

MINUTES OF THE WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATING CHAMPIONSHIPS LTD
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HYATT HOTEL, CRYSTAL CITY, WASHINGTON DC,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
13 SEPTEMBER 2008

- CHAIRMAN:** Christopher Erskine (Australia)
- MINUTES:** James Probert (England), Claire Ryan (New Zealand)
- MEMBERS:**
- Argentina (corporate, full) - Daragh Grant
 - Australia (corporate, full) - Todd Golding
 - Bangladesh (corporate, full) - Marbroor Wassey
 - Bermuda (individual, full) - Calvin Thomas
 - Botswana (corporate, ordinary) - Evans Chipomho
 - Canada (corporate, full) - Janet Webster
 - Czech Republic (corporate, full) - Jan Libicek (*late to meeting*)
 - England (corporate, full) - James Probert
 - Estonia (corporate, full) - Karin Palo
 - Germany (corporate, full) - Angelika Hoeness
 - Greece (corporate, full) - Effie Giannakouri
 - Hong Kong (corporate, full) - Greg Forse
 - India (individual, ordinary) - Andrew Fitch
 - Indonesia corporate, full) - Sherria Ayuandini
 - Ireland (individual, full) - Dick Wafer
 - Israel (corporate, full) - Yoni Cohen
 - Japan (corporate, ordinary) - Junichi Miyagawa
 - Kuwait (individual, full) - Emma Bowie
 - Lithuania (corporate, full) - Virginija Paksiene
 - Mexico (corporate, ordinary) - Daragh Grant
 - Mongolia (corporate, ordinary) - Allison Hahn
 - Montenegro (corporate, full) - Predraig Zenovic
 - Netherlands (corporate, full) - Jeanette Baljeu
 - New Zealand (corporate, full) - Jeremy Johnson
 - Pakistan (corporate, full) - Taimur Bandey
 - Peru (corporate, full) - Sixto Ramos
 - Philippines (corporate, full) - Jimmy Soriano
 - Qatar (corporate, ordinary) – Alex Just
 - Romania (individual, full) - Simona Mazilu
 - Scotland (individual, full) Irene McGrath
 - Singapore (corporate, full) - Gaurav Keerthi
 - Slovakia (corporate, full) - Branislav Fecko
 - Slovenia (corporate, full) - Bojana Skrt
 - South Africa (corporate, full) - Daniel de Kadt
 - South Korea (corporate, full) - Joshua Park
 - Sri Lanka (individual, full) - Andrew Deshan Pushparaja
 - United States (corporate, full) – Phyllis Hirth
 - Wales (corporate, full) - Martin Pollard

OBSERVERS: Canada – Kris Ade, Erin Butt, Pardip Chopra, Eliza Frank,
Martin Poirier
Estonia- Tajo Oja
Germany – K-P Heil
Hong Kong- Emily Zhang
Indonesia- Rivandra Royono
Ireland- Eoghan McSwiney
Israel - Hayah Eichler, Asher Weill
Japan – Yayoi Yasudu
Netherlands - Ard van der Steur, Alexander Zwagermann
Pakistan - Sofyan Sultan
Peru - Camilla Forder, Gloria Maria Gonzalez, Christian Grados,
Diego Ortiz de Zevallos
Qatar – Andrew Goodman, Hayat Maarafi
Scotland – Diana Gotts, George Molyneaux, Pat Slaven,
Singapore - Geetha Creffield, Rohini Singh, Evelyn Woels
Slovakia - Andrej Schulz
South Korea - Peejay Garcia, Roger Hatridge,
United States - Alfred Snider
Wales - Lewis Turner

1. Establishment of quorum. 8. Report on the status of the rules. 9. Incorporation

Christopher Erskine, the Chairperson of the World Schools Debating Council Executive Committee, opened the meeting at 10: 06 am and welcomed all present. He suggested that some of the items in the agenda may need to be dealt with out of the order in which they appeared in the Agenda and asked members to bear with such changes as there was a logical pattern to them.

For example, the establishment of a quorum, the rules and incorporation were items that could be dealt with together. Since the last meeting in 2007, WSDC Ltd has become an incorporated society, following a unanimous vote by council members in a postal ballot earlier this year and is now governed by a memorandum, articles of association and rules, copies of which had been distributed to members.

For Council meetings to proceed there needs to be a quorum of members under rule 6.10 of those rules and Article 10.2 of the Articles of Association. As 38 of the 39 members of the Council were present, a quorum was clearly established.

2. Election of chair (in the event that no director is present)

Given that none of the original directors, Michael Birshan, Andrea Coomber and Yuri Romanenkov was present, the meeting agreed that pursuant to Rule 6.11 of the Charity Rules and Article 12 of the Articles that Chris Erskine as Chairperson of the Executive Committee would chair the meeting.

3. Election of directors and 5. Identification of full members, ordinary members and observers

James Probert, WSDC Ltd company secretary informed the meeting that 11 nominations had been received for the position of Director. These were: Jonathan Bailey, Michael Birshan, Andrea Comber, Peejay Garcia, Andrew Goodman, Nick Pacheco, Yuri Romanenkov, Claire Ryan, Jimmy Soriano, Spencer Steadman and Asher Weill. Article 22 requires the maximum number of Directors to be 9 and accordingly, the full members would need to vote.

He advised that among the countries represented at the 2007 World Schools Debating Championships, Botswana, India, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, and Montenegro had not participated in at least two of the previous three championships, and therefore would not be entitled to vote for any Director or any proposed changes to the WSDC Rules at this meeting, though their delegates were welcome to vote on motions which did not seek to amend the WSDC Rules.

The 31 full members present then voted and the returning officer Todd Golding announced that following people had been elected as Directors: Michael Birshan, Andrea Comber, Peejay Garcia, Andrew Goodman, Nick Pacheco, Yuri Romanenkov, Claire Ryan, Jimmy Soriano and Asher Weill.

11. Report of the 2008 WSDC Organising Committee

Phyllis Hirth presented a verbal Convenor's report. She said that the falling ceiling was regretted. She could not praise Colin Touhy enough for his work in locating venues. She explained that major crime in Washington venues and the collapse of the public school infrastructure meant that finding schools and venues had proven difficult. The hotel was not prepared for the size of the tournament and had estimated 280 based on registration details provided by teams to Phyllis but close to 350 showed up. JJ Rodriguez had decided to study law which meant that he was not available during the tournament but she thanked him for his work until that time.

The hurricane had prevented the walking tour around Washington and the debaters needed to stay indoors. Phyllis thanked Debbie Newman and George Molyneaux for working with the debaters on that day to produce symbols of peace to be presented on the 9/11 evening, which was a great night.

Phyllis suggested that we consider dispensing with sightseeing tours on free days in the future. The tour companies had required Phyllis to book and pay for buses in advance and teams had indicated their preferences for tours, only to withdraw at the last minute and either not pay or ask for refunds. This had proven a costly exercise for Phyllis.

She also expressed concerns about the need for team managers to take more responsibility for communicating, booking and paying on behalf of their teams. She had been swamped by individual emails and payments by various observers and debaters, many of whom she did not know and could not link to a particular nation or delegation. A more streamlined procedure by which such matters were handled by the team managers so there was only one person per delegation contacting the Convenor would be more helpful.

While she noted that the break night party and final banquet appeared to be successful events, she expressed disappointment that kosher and halal food was not provided. She concluded by thanking Aaron Maniam, the CAP, Claire Ryan and Geetha Creffield. The best aspect of the tournament for her was the great debates that took place.

Tuna Snider announced that the scrap book was almost complete and urged all teams to send material still outstanding when they got home.

Moved: England/Slovenia: That Phyllis be thanked for her work as Convenor of the 2008 Championships. **Carried by acclamation.**

12. 2008 awards including ESL and EFL awards

Bojana Skrt asked who is responsible for determining who is an EFL or ESL team and making the relevant awards. Claire Ryan replied that under rules 17.5 and 17.6 of the debating rules, the coach is supposed to submit to the Convenor a form prior to the championships outlining the family and educational linguistic backgrounds of each of the debaters on the team and the Chief Adjudicator then decides whether the team is ESL, EFL or not. Claire noted that no team had done that this year but as a result she had designed a form and had distributed it during this Championship. She apologized for not sending it out in advance. She also noted that she had to chase most ESL/EFL teams at the Championship for its return. She will send it out prior to the next Championship and it will be up to teams to complete and return it.

Chief Adjudicator Aaron Maniam announced to applause that Greece had won the ESL award and Slovenia the EFL award. Rule 17.10 of the debating rules states that a team which reaches the Grand Final of the Championships shall be ineligible for an EFL or ESL awards.

Daragh Grant said that such an award should not be a consolation prize and that even if an EFL or ESL team wins, it should still receive the award. Chris Erskine pointed out that the rules could not be changed at this stage and that if he wished a rule change, Daragh would need to give notice prior to the Athens AGM.

13. Report of the 2009 World Schools Debating Championships Organising Committee.

Effie Giannakouri presented a verbal report together with a written draft schedule. The tournament has not received sponsorship but it can run on registration fees only. The fee is 450 Euros which some may think is high but is necessary to pay for what is required for a tournament without sponsors.

The dates are from 9 to 19 February 2009. Transportation will be provided by 10 local schools who will be hosting debates and the organisers have asked that as part of hosting, the schools are to supply buses to collect the debaters from and return them to the hotel, to which the schools have agreed. The Hotel Stanley, right next to the Metro, will accommodate participants. Continental breakfasts will be supplied every day in the hotel and the schools will provide lunch. Some evening meals will be provided, about 3. The schools are very keen and audiences will be guaranteed

The drinking age is 17 and team managers need to know that young people will be served alcohol in bars.

Effie will be seeking an early, non refundable payment by all delegations, by about 10 December 2008 and asks for our co-operation in ensuring money is paid as soon as possible.

She wants the money by then but we can give the specific names of members of delegations later.

Moved Greece/ Pakistan: That the Complaints officers be Martin Pollard and Effie Giannakouri and that the Chief Adjudicator be James Probert. **Carried by acclamation.**

14. Future Championships

a. 2010

Claire Ryan announced that she had received two applications to host WSDC in 2010, one from the Netherlands and one from Qatar. Both nations had distributed their bid document to all members prior to the meeting and the documents were taken as read. Both were provided with the opportunity to speak in order to clarify any matters and to answer questions from the floor.

Netherlands.

Ard van der Steur and Alexander Zwagermann represented the Netherlands and answered questions. They confirmed that the championship would be held in February 2010. The exact dates were still being negotiated. The registration fee would be 250 Euros and sponsorship had been arranged. Audiences would be guaranteed. The schools who will host the championship will be a mixture of international schools, English speaking schools and Dutch schools which have debating.

The drinking age is 18 and soft drugs are “formally illegal but practically condoned.”

The Dutch organisers are aware of the need to provide kosher and halal food and are able to do so.

Ard has sourced local judges and reminded the members of the cadre of competent judges from the Netherlands. If successful in the bid, the Netherlands will send more local judges to Athens and will encourage international judges, especially from Europe, to come to Rotterdam.

The Netherlands wishes to host because of its experience of WSDC, its desire to contribute to the generosity of the hosting community, and current municipal/ local government support. However, elections in March 2010 could alter the political landscape, so that future support, necessary for the championship in Rotterdam, may not be available.

Newsletters and communication to members would be frequent prior to and during the tournament.

Qatar

Alex Just, Andrew Goodman and Dr Hayat Maarafi represented Qatar and also took questions. Hayat was introduced as the director of Qatar debate, a former school principal holding an MA and a doctorate.

Qatar promised to waive registration fees for the first 8 members of any nation’s delegation attending the championships. If the number was greater than 8, the extra members would pay. It was actively encouraging the participation of judges, including more EFL/ESL judges and would pay for the airfares of about 20 judges to ensure numbers and a broad representation.

Hayat assured the Council that Qatar was very civilized, cultured and safe. Doha would provide a unique experience for all participants as a new, vibrant city. She saw the championship as a key moment in its history in which all nations could participate freely under their flags and there should be no difficulties in providing them with visas. She emphasised that Qatar is a free country and while many women there choose to be covered, visitors do not need to do so, being unrestricted in movement and attire.

All food would be halal. It is easy to obtain visas. Shuttles and/or buses would be the mode of transport and accommodation would be in hotels. The Marriott Hotel, not yet completed but already striking, could be a good place to house participants. In addition, Qatar hoped to attract up to 50 nations, including Bahrain, UAE and possibly even Palestine. African nations would also be encouraged and Qatar would work closely with the Executive to invite and support new nations.

The drinking age is 19 but alcohol is accessible only in hotels and the age is strictly enforced.

The Qatari delegation also pointed to difficulties in planning to bid beyond 2010 as funding is in 3 yearly cycles and it was not clear at this stage whether funding was available beyond 2010.

Questions were asked about the involvement of the media and whether they would publicize any debate in which such teams as Pakistan and Kuwait whose governments do not recognize Israel, might be drawn against Israel. The Qatari delegation answered that press releases and articles could be prepared for the media in which the issue was not raised, that the media would not be advised of certain venues or invited to certain debates and that some media would respect the sensitivities involved. Information cannot be suppressed or censored but Qatar Debate can work with media organizations such as Al-Jazeera for mutual benefit whereby asking a favour and offering a favour could work.

Asher Weill asked about Israel's status. Hayat said that Israelis were welcome in Qatar and easily obtained visas. Asher felt that every country was not necessarily sensitive to the charter but Dr Maarafi confirmed her awareness of the charter and her preparedness to abide by it. Asher noted that a deeper issue might be whether Israel would be able to convince 17-18 year olds and their families to go to Qatar.

Peejay Garcia asked about a possible team cap given that encouragement of new countries and the absence of registration fees could see over 60 teams attending. How would Qatar cater for such a huge influx? Hayat advised that Qatar might consider a cap of about 50 or would encourage teams to reach a number of around 50. In such a case at least 2 hotels were available. Registration and transport would need to be managed possibly by a professional event manager. Some members of her staff have organized large, successful events involving greater numbers.

Concerns were expressed that a highly professional tournament with no registration and a huge influx of teams could create an unrealistic expectation especially by newer nations of future championships and disappointment or surprise when they charged registration fees. A

huge influx of teams could make it harder for other nations to host in future as they might not be able to cope with 60 or more teams. Chris Erskine said that the Council and the host could prepare teams for expectations by informing them in plenty of time beforehand.

Qatar concluded by saying that, like the Netherlands, it could not say whether it could bid again.

The meeting broke for lunch at 12:30 pm and resumed at 1:45 pm in order to vote on the bids. The Qatari bid was approved 30-8. The Dutch committee was also congratulated by acclamation for the quality and professionalism of its bid.

b. And beyond

Irene McGrath advised the Council that Scotland wished to submit a bid for WSDC 2011 at the 2009 AGM and had carried out preparatory work to do so. The Scottish Schools International Debating Council intends to become incorporated prior to the bid. The championship will be held in Dundee with the support of the City Council, the Director of Education and the Economic Development office. An organising committee has been established and has been working on the bid since last August.

Dates have been carefully considered. January/February is unsuitable as every school has or is preparing for preliminary exams and the winter weather means that it is dark early and very cold. Scottish schools are closed in July. Late August/early September is the best window of opportunity for the Scottish weather, school audiences and university venues for accommodation before the university term starts. The dates will be around 22 August to 1 September. Irene acknowledged that this would require a two-thirds Council vote as the dates just fall outside the requirements of the July-August time bracket approved by the Council at the meeting in Seoul scheduled to take effect from 1 January 2009.

University accommodation, as in Wales, will be available, through Dundee University and at least 12 schools will be willing to host debates, provide audiences, provide lunches and have students as chairpeople and timekeepers to undergo training before the championships. Scottish debating alumnae will be available to assist the Committee and on-line newsletters will be regularly sent.

The maximum time to be spent travelling in a bus to a venue will be about 30 minutes. A Tour to Edinburgh Castle is planned on the Saturday.

There is a huge pool of judges available in Scotland and in Europe and a number of EFL/ESL students now studying in the UK who are eager and able to judge.

Taimur Bandey suggested the possibility of a Pakistan/India tournament in 2012 but acknowledged that this was a dream. Gaurav Keerthi referred to Singapore's 50 year celebrations in 2015 and said that hosting in that year was a possibility.

Beth James suggested that while bids should be submitted before the competition begins, the verbal presentation/question and answer session should take place after the adjudication seminar to allow people time to consider bids before the Council meeting rather than hold up the meeting itself.

Janet Webster noted that Irene and her team had done a great deal of work and if another bid was presented prior to Athens, one of the two bidders would miss out, notwithstanding all of the work done. She wondered if there was a way that could permit a more amicable resolution between bidders so that hard work was not wasted. Daragh Grant suggested that nations could co-ordinate and consult between Council meetings and while this may not always guarantee one single bid, it was more likely to result in one nation agreeing to bid one year and another the following year.

6. Ratification of the Minutes of the 2007 World Schools Debating Council Meeting

A number of members had not brought with them their copies of the 2007 minutes which had been previously distributed by email. Bojana Skrt asked that hard copies be made available to members at the championship just before or at the AGM in future because members do not read them before then and do not remember to print them out and bring them from their respective countries. Because many members had not read the minutes of the 2007 meeting, this item was postponed until later in the meeting to enable them to do so.

Moved: Argentina/Australia; “That the Minutes of the World Schools Debating Council be accepted.” **Carried unanimously.**

7. Matters arising from the minutes.

Nil

15. Elections for the 2008-2009 Executive Committee

a. Chairperson

Claire Ryan assumed the Chair. One nomination had been received for Chairperson, namely Chris Erskine (Australia). There being no other nominations, Chris Erskine was declared elected as chairperson.

b. Vice chairperson

Chris Erskine resumed the chair. One nomination had been received for Vice Chairperson, namely Geetha Creffield (Singapore). There being no other nominations, Geetha Creffield was declared elected.

c. Secretary

One nomination had been received for Secretary, namely Claire Ryan (New Zealand). There being no other nominations, Claire Ryan was declared elected.

d. 6 Executive members

7 nominations were received namely Jeanette Baljeu (Netherlands), Taimur Bandey (Pakistan), Angelika Hoeness (Germany), Beth James (Wales), Alex Just (Qatar), Irene McGrath (Scotland), and Dick Wafer (Ireland).

After the members voted, returning officer Todd Golding reported that Jeanette Baljeu, Taimur Bandey, Beth James, Alex Just and Irene McGrath had been elected but that there was a tie between Angelika Hoeness and Dick Wafer. After members voted between the two, Dick Wafer was elected.

Chris Erskine acknowledged the work of the outgoing Executive members, JJ Rodriguez, Sixto Ramos, Bojana Skrt, James Probert, Martin Pollard and especially Mark Gabriel, for his common sense, industry, drafting skills, the ability to render complexities into simple English and his talent for quickly grasping pertinent issues and encouraging the Executive to focus on them.

16. Election of 2009 Motions Committee

There were 10 nominations for the 5 positions, namely James Probert (England), Hayah Eichler (Israel), Janet Webster (Canada), Diana Gotts (Scotland), Liana Miholic (Slovenia), Taimur Bandey (Pakistan), Rohini Singh (Singapore), Matej Sapak, Angelika Hoeness (Germany) and David Penny (Wales.)

The following were elected: James Probert, Hayah Eichler, Liana Miholic, Taimur Bandey, and Rohini Singh. The host nation, Greece, will nominate 2 further members to the committee pursuant to Rule 16.1.2.1 of the Debating Rules.

17. Election of 2009 Complaints Committee.

Three nominations were received: Beth James (Wales), Sofyan Sultan (Pakistan), and Michael Thng (Singapore). There being no further nominations, these three were declared elected. The host nation, Greece, will nominate 1-2 further members to the committee pursuant to para 4.1. (a)(iii) of the Code of Conduct.

18. Proposed amendments to the Rules

Rule 9 of the Charity Rules as at 13 September 2008 read as follows;

9. The Host

- 9.1.1 There shall be a Host for each debating tournament considered by the Charity to be a World Schools Debating Championship.
- 9.1.2 Hosts may be individuals over the age of 18 or organisations with legal personality.
- 9.2 Individuals or organisations may apply to the Council to be chosen as the Host for a Championship for a particular year.
- 9.3.1 If chosen, the Host has the right to call their debating tournament the World Schools Debating Championship for the year in which it is held.
- 9.3.2 If chosen, Hosts must ensure that their debating tournament complies with these Rules, including the Charter.
- 9.4.1 Hosts are solely responsible for the organisation and management of a particular championship, including raising funds, arranging venues, food, accommodation and liability insurance, registering participants and distributing information.
- 9.4.2 At the end of a tournament, Hosts must make a report to the Council.
- 9.5 The officers of the Charity may from time to time request information from a Host. This implies neither an oversight role nor responsibility to act on that information.

- 9.6 If a Host does not comply with these Rules, including the Charter, or if the Council so chooses for any other reason, the Charity may withdraw from a Host the right to call their debating tournament the World Schools Debating Championship for a particular year.

The Executive Committee proposed:

That Rules 9.1.2 and 9.2 be amended to read as follows:

- 9.1.2 Hosts must be organisations with legal personality**
- 9.2 Organisations may apply to the Council to be chosen as the Host for a Championship for a particular year.**
- 9.2.1 An organisation bidding to host a Championship must submit to the Council no later than one month prior to the date upon which the Annual Meeting is to decide the date and venue of the said Championship a written document containing the following details:**
- (i) the name of the Convenor;**
 - (ii) the names of the organising committee, which should include at least 2 people who reside in the location where it is proposed to hold the Championships together with a brief description or list of the committee members' respective roles and functions, administrative and debating experience;**
 - (iii) the name of the proposed Chief Adjudicator or Adjudicators and his, her or their curriculum vitae;**
 - (iv) the name of the organisation that proposes to host the organisation and its legal status;**
 - (v) the proposed dates and whether the approval of the Council is needed to make an exception to the rules on dates of hosting;**
 - (vi) a proposed schedule;**
 - (vii) proposed recreational activities for the participants;**
 - (viii) a draft budget;**
 - (ix) a list of the proposed venue(s);**
 - (x) details of the proposed accommodation, including the name of the hotel or hostel or other accommodation, and details as to its proximity to a shopping centre, recreational facilities and public transport;**
 - (xi) whether the organisation requires sponsorship in order to host the Championship, and if so, the name of the sponsor(s) and a letter from the sponsor(s) pledging support;**
 - (xii) the name of at least one secondary school organisation or at least one school which is prepared to support the bid, with a letter from that organisation and/or school pledging support;**
 - (xiii) whether the organisation has obtained support from a local council, regional or national government, or ministry and if so, a letter of support from the said local council, regional or national government or ministry;**
 - (xiv) a brief synopsis of school debating in the region where the championships will be held, including whether debating is in English, whether the students understand English and the nature, type, age and numbers of audience members that are likely to be present.**

9.2.2 If, between the time the Council approves an organisation's bid to be the Host of the Championship and the time of the commencement of the Championship, there are changes to any of the items referred to in rule 9.2.1, the Host shall notify the Charity in writing as soon as possible and in any case no later than 14 days after such a change has occurred.

Moved: Scotland/Netherlands: That proposed amendment 9.1.2 (ii) be amended by deleting the phrase "the names of the organising committee, which should include at least 2 people who reside in the location where it is proposed to hold the Championships..." and replacing it with the phrase "the names and places of residence of the organising committee". **Carried.**

The proposed amendments to rules 9.1.2 and 9.2 as amended were carried.

10. Report of the 2007-2008 Executive Committee.

Moved: Israel/Indonesia "That the Executive Committee report be received." **Carried.**

19. Discussion on role of Directors and Executive with respect to Hosts.

Bojana Skrt began the discussion by noting that there are two schools of thought, one being that the host is solely responsible for the organising of the WSDC event without any assistance for fear it will be seen as "interference" and the other that the Executive should work with the Convenor and when the Convenor is clearly struggling, to step in.

Chris Erskine pointed out that rule 9.4.1 has been there since the beginning although numbered differently in the old constitution. The rule says that the host is solely responsible for the championships. This was especially important when WSDC did not have a corporate structure and did not have insurance. If the Executive is to take any responsibility for the Championship, this exposes its members to potential liability if something goes wrong. There is no problem with individuals offering to assist as individuals.

However, Claire Ryan pointed out that when she offered to assist Phyllis Hirth as an individual, Council members became confused and could not make the distinction between Claire Ryan the individual and Claire Ryan the Secretary of the Executive, nor could they distinguish between the host and the Executive, often asking Claire questions about payment of registration, meeting at the airport or administrative and scheduling matters about which she knew nothing as they were matters arranged by the host. Clearly in people's minds, involvement translated into responsibility.

Chris Erskine explained that incorporation now meant that any lawsuit would be against the company, people preferring to sue an organisation which they believe will have more money than an individual. The Directors are responsible for dealing with all of the legal matters of the Charity and ought to be protected by insurance. As yet, WSDC Ltd has no money to insure itself against legal liability so both the Directors and the members of the Executive are understandably cautious. They could be sued.

Bojana asked if a Convenor should be insured and the answer was a resounding "yes" with Chris Erskine confirming that in Australia, such insurance is obtained and Geetha

Creffield confirming that when Singapore hosted WSDC in 2002, all members of the Org Comm were insured. Effie Giannakouri said that her Org Comm would also be insured.

It was agreed that the Directors and Executive would consider the issue further and ascertain whether a more clear distinction between them and the host could be established in writing together with a clear statement of the relationship between them.

20. General business

(a) Ramadan/Eid.

Alex Just asked that Ramadan be considered when fixing future dates. A growing number of WSDC debaters are Muslim and they cannot eat or drink from sunrise to sundown during the month-long period. This is particularly acute during summer months when the days are longer. Claire Ryan said that Ramadan dates or at least their approximation can be discovered two years in advance from websites or a local Imam and falls roughly 11 days earlier every year on the western calendar.

Alex suggested hosts might consider not scheduling the championship during Ramadan especially if Eid is to fall during the scheduled time. Phyllis said she had checked this when fixing her dates and she could not remember anyone who objected and wondered to what extent it was a problem if the host took it into consideration and, for example, made food available before sun rise. Irene said she was taking advice from the local Muslim community as Scottish summer days were 14.75 hours long.

Alex also raised the possibility of having a “religious officer” in the future who could advise on kosher/halal food and/or ensure its availability.

(b) New team award.

Beth James suggested a new team award for the best new team, something which has never been done before, at least not in the last 10 years.

(c) Alternative entertainment.

Alison Hahn advised that her team found dancing absurd and preferred to play sports with new debating friends between debates. She asked that WSDC consider football games which could be as simple as kicking around a ball or other sports activity when planning event nights for the participants. Alex said that Qatar could have a games room in the hotel with a pool or table tennis table, computer games, Wii and the like with a bar stocked with soft drink. Effie Giannakouri asked people to give her suggestions for activities they would like.

(d) The draw

Karin Palo expressed concerns about disparities in the draw and the fact that some teams appear to have had significantly harder draws than others, which she felt had not been adequately explained. Aaron Maniam said that with 39 teams, as there were when the draw was prepared, it was impossible to evenly divide them so that each saw 2 As, 2 Bs, 2 Cs and 2 Ds. Some teams would have to see fewer or more of some teams in one of the four categories than others. The uneven number made it inevitably porous.

Issues of transparency of the draw were also raised as were options for creating the draw which had not been considered. Power pairing teams was discussed but the inability to then be able to tell schools which nation they were hosting also had to be considered.

In the end, it was agreed that issues relating to the draw should go to a working group for recommendations to the next Council meeting.

(e) Motions.

Dan de Kadt expressed concerns about the motions, citing the octofinal in particular and said he was not alone in his concerns. There was general discussion about the motions, their suitability for EFL/ESL and their degree of ambiguity or obscurity before these issues too were referred to a working group to draft guidelines to assist the Motions Committee.

(f) Judging at Worlds.

Dan also addressed the Council about the nature of this prestigious competition for the debaters, and the disappointments caused by inconsistency of judging, some obscure decisions and the inability of some judges to justify their decisions. He wondered whether a system of pre-accreditation might be of assistance. This led to some intense discussion until Chris Erskine suggested that this too be referred to a working group.

Moved South Africa/ Indonesia “That the adjudication working group consider the issue of accreditation and present a specific proposal about accreditation to the meeting in Athens.” **Carried.**

(g) Qatar DVD debate box set.

Alex Just said the set was especially helpful for ESL/EFL students and would be happy to take orders.

(h) Republic of Korea

Roger Hatridge said that this was the preferred name rather than South Korea.

(i) 25 years of WSDC.

This special event falls in 2013 and the Executive and the Council might like to consider what might be done to mark the occasion.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 4:30 pm.