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ISSF Executive Committee and Administrative Council meet to discuss Tokyo 2020 Olympic Program recommendations

The ISSF Executive Committee and the ISSF Administrative Council will meet in New Delhi, India, on 21 and 22 February 2017, to discuss the ISSF Ad Hoc Committee conclusions and further consider all factors and opinions regarding recommendations for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic shooting program that the ISSF will submit to the IOC before its 28 February 2017 deadline.

These recommendations are in response to the requirements of the International Olympic Committee's Agenda 2020. The IOC is now working with International Federations "to achieve 50 per cent female participation in the Olympic Games and to stimulate women's participation and involvement in sport by creating more participation opportunities at the Olympic Games" by Tokyo 2020. The IOC is also encouraging "the inclusion of mixed-gender team events," – consisting in one male and one female athlete competing for the same nation.

ISSF President Olegario Vazquez Raña – with ISSF Executive Committee and ISSF Administrative Council approval – appointed a special "Ad Hoc" Committee composed of ISSF leaders to prepare recommendations for achieving gender equality in Shooting. Secretary General Franz Schreiber chairs the Committee, which includes ISSF Vice-Presidents Gary Anderson and Wang Yifu, as well as representatives of athletes and coaches, and other discipline experts.

The ISSF decision process started in 2015. Since then the Ad-Hoc Committee has met four times and conducted a detailed analysis of the actual events and the IOC Rio 2016 event-based evaluation. The process has involved all ISSF Section Committees (Athletes, Coaches, Shotgun, Rifle, Pistol and Technical) in their evaluation of several different alternatives and proposals.

The first decision of the Ad-Hoc Committee was to preserve discipline parity and retain 15 Olympic shooting events – 5 Rifle, 5 Pistol, 5 Shotgun. Each of the three disciplines currently has three men's events and two women's events in the Olympic program. The Committee decided

that the best way to achieve gender equality was to convert one men's event in each discipline to a mixed gender team event. Many different proposals were introduced for the events to be changed, considering factors such as universality, sport presentation, grass-roots development and sustainability. Many mixed gender team events proposals were also evaluated, with specific consideration given to their potential to support the worldwide development of Shooting.

After concluding an exhaustive evaluation process, the ISSF Ad-Hoc Committee recommended replacing the Double Trap Men event with a Trap Mixed Gender Team event, the 50m Rifle Prone Men event with a 10m Air Rifle Mixed Gender Team event and the 50m Pistol Men event with a 10m Air Pistol Mixed Gender Team event. The path to this recommendation involved many difficult, emotional and courageous decisions by coaches, athletes, members of all Section Committees, ISSF leaders and many persons in the shooting community, who tried to act in the best interests of future generations in our sport while emphasizing the priority of keeping Shooting in the Olympic Games.

Ahead of the ISSF Executive Committee and Administrative Council meeting in New Delhi, ISSF Headquarters summarized key points in the process for preparing these recommendations:

- 1. Is a change in the Olympic shooting program necessary?** Before reaching any conclusions about possible changes in events on the Olympic shooting program, it is necessary to understand why these changes are being considered. The IOC adopted *Agenda 2020* as its plan for the future. Gender equality is one of the key principles in *Agenda 2020*. Gender equality means all Olympic sports must have 50-50 men's and women's events and participation quotas for the Tokyo 2020 Games. There are concerns regarding the shooting events program because there were nine men's events and only six women's events in the 2016 Games. The IOC therefore requested that the ISSF propose possibilities for achieving a gender equal program for Tokyo 2020.
- 2. How is the ISSF responding to the IOC Agenda 2020?** The ISSF formed an Ad Hoc Committee to study all possibilities for achieving gender equality in shooting, to consider stakeholder opinions, to evaluate the IOC event based evaluation and to prepare the recommendations requested by the IOC. The Ad Hoc Committee was comprised of ISSF leaders and experts from media, TV and all of the shooting disciplines. In addition to four Ad Hoc Committee meetings, all possible options were thoroughly discussed on two different occasions with ten different ISSF Committees. After its first three meetings, the Ad Hoc Committee presented its conclusions to all shooting stakeholders in the 24 November 2016 news release that was posted on the ISSF website. Athletes, coaches, national federations and fans were requested to submit comments. The Committee recently had its fourth meeting to consider all responses to the November news release as well as data from an IOC event-based popularity analysis. After evaluating this additional information, the Committee voted with a big majority to support its November recommendations.
- 3. Why were the three events selected for deletion?** The Ad Hoc Committee decided that each of the three shooting disciplines should keep their present five events (5 rifle, 5 pistol and 5 shotgun). Since there have been three men's and two women's events in each discipline, gender equality should be achieved by changing one men's event in each discipline and replacing it with a mixed-gender team event. The Ad Hoc Committee is recommending the addition to the Olympic Program of three mixed-gender team events (for one man and one woman) for 10m air rifle, 10m air pistol and trap to replace three

men's shooting events, 50m Rifle Prone Men, 50m Pistol Men and Double Trap Men. This proposal would allow shooting to keep 15 events, the same number that it has now. The new events fully support gender equality and have far greater possibilities for being practiced by all ISSF member federations and attracting far more athletes. The 50m prone event was selected for replacement in rifle where the 10m Air Rifle and 50m 3-Position events were judged to be preferable to prone. In pistol, the selection considered both 50m Pistol Men and Rapid-Fire Pistol Men. Rapid-fire is dynamic and has one of shooting's best finals while 50m pistol athletes can still apply their skills in 10m Air Pistol and therefore 50m Pistol Men had been selected. In shotgun, Double Trap Men was selected for replacement because it is the lowest participation men's shotgun event.

4. **What factors were involved in selecting mixed-gender team events?** Adding mixed-gender team events was proposed by IOC *Agenda 2020*. The Ad Hoc Committee analysis concluded that mixed-gender events offered the best way for shooting to preserve discipline parity, achieve gender equality and add an exciting new dynamic to shooting. Mixed team events have already been successfully tested in European Championships, Junior World Cups and the Youth Olympic Games. The Ad Hoc Committee evaluated literally dozens of possibilities for mixed-gender team events. Final selections were based on which events offered the most favorable universality, cost and accessibility, youth appeal and attractiveness for media and television. Another important consideration was how the distribution of Olympic quotas could best support participation opportunities. The events that ranked highest according to these measures were 10m Air Rifle, 10m Air Pistol and Trap. Proposals for 50m Pistol and Double Trap mixed teams were rejected because there are no women's World Championship events for either. A 50m Rifle Prone mixed team was considered, but judged to have far less potential for future shooting growth than a 10m Air Rifle team event.
5. **Is ISSF General Assembly approval required to change the Olympic shooting program?** Article 3.3.2 of the ISSF General Regulations provides a list of Olympic shooting events that are recognized by the IOC. Ordinarily, General Regulations can only be changed by the ISSF General Assembly, but this is not applicable in this case, because the Olympic Games and the Olympic sports program are governed by the IOC and the *Olympic Charter*, not by the ISSF Constitution and General Regulations. Ch. 45 of the Olympic Charter gives the IOC Executive Board exclusive authority to decide all events in the Olympic program, including the shooting events. 3.2.2 merely lists the events that the IOC has approved. Neither the ISSF General Assembly nor any other ISSF body has the authority to decide the shooting events in the Olympic Games. The ISSF Executive Committee will only submit a recommendation to the IOC.
6. **How were National Federation opinions considered?** ISSF member federations and all interested stakeholders have already had full opportunities to offer their opinions after the publication of the November 2016 Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations. Many took advantage of this opportunity. The development of the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations has been a very complicated process that evaluated at least 20 different possibilities for shooting program changes. These possibilities have considered many national federation opinions, moreover, they were debated during approximately 25 meetings involving all elected members of ISSF bodies. In the ISSF system of governance, the General Assembly elects the ISSF Committees, Executive Committee and Administrative Council to be responsible for deciding these detailed technical matters in the best interests of shooting and to preserve its future status as an Olympic sport.
7. **What were the results of the IOC event-based analysis?** IOC Agenda 2020 called for an "event-based analysis" of all events in the 28 Olympic sports. During and after the 2016 Olympic Games, the IOC analyzed worldwide television viewer numbers, internet user statistics, social media contacts, spectator responses and public opinions for all Olympic

events including the 15 shooting events. The ISSF Ad Hoc Committee evaluation of the IOC event-based analysis strongly confirmed the recommendations for replacing the mentioned three men's events and adding the three mixed-gender team events.

8. **How will Olympic program changes impact shooting?** The changes necessary to achieve gender equality in Olympic shooting have great potential to make shooting an even stronger Olympic sport. Deciding the ISSF recommendations to the IOC is a **past versus future decision**. The Olympic program has always been a dynamic program where changes are necessary for sports to keep their place in the Olympic Movement. Shooting had to delete two events in 2005, but it continued to grow in worldwide popularity. Gender equality is right and the ISSF fully supports this aim. The changes necessary to achieve gender equality will probably include the loss of three beloved events that represent the past and no longer fulfil the highest standards for dynamic, growing Olympic events. These changes will also give shooting three new mixed-gender team events that add value to shooting's most popular and fastest growing events, Air Rifle, Air Pistol and Trap. We understand the concerns of those who will lose favoured events, but it is important to recognize that those who will gain, the young athletes who are only now beginning to live Olympic dreams, must also be heard. The ISSF Ad Hoc Committee recommendations give voice to those who will benefit the most from these changes. They are changes that will allow shooting to keep 15 events on the Olympic program, best grow sport shooting in the future and give shooting a more secure position within the Olympic Movement.

9. **What will happen next?** The IOC requested proposals for the 2020 Olympic program from all International Federations by 28 February 2017. The ISSF Ad Hoc Committee conclusions will be discussed at an ISSF Executive Committee meeting on 21 February 2017 and an Administrative Council meeting on 22 February. The ISSF Executive Committee and Council will further consider all factors and opinions regarding this matter. The Executive Committee will explain its conclusions to the IOC before the 28 February deadline. The IOC Executive Board will decide the 2020 Olympic shooting events program later this summer. Again, we must emphasize that this decision is under the full authority of the IOC; it is not the ISSF that is making this decision.

We hope this information has helped our national federation, athletes, coaches and stakeholders to better understand this extremely important and complex situation and how it can become another step forward for our beloved sport. If you have questions or wish additional information, please contact ISSF Headquarters.

Notes for the editors:

The International Shooting Sport Federation is the governing body of the Olympic Shooting events, and it has over 160 affiliated National Federations worldwide. Shooting is an Olympic sport since the very first edition of the modern Olympic Games, Athens 1896. Find out more about the International Shooting Sport Federation at www.issf-sports.org.

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