

IWF NEWS Already in Phuket (THA)

IWF allocates its World Championships in 2027 to Armenia and in 2028 to Venezuela

Yerevan and Caracas (*subject to WADA confirmation*) will be the respective hosts of the 2027 and 2028 editions of the IWF World Championships, after the decision of the IWF Executive Board (EB), meeting on March 29 in Phuket (THA). The Armenian capital successfully hosted the 2023 European Championships, while the Venezuelan metropolis staged the recent Pan-American showcase. In addition to the two senior competitions, the EB also awarded the organisation of the 2026 IWF World Youth Championships to Buenos Aires, in Argentina.

“We had two very interesting and professional candidates for our World Championships, so we naturally opted for this double award. This also brings further stability to our calendar and allows more time to prepare and successfully deliver two great competitions. After Ningbo, in China, we travel to Europe in 2027 and to Americas in 2028 – three successive World Championships in three different continents,” underlined the IWF President Mohammed Jalood after the vote of the IWF Executive Board.

If the allocation of the IWF showcase was the highlight of the meeting, other important topics were discussed, namely:

- The approval of the first-ever IWF anthem (to be ratified by the IWF Congress, taking place this Saturday);
- The approval of the IWF Technical Committee’s proposal to reduce from 10 to eight the bodyweight categories for both men and women;
- The approval of the audited 2023 IWF Financial Report;
- The acknowledgment of an updated report on the final preparation for the 2024 Olympic Games, presented by Jacqueline White, Weightlifting Sport Manager of the competition. The EB was informed that “everything is perfectly on track” for a smooth running of the event in the French capital;
- The presentation of updated reports on the IWF Anti-Doping Programme, IWF Refugee Team, and the IWF Sustainability Project.

Read more [here](#)



IWF NEWS

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IWF Congress approves the first-ever IWF anthem

“An anthem should reflect an identity. This is normally the case with a country, as we are used to national anthems. But it should also happen with all types of organisations, namely in the sports world. That is what I tried to apply for the IWF”. Antonio Urso, the International Weightlifting Federation General Secretary, was obviously happy after the IWF Congress in Phuket (THA) approved the melody of the first-ever IWF anthem. His melody, as Urso is also a musician and is the author of the music that will from now on represent the IWF at all protocolar moments.

“I wanted something joyful, something that could represent the happy moments in our beloved sport, the satisfaction of a good performance, the importance of being together, of competing in a spirit of fair-play and camaraderie, of enjoying each and every moment we lift a bar. I had to ‘condense’ that in a 1m30s melody that would resonate in a nice harmony for all those listening to the IWF anthem,” adds the IWF General Secretary. *“I am too biased to say it, but I believe everyone in the weightlifting family will like our anthem,”* he continues. *“It all started last November, when we were in Guadalajara for the IWF World Junior Championships. After listening to the Mexican anthem at the opening ceremony, our IWF Communications manager approached me and said: ‘We need an IWF anthem. You could be the person doing it’. I immediately liked the concept and many ideas started to flow in my head. But, one day in December, the melody came naturally. In no more than 30 minutes, I had it written down,”* Urso admits. (...)

The Congress also ratified the IWF 2023 Audited Financial Report and the ones received from the various IWF committees: Technical, Medical, Coaching and Research, and Athletes. As with the Executive Board meeting on Friday, an update was also given on the Paris 2024 Games, the Olympic qualification system, and the IWF Refugee Team and Sustainability projects. (...)

After the presentations from the IWF licensed barbell companies (Eleiko, Uesaka, and ZKC), and from the most recent IWF sponsor (SBD), the delegates approved the status of Associate Member for the Federation of Faroe Islands (FRO).

Read more [here](#)



IWF INSPIRATION

Celebrating women in weightlifting: Luisa Peters (COK)

When celebrating the International Women's Day on March 8, the best way to illustrate their importance, namely in the world of weightlifting, is to point out concrete examples. On this special occasion, we look into a tiny country in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, constituted by paradisiac portions of land, the Cook Islands. With less than 20'000 inhabitants, a distinguished citizen and successful lifter has become one of the most respected members of the weightlifting family: Luisa Peters.

Born on June 27, 1993 Peters is presently a member of the IWF Athletes Commission – she was elected with her peers during the 2022 IWF World Championships in Bogota (COL) -, but is also part of the IWF Executive Board (EB). After the recent reforms in our International Federation, its Board includes three members of the Athletes Commission, with full voting rights – its Chairman Forrester Osei, the Olympic champion from the Philippines Hidilyn Diaz, and Peters. Overall, the EB has nine women, well above the minimum six stipulated in the IWF Constitution.

But Peters' path began well before she could be at the top of the IWF management. *"I was introduced to weightlifting at the age of 14 years old by my grandmother who was a sports enthusiast. She had taken to me the National Weightlifting training centre and I was coached by Sam Pera Snr who was the top weightlifter in the Cook Islands,"* she recalls. By that time, in 2007, women's weightlifting around the world was getting consolidated, after the entry into the Olympic Games in 2000, and the first IWF World Championships in 1987.

In the Cook Islands, the situation was not different: *"I remember as my grandmother and I pulled up to the training centre, she told me 'Luisa, I want you to do weightlifting, I want you to show female athletes that no matter the barrier we can achieve our goals'. Weightlifting was not a sport that females did in our country. So, if I had to convince, today, a teenage girl to start weightlifting, I would also say 'Go for it, weightlifting is for both boys and girls and don't let anyone tell you that you can't do it!'"*

Motivated by another strong woman, her grandmother, Peters soon realised she had talent and potential in the sport. *"I attended my first international competition in 2008, the Oceania Championships".* Looking at the IWF records, this debut was modest – in the +75kg category, she lifts 48-60-108, exactly three months before completing her 15th birthday.

Things would progress quickly, and in October 2009, she gets her first medal, at the Commonwealth Junior Championships, finishing third in 58-74-132. Fast forward three more years, and we find Peters at the 2012 Olympic Games in London. *"I was the first female Olympic weightlifter for the Cook Islands, and I was the only one for quite some time until another female athlete, Phillipa Woonton, joined me in 2015".* In the British capital, she is 11th in the +75kg, lifting 82-100-182.

Read more [here](#)



Luisa Peters (right) with Forrester Osei and Hidilyn Diaz, sitting at the IWF Executive Board



Sustainability: start of a successful journey for IWF

Following the launch of the IWF Sustainability Programme in 2023, the IWF Executive Board member in charge of this project Florian Sperl and the IWF CEO Achilleas Tsogas met recently in Lausanne (SUI) with the representatives of Sporting Giants, our International Federation's partner in charge of conceiving a Sustainability Strategy, to be presented and implemented from October 2025 onwards.

This process has included so far a thorough assessment of the situation in terms of the IWF sustainability actions (or lack of them), and will proceed with extensive consultation with all stakeholders of the weightlifting community. This approach will allow the elevation of successful case studies already in place on a local or national level, and will also establish the priorities of the Sport family in this field.

During the two-day rendezvous in Lausanne, there was also time for a meeting with IUCN (the International Union for the Conservation of Nature), an organisation with whom the IWF signed an agreement, under "The Sports for Nature Framework".

Read more [here](#)



From left to right: Dan Reading (Sporting Giants), Achilleas Tsogas (IWF CEO), Florian Sperl (IWF EB member), Scott Over (Sporting Giants) and Timea Horvath (IWF Development and Education Manager)

NATIONAL FEDERATION NEWS

Malta Weightlifting Association celebrates triumphs at Malta Sports Journalists Association Awards Night

In a dazzling night filled with excitement and celebration, the Malta Weightlifting Association took centre stage, revelling in their success in elevating the status of weightlifting on the island. The highlight of the evening was Tenishia Thornton's remarkable achievement as she clinched the prestigious Sportswoman of the Year award during the 64th edition final night organised by the Malta Sports Journalists Association.

The honour was bestowed upon Thornton by Hon. Clifton Grima, the Minister responsible for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation, alongside Sandro Micallef, President of the Malta Sports Journalists Association. Thornton's outstanding contributions to the sport were recognised with this coveted title, marking a significant milestone in her career. Adding to the association's triumphs, Kim Camilleri Lagana secured the Youth Woman Athlete of the Year, following in the footsteps of her teammate Tenishia Thornton, who had previously won this title for three consecutive years.



Read more [here](#)