13 million. Similarly, a loss of 3.174 million is budgeted for 2026.



The budget are pessimistic, the objective is to reduce losses as much as possible. The aim is to break-even in the short term.

No comments and questions were raised.

## 9. Update on Strategy for Wrestling & UWW for 2022-2026

Mr Roy reminder that the UWW 2022-2026 Strategy launched during the 2021 Congress, and consisting of a 5-year roadmap where additional efforts would be put on 5 focus areas: : Youth Engagement, Women's Wrestling, Associated Styles, Image of Wrestling and Digital Transformation.

Rather than going through a detailed report, considering that a quarterly update was sent to all federations regularly, highlights were presented on the *Wrestler4Fun* project and on Women's Wrestling by Development Director, Mrs. Deqa Niamkey.

Highlights were then provided on the digital transformation by Marketing & Communications Director, Mr. Gordon Templeman.

No questions or comments were raised. The update report was adopted.

## 10. Report on Refereeing

Mr. Silvestri, Head of the Refereeing Commission was given the floor for the report on refereeing for this period.

He first reported on the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, mentioning the work of the commission to select and prepare the best referees, aiming for high quality, neutrality and professionalism. These games were considered as one of the best Olympics for referee performance, with extensive training, mental preparation, and strong collaboration with athletes and coaches. The Women Referee Program doubled the number of female referees compared to Tokyo, and 26 referees were new to the Olympics.

Referees applied passivity procedures well, issued no red cards, and oversaw active, high-scoring matches, though identifying fouls in Greco-Roman remains a challenge.

Lost challenges by referees decreased from 40% (Tokyo) to 35% (Paris), indicating improved decision-making.

More broadly, he noted that around 1,300 referees are active worldwide, with ongoing education and faster feedback for upgrades or downgrades.

The commission emphasizes talent development, education, and improved communication, with specific progress in Beach Wrestling and Grappling refereeing.

Collaboration with coaches, athletes, and the medical team has reduced misunderstandings and improved safety.

No questions or comments were raised. The report was adopted.

## 11. Update on Change of Nationality

The President said that a change of approach had been decided in order to be more in line with the to be more in line the Olympic Charter and to address the concerns around this topic that



were witnessed lately. He gave the floor to Mr. Silva, who chaired the working group on nationality changes.

Mr. Silva confirmed that the new rules were indeed changed to reflect the rules of the Olympic Charter regarding the nationality of the participants, while promoting the grassroots in our sport.

Mr. Roy added that one of the main limitations introduced with the new rules is the holding of the passport to represent a new country. And the number of permitted changes per year will be reduced as well. As some final adjustments were pending, the complete information rules and information would be communicated to the federations at a later stage.

No questions or comments were made.

## 12. UWW Pro Wrestling League & development of Pankration MMA

The President gave the floor to the Chairman of the working group formed to study the feasibility of a UWW Pro Wrestling League.

Mr. Julfalakyan informed that the main idea was to establish a professional league where the best athletes from all continents would compete and earn money from their sport activity. He informed that the format of such league was not yet finalized. However, in order to test some ideas, it was planned to hold an event by the end of 2024, using the model of the existing “Poddubny Wrestling League”, which already organized six similar events since 2022.

Mr. Julfalakyan repeated that the main goal was to allow wrestler gain financial resources but also to boost the attractiveness of wrestling through social media and television.

Mr. Lalovic added that the business model of this league could be franchised events by different organizers in different part of the world. He said that we should initiate such new models to protect our sport from external private event organisers.

No questions or comments were raised. The plan to establish a professional league was **approved**.

The President then gave the floor to Mr. Namig Aliyev, the Chairman of the working group on the development of Pankration MMA.

Mr. Aliyev said that MMA had become very popular, and as wrestling is one of the principal combat skills required by successful MMA fighters, our duty was to continue develop and support this area, in particular because national federations invest a lot of resources in the training of their wrestlers, but they ultimately leave wrestling once formed to earn money in other organizations.

The floor was given to Mr. Adrian Bakos, member of the UWW World Pankration Committee. He said that Pankration is divided in two groups: Traditional Pankration and Pankration-Elite (strikes to the head being the main difference between the two). Since UWW is already managing Pankration Elite, which is essentially a form of Amateur-MMA, it had the strong foundation to govern Amateur MMA in view of its established position as an International Federation.



Mr. Pedro Gama Filho, chair of the working group on Pankration/Amateur MMA, thanked the UWW President for initiating this re-investment of pankration. He said it is very important that we move in that direction as MMA is one of the fastest growing sport in the world.

Mr. Edmar Abdoulaev (NED), member of the World Pankration Committee, was given the floor. He shared examples of regional clubs in his country, where wrestlers who were active in wrestling during 3, 5 or 10 years with very good level suddenly left wrestling to MMA. He said that this opportunity to develop Pankration MMA was very good opportunity for wrestling, as well as for national federations to attract more members.

The President thanked all speakers. He reminded that UWW was not planning to compete with UFC or One Championship. He insisted that the objective is Amateur MMA with protections, and no combats in a cage, based on the Pankration rules.

He added that pankration is the eldest type of wrestling and UWW must protect its rules. This is the way to go and develop Amateur MMA with protections.

No questions or comments were raised. The proposal to further develop “*Amateur MMA*” and govern this style was **approved**.

### 13. Report by the Associated Styles Committee

Mr Simsek, Manager of the Associated Styles Office, made a report on the activities of the associated styles during the 2023 and 2024 period.

Several partnership and cooperation agreements have been signed in the field of traditional wrestling, which confirm the mission of bringing together and uniting all traditional wrestling styles under the UWW umbrella.

For example, a cooperation was signed in 2023 with the Federation of Indian Style Wrestling to promote and grow the “Kushti” style.

Also, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2023 with the UAE (United Arab Emirates) with the aim of promoting the development and protection of the traditional Emirati wrestling style known as Mutaraha.

Recently, Iranian « Choukhe » has officially joined the UWW wrestling family, following a partnership with the Iran Wrestling Federation and another collaboration agreement with the Turkish Traditional Wrestling Federation to promote and develop 6 more traditional styles of wrestling.

No questions or comments were raised and the report was **adopted**.

### 14. New affiliations

Four completed applications for affiliation were submitted to the approval by the Congress:

- Federación Ecuatoguineana de Lucha Olimpica, Lucha Tradicional y Disciplinas Asociadas
- Wrestling Association of Lesotho
- Wrestling Association of Zambia
- Wrestling Federation of Timor Leste

The Congress **approved** the affiliation of these four national federations.



The total number of affiliated national federations, including these four, is now **189**.

## **15. Questions by the National Federations**

There were no questions submitted by the national federations ahead of the congress. Nevertheless, the floor was opened for any questions or comments.

The delegate from POL asked a question about challenges, in particular the reason why a point is granted to the opponent when a challenge is lost. In his opinion, there should be some simplification.

The President answered that such technical topics regarding the rules could not be solved during a congress but had to be reviewed by the Technical Commission.

The delegate from KEN asked about the possibility to allow refugee wrestlers in the UWW events. The President answered that indeed the status of refugee is challenging and that the United Nations estimate the number of forcibly displaced people, including the refugees, to more than 123 million in 2024. He said that a strategy should be developed by UWW to include them.

The delegate from AFG mentioned that refugees had the possibility to compete on the club level. He mentioned the transfer regulations, allowing the participation in interclub competitions.

The delegate from RSA took the floor to thank the UWW for the organization of clinics and courses in South Africa.

The delegate from BLR thanked UWW and the Albanian Wrestling Federation for the organization of the championship and congress. He also thanked the UWW Bureau for revising the eligibility criteria for the AIN athletes. He added that their wish would be to be able to have their flag on the singlet and in the venues.

The delegate from GUA thanked UWW for the work in favour of the development of wrestling in Guatemala and elsewhere.

Finally, the delegate from MGL asked whether any changes to the weight classes were considered. He also mentioned the issues around “leg laces”, noting that such move brings injuries and prevents any possibility to escape once properly initiated. He suggested that the number of turns could be limited.

The answer was that such topics were to be examined by the technical commission.

No other intervention was made.

## **16. Election of the Bureau Members**

The floor was given to Mr Karl-Martin Dittmann, Chairman of the Elections Commission.

Before proceeding to the elections, Mr Dittmann asked whether all delegates with voting rights received their tablet. He then explained the voting and the election rules.

A tablet user's video was shown and a test with fictitious candidates was carried out.



Mr Dittmann read the names of the candidates and informed the Congress that one candidate, Mr. Myanganbayar BATSUKH (MGL), had withdrawn his candidacy on the morning of the Congress.

He then asked whether at this point, any other candidates wished to withdraw their candidacy. This was not the case.

Some issues with the presentation of the candidates on the tablets were identified, namely the different colours used for men and women. This issue was fixed.

The Congress proceeded to the elections.

The results of the 1<sup>st</sup> ballot were provided to the Elections Commission, which verified the results and confirmed the elected candidates in accordance with the constitutional rules. The results were then announced by Mr Dittmann and displayed on the screen:



UNITED WORLD WRESTLING			
Session 2024 Tirana (ALB)			
27.10.2024 / 13:13:29			
Results: Elections of the Bureau Members Vote for : 6 Minimum: 1			
Box given / Boitiers distribués :	121		
Participants :	113		
Majority / Majorité :	<u>57</u>		
<hr/>			
+ Mr SILVA Pedro	80	M	-
+ Mr BACSA, Peter	72	M	-
+ Mr BAUMGARTNER Bruce	70	M	N
+ Mr AL-SHAHRANI Zamel	69	M	-
+ Mrs YARIGUINA Natalia	60	W	-
Mr TURLYKHANOV Daulet	39	M	-
Mrs PELJEE Buyandelger	30	W	N
Mrs SULTANBEKOVA Cholpon	26	W	N
Mrs TANIOKA Kuniko	23	W	N
Mrs LEGRAND Lise	19	W	N
Mrs KURE Anette	16	W	N
Mrs PIETSCHMANN Nadine	14	W	N
Mr MACHAIDZE Edisher	10	M	N
Mr GANCHEV Danail	6	M	N

Considering the results of the first tour, and in accordance with the Constitution, a second tour was required to attain the minimum three women on the Bureau. This second tour would therefore be contested among the remaining women candidates. Mr Modoux was asked to configure the tablets so that only the remaining women's candidates appear on the tablets. The Congress proceeded to the second ballot (simple majority, two votes maximum).

The results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ballot were provided to the Elections Commission, which verified the results and confirmed the elected candidates in accordance with the constitutional rules.



The results were then announced by Mr Dittmann and displayed on the screen:

<b>UNITED WORLD WRESTLING</b>		
<b>Session 2024 Tirana (ALB)</b>		
27.10.2024 / 13:24:14		
Results: Elections of the Bureau Members    Vote for : 2    Minimum: 1		
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Box given / Boitiers distribués :	121	
Participants :	119	
Majority / Majorité :	0	
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Mrs PELJEE Buyandelger	55	W N
Mrs SULTANBEKOVA Cholpon	45	W N
Mrs LEGRAND Lise	35	W N
Mrs TANIOKA Kuniko	33	W N
Mrs PIETSMANN Nadine	20	W N
Mrs KURE Anette	14	W N
  		

## 17. Miscellaneous & closing of the Congress

The President congratulated the newly elected Bureau members as well as all the candidates to this election. He mentioned that these elections were conducted under the new constitution and the objective to increase the number of women in the Bureau was a first achievement in that regard.

He wished all athletes and federations a successful competition in Tirana.

I also thanked the local organizing committee for organizing this congress and informed that a lunch was offered in the same room.

Mr Lalovic thanked all the delegates and Bureau members for their participation and closed the Congress.

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The Congress was adjourned at 13h15. Minutes submitted by Mr Roy

A blue ink signature of Nenad Lalovic, consisting of a stylized 'N' and 'L' followed by a horizontal line.

Nenad Lalovic  
UWW President

A blue ink signature of Carlos Roy, featuring a stylized 'C' and 'R' with a large loop at the end.

Carlos Roy  
UWW Secretary General

Corsier-sur-Vevey, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 / cr