

## International Committee

### Minutes of the 01-08 September 2024 Meetings Held in Alexandria, Egypt

#### Present:

|                     |           |                                  |                 |            |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Benjamin Burton     | President | ab@maths.uq.edu.au               | Australia       | 2021-2024  |
| Flora Retfalvi      | Host 2023 | flora.retfalvi@techedhungary.com | Hungary         | 2024-2024  |
| Eslam Wageed        | Host 2024 | eslamwageed@gmail.com            | Egypt           | 2020-2025  |
| Jhonatan Castro     | Host 2025 | jhtan@jhtan.com                  | Bolivia         | 2022-2026  |
| Humoyun Sultonov    | Host 2026 | h.sultonov@digital.uz            | Uzbekistan      | 2023-2027  |
| Eduard Kalinichenko | Elected   | eduardische@gmail.com            | Latvia          | 2022-2025  |
| Sun Teck Tan        | Elected   | tanst@comp.nus.edu.sg            | Singapore       | 2022-2025  |
| Fredrik Niemelä     | Elected   | fredrik@niemela.se               | Sweden          | 2023-2026  |
| Sandra Schumann     | Elected   | sandra.schumann@ut.ee            | Estonia         | 2023-2026  |
| Eljakim Schrijvers  | Treasurer | eljakim+ioi@gmail.com            | The Netherlands | non-voting |
| J.P. Pretti         | Secretary | jpretti@uwaterloo.ca             | Canada          | non-voting |

#### Welcome

Ben thanked everyone for coming and acknowledged that Araz was unable to attend IOI 2024 for logistical reasons. It was also noted that Flora, Jhonatan and Eduard had yet to arrive but would be in Alexandria soon.

#### Urgent Issues

Ben said the Code of Conduct is normally put in bags, but we were told a year ago that this would not happen for IOI 2024 because of its content. He asked if anyone objected to emailing it to all participants instead. Nobody objected.

Given that the GA was scheduled to discuss how to respond to the conflict in Gaza and Israel was not present in Alexandria, there was discussion of how to allow them to participate in the debate. IC agreed that Israel should be able to hear and respond to all the arguments. Ben said that unfortunately the only option may be through use of the mailing list and Matrix. He argued that it would be a cop out to say Israel cannot vote because they cannot fully participate in the discussion. Everyone eventually agreed that Israel was part of the IOI 2024 GA and had full voting rights. This left the main question of how they will be able to deliver their opinions noting that the situation was far from ideal. The consensus was to suggest Israel make a statement at GA 4, inform them of the discussions during that meeting, and then give them a chance to write again.

Planning the GA discussions followed with consideration to separating the question about Israel from the more general idea of how much IOI should or should not be involved in political issues. Fredrik suggested we first discuss Israel and then have a conversation about the more general question. J.P. said they cannot be separated because both will be brought up if the other comes up first. Ben reiterated this and said we should start with proposals that have come from the GA and a request for any other proposals (independent of rationale to begin). There was agreement to email the GA right away giving them time to ensure no proposals they favour are left off the list.

The hosts were asked to remove Russian and Belarussian flags from badges, placards, etc. Given what happened at IOI 2023, the question was raised about national symbols on T-shirts for contestants from

Australia. Given the circumstances under which Australia was competing under the IOI flag, IC agreed there was no need to address this.

### **Sponsorship Issues**

Eljakim provided a list of current sponsors, stated that they seem happy overall and discussed a few challenges to address.

### **SSD Issue**

Eljakim explained that in the week leading up to IOI it was found out that about 40% of SSDs for the contest computers were broken. These computers had all been used for ICPC and should not have had issues. Given the extremely high number of unusable computers, it would be impossible to run the competition on those machines. Eljakim continued to say that in a discussion before IOI, he had requested to be allowed to guarantee IOI cover the expenses for new machines because the host was unable to, and without new SSDs the entire event was at risk.

IC briefly discussed what to do with the SSDs after IOI. Given practical considerations (storage, transport, duties, etc.) it was decided to leave the hard drives with the host.

At a later meeting, Eljakim announced that he had secured a sponsor to cover the cost of the new SSDs. IC thanked him for this expressing appreciation for the fact that the funds would not come out of IOI reserves.

### **Agenda**

The IC agenda was approved.

### **Taiwan**

Ben said we received two complaints about the use of the delegation name “Taiwan”. He noted that Taiwan is not a UN/UNESCO member so our new policy says that we can ask this delegation what they want to be called or force them to use a previously used name. In both cases, we expect Taiwan to be the name used but he can confirm this. Fredrik and Eduard agreed with this, but it was also noted that the hosts cannot be forced to use particular names and may need to abide by local constraints.

### **IOI Statistics**

On a related note, Eduard said North Macedonia asked for a note on IOI Statistics mentioning the change in name for their delegation linking past and current data. Fredrik said this sounded reasonable and others agreed. He also noted that it would help to have an internal list of country name changes over time, and we can add any note of this sort if one of these countries wishes.

### **Future Hosts**

J.P. said there is one bid to host IOI 2027, and he will arrange for this bid to be presented to IC. He said we do not have any bids for IOI 2028 and a plea for bids needs to be made to the GA.

## **Secretary Report**

J.P. described his own recent activity and raised the issue of how to archive IC activity that happens between meetings. There was approval of his suggestion to prepend or append a “between meeting summary” of IC decisions and discussions that occurred by e-mail since the previous meeting.

J.P. informed the group about an international organization who reached out about increasing IOI activity in Africa. Everyone was keen to address this issue and solicit support but a general feeling that any new delegations need strong and local grassroots connections. Some hesitation was expressed about involving corporations while noting that businesses are already quite involved in supporting some delegations and offers of sponsorship funding is always greatly appreciated.

Sun Teck noted that funding may have been found to support a national Olympiad in Informatics in Cambodia, so work continues to bring them into the IOI community.

## **More IOI Statistics**

There was some back and forth between Eduard and Fredrik about IOI Statistics including paying guests. They agreed there is a balance between including all participants but also identifying when participants are part of official delegations and when they are not.

## **Russia/Belarus**

Eduard pointed out that after Russia and Belarus have competed under the IOI flag for three years, their membership will have officially lapsed. This in turn means that future hosts are not obliged to invite them. Sandra said she feels strongly that this was not the GA’s intention, and we should not allow this. Fredrik strongly disagreed. There was debate about what/if to bring to the GA but upon Ben’s recommendation, it was decided that because this is only hypothetical, we should let it be unless the issue comes up.

## **Complaints**

It was noted that there have been complaints about gluten-free food being unavailable or mislabeled.

## **President’s Report**

Ben said that IC knows what he thinks, wants, and has been doing. He said that there are few things he wants to raise as his presidency winds down.

First, Ben said the IC has invisible policies and they need to be recorded somewhere. He listed examples (country naming, conflict of interest, dealing with reported incidents) and asked that people send him additions from which he will begin drafting a document. Eduard mentioned the IOI Statistics data policy.

Second, Ben asked that EDI remain a permanent IC agenda item. He said sometimes there will be little to discuss and sometimes there will be a lot. IC was reminded that EDI issues do affect the IOI, and we do receive related messages.

## **Report on IOI 2026**

Humoyun reported that there have been discussions with the government about IOI 2026. He said the budget is being developed they are talking to companies about sponsorship. Humoyun said venue

locations are yet to be determined, but he is learning lots from IOI 2024 and will endeavour to have as much as possible within one place and ideally close to infrastructure (e.g. stores and restaurants).

Fredrik emphasized that committee members do not need fancy hotels or better amenities than the contestants.

J.P. pointed out that when selecting dates, the recent trend of choosing early September does not have to be continued. In fact, he said it does not work well for many countries because it coincides with the start of the school year. Eduard noted that IMO and ICPC are events to avoid conflicts with. Sun Teck underlined the importance of booking venues early.

### **Funded Projects**

Nobody recalled receiving a call for funding projects. Ben said he would speak to Mile who had said he would continue to steward these.

Fredrik mentioned that he and Ali were talking about ideas for supporting countries through, for example, the sharing of problems. He said this new project might benefit from funding.

Ben said this reminded him that he would also like to see Outreach as another permanent IC agenda item.

### **Regulation Changes**

Eduard said he did not have any new proposals but is taking suggestions.

Ben said it has come up that we change the noun “country”. He suggested we figure out conceptually what we want to do, work on the concept before approval in February/March and present details to the GA at IOI 2025.

Ben said there is also the question about what “member” means and this became a problem for IOI 2024 and Australia. Fredrik wondered what would happen if, as an example, a new group from a country came forward with government support claiming to be the official representative. Ben suggested he speak to Richard Forster about how a situation like this was handled in the past. Eljakim also suggested he look through the minutes because this has come up with IC before. In response, Fredrik said he would like some general guidelines to be in place. Eljakim felt this might be all hypothetical, but Fredrik and Sandra cited past and current examples and potential examples. J.P. said perhaps Eljakim was getting to the point that having a rule could be dangerous and each case needs to be handled individually. Fredrik responded to say he just wants to be sure that any future cases don’t simply receive a blanket: “no, we always stick with past IOIs”.

Eduard noted that he will have a group discussion followed by a straw poll about exceptions, age limits etc.

### **Country Fees**

Eljakim asked for guidance on dealing with a country that hasn’t paid their fee. Ben said if it is a recurring problem, then somebody should sit down with them and ask about the situation. Fredrik said they could be told that they are in jeopardy of not being allowed to participate. Ben asked if there might be a weaker “punishment”; perhaps an inconvenience can be imposed that encourages payment. For now, the decision was to not act until a debt is incurred for a longer period. Ben closed with a comment about

being cautious in situations where/if we learn that financial difficulty is connected to locations where the IOI currently has low engagement.

### **Remote Contestants**

In response to a related question posed by Eduard, Fredrik and J.P. said Iranian contestants' results do count towards medal boundaries. Eduard countered by saying this is not what the regulations say. Ben agreed with Eduard and explained what happened at IOI 2017 where he believes the main issue was that it was impossible to have a live pipe with Israel. In the end, IC agreed to follow the regulations (they do not count for medal boundaries) but the scientific and technical committees need to be told this. At a later meeting when it was learned that Iran may be able to show up for Contest Day 2, it was determined that they then would count towards medal boundaries again because of a strict reading of the regulations.

The same question was asked about the one contestant participating remotely because of medical issues with Ben saying they should be treated the same as Iranian and Israeli contestants. After a bit of debate, everyone present voted in favour of being conservative and saying this contestant should also not count towards medal boundaries.

The general sense was that it was important to follow the regulations, but these regulations should change. There was a unanimous vote in favour of this in principle.

### **IOI 2024 Issues and Complaints**

Eslam addressed a number of raised concerns saying:

- There will not be a surprise dress code on Contest Day 2 as there was on Contest Day 1.
- More washrooms would be opened on other floors to address long queues for the toilet.
- The air conditioners would be checked again, and grills can be adjusted if air flow is bothering a contestant.
- Any visitors in the contest hall on Day 2 will be told to remain silent.
- Guides escorting students to the washroom should be asked to not speak to them.
- Any contestants entering the contest hall on Day 2 past the stated arrival time will be escorted to ensure quarantine rules are respected.

### **Cooperation with other Olympiads**

Fredrik wondered whether we are open to cooperating with other Olympiads. Everyone agreed that we wish to be friendly and are open to cooperating but do not have specific ideas. Ben said one exception is that on a number of occasions he has reached out to other presidents to see how they are handling delicate issues (e.g. sanctions and country naming).

### **GA 4 Gaza Discussion**

Ben recalled that IC received a request to sanction Israel and debated the proposal at length during an online August meeting. He reminded everyone that IC was unable to reach a decision. One reason for this was that many people felt strongly that the IC should not decide on the proposal given how upset some members of the GA were in 2022 when IC decided to sanction Russia and Belarus. Consequently, Ben sent an email to the GA presenting the options/proposals with options on how to respond to the conflict in Gaza including the option of doing nothing. He said all five countries (Israel, Palestine, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine) are aware of this so they will not be unfairly surprised. He also said that the formal motions will

be determined after GA 4, but in advance of GA 7. He requested that everyone on IC, himself included, give the GA priority to speak because IC has already had the opportunity to discuss and vote on the issue.

In response to Fredrik, Ben said options have only been included if they were received in response to his request to the GA for other options.

Eduard said everyone should be reminded about the 2/3 threshold and how abstentions are handled.

Eduard then asked if the vote will be public. After a bit of discussion, there was a vote and unanimous decision to ask the GA to approve that all votes related to sanctions be private.

J.P. said logistics will all be determined offline, but scrutineers will be involved, and the anonymized Schulze data will be published.

Ben said that when he sends the GA the final formalized list of options in advance of GA 7, he will try to clearly articulate the implications of options and what would happen under different scenarios.

After further debate about technicalities of the Palestine question and Schulze method, it was decided to leave the “Palestine questions” as options 5 and 6.

J.P. relayed an official complaint from Richard Forster (United Kingdom) that he wished to be heard by IC and recorded. His complaint was that Israel was not acknowledged during the opening ceremonies. Related to that, Ben told the IC about a motion for the GA from Israel: “The GA reiterates the obligation of the present host to respect and acknowledge the participation of all national delegations participating IOI’n as defined under the IOI regulations.” He said there will be a vote on this motion at GA 5.

### **Long Term Service Awards**

The hosts indicated that there is no time at the closing ceremonies to acknowledge the longest Long Term Service Awards. The suggestion was made to present them at GA7 instead and because this overrode previous IC decisions, Ben asked for a formal vote on the suggestion. It passed unanimously.

### **Future Host Bid**

A bid was received from Germany to host IOI 2027 in Potsdam. Wolfgang Pohl presented the major features of the bid. He said the bid is led by and generously funded by the Hasso Platner Institute in cooperation with BWINF (the German organization behind its IOI participation). IC followed up with questions about the security of the commitment, ability to invite all countries, nature of the cooperation between organizations, plans for HTC and HSC and a commitment to making IOI inclusive and welcoming.

After deliberating privately, IC quickly and enthusiastically voted unanimously in favour of accepting the bid from Germany to host IOI 2027.

### **Urgent Matters**

Eduard brought attention to the IC about a sick contestant currently resting at a hotel with their parent. The group decided to allow the contestant to remain at the hotel with measures to mitigate quarantine risk.

Ben said he received a complaint from a guest speaking at GA 4 without prior approval. IC acknowledged this and then gave for permission for the guest to attend and participate in upcoming meetings.

Ben asked that everyone proofread his message about the conflict in Gaza as soon as possible reporting any major issues in time for him to send the message before GA 5.

Ben confirmed that “Macao, China” is the name this delegation wishes to be used. Sun Teck wondered if “Chinese Taipei” might be acceptable for that delegation in an attempt to avoid future complaints and disputes. (It was later confirmed that this was not satisfactory for the delegation that is currently referred to as Taiwan.)

Ben said we need to respond to the question asked at the GA about flags on clothing. Fredrik and Sandra said lots of delegations wish to wear flags on their clothing and already have plans to do so for the closing ceremony, but of course sanctioned countries cannot. There was then some discussion about potential incidents and how problematic they might be.

Fredrik asked if something was going to be done about the map of the area surrounding Egypt in which the territory of Israel is labelled Palestine. In the end, it was agreed that it would be best to remove or crop the image but there was also an understanding that the host might be limited in what it is able to do.

## **Minutes**

Ben asked IC to confirm minutes from the online meeting in August. They were confirmed unanimously. Eduard asked that a placeholder be put online for the February 2024 minutes which Ben said he intends to produce soon.

## **Possible Cheating Incident**

Ali Sharifi (ISC) arrived to inform IC about an incident that occurred during Day 2 of the competition. He detailed the discovery of three contestants from one delegation all with phones in their possession during the contest. Ali described how one of these contestants had a phone in their possession while going to the washroom and the other two contestants may not have removed their phones from their bags. A very long discussion ensued carefully considering all the following:

- what the contest rules say and do not say about cell phones and bags
- related messages the contestants received on Day 2 and earlier during IOI
- role of proctors at the door of the contest hall and during the contest
- contestants’ responses to being questioned about the situation
- handling of situation by ISC and Ben and J.P. who responded to a call for help
- how many bags were allowed into the contest hall
- involvement of and discussions with the team leaders
- inspection of the phones in question
- information from the volunteer guides
- general quality of information disseminated during IOI 2024
- practices at schools, cultural differences, and English proficiency affecting rules understanding

During the discussion, IC was not made aware of which country these three contestants were from.

In conclusion, IC determined that in each case, the contest rules were clearly violated and there was strong agreement that the situation where a student took their phone to the washroom was especially

problematic. Ben outlined that for each contestant, options include disqualifying the contestant, setting their score to zero, or doing nothing. Sandra added the possibility of banning the contestant(s) from future IOIs.

A vote was taken, and IC unanimously voted to disqualify the contestant who brought their phone to the washroom.

A lengthy discussion followed about the other two contestants. In general, members of IC felt uncomfortable doing nothing but also felt that setting the contestants' Day 2 scores to zero was too harsh under the circumstances.

A vote was taken to disqualify these two students. There were no votes in favour, five votes against and two abstentions. Consequently, a discussion ensued about possibly adjusting the scores of these students and reminding the team leaders that it is their responsibility to ensure their contestants know the rules. Then the Schulze method was used with the following options:

- A. Talk to leader and contestant.
- B. Remove 50% of Day 2 score.
- C. Zero Day 2 score.

Option B was the winning option and final decision of the IC.

### **Financial Report and Budget**

Eljakim presented as Treasurer of the IOI. He opened by speaking about the emergency expense of new hard drives noting that IOI is fortunate to have the money for something unexpected like this. A summary of the key details noted is:

- 2023 income totalled 22.800 EUR and 2023 expenses totalled 11.592 EUR both of which were very similar to 2022
- as of December 2023, IOI's assets totalled 163.321 EUR
- differences for 2024 include the emergency expenses and many new global sponsors
- the IOI 2025 budget includes income of 23.000 EUR and expenses of 38.700 EUR

In response to questions, two small budget modifications were made: the accounting of interest and the removal of the amount for offsite participation.

Eduard wondered if anything can be done about seeing or estimating the 2024 actual numeric values even though the year is not complete.

IC was comfortable sending the report for 2023 and budget for 2025 to GA for approval.

### **Regulation Tweaks**

Eduard suggested minor wording tweaks to the previously presented regulation changes. All were in favour of sending them to the GA.

### **Report on IOI 2025**

Jhonatan updated IC on plans for the next IOI. He noted that the dates may need to move earlier because of an announced election. Consequently, venues have not been booked. Nonetheless, Jhonatan outlined a



possible location of the contest hall, possibilities for the opening and closing ceremonies, and potential accommodations. He answered related questions about parking, spacing, power, bathrooms, capacity, previous uses of the venues and back-up plans.

Jhonatan also described challenges with the timing of the flow of money to fund the event. Ben followed up asking that by February, everything be booked, and concrete plans be in place. IC then commented on advantages and disadvantages of July, August and September dates noting other events and happenings to avoid conflicts with. For example, Fredrik said it is important to avoid a conflict with IMO. Others felt this was preferable but not a strict requirement. There was also discussion about trying to ensure that eligible contestants could participate in both EGOI and IOI.

Eljakim asked about the hotel reservations. Adding up the total number of rooms, he said that there were not enough. Jhonatan said that's what the extra hotels were for. Eljakim asked what was "extra" about them if there were not enough rooms in the first place. Her also asked whether the rooms had two single beds or one double bed. Jhonatan did not know. Eljakim mentioned that with so few rooms it's very risky to not yet have made the reservations.

In general, there was serious concern about missing information, but that continuing the discussion in Alexandria was not going to be productive. Instead, there was agreement to have a follow up meeting in about one month to discuss any progress that has been made. Flora offered to create a document to aid in the planning and preparations. The urgency of the situation was emphasized.

### **Motions from the GA**

J.P. outlined motions from the GA and IC agreed to send them to the GA right away. J.P. said he would work with the proposers to finalize the formal wording of the motions. After the meeting the end result was as follows.

*MOTION: Any vote to remove IOI sanctions from a country requires a 2/3 majority.*

*RATIONALE: This is a very significant change of policy. According to IOI tradition and precedent, it should require support from more than a simple majority of the GA.*

*MOTION: IOI removes the sanctions on Russia.*

*[Only to be voted on if the GA votes in favour of Option 1, or if the GA votes in favour of a different option that then does not meet the 2/3 majority needed in the subsequent vote.]*

*RATIONALE: The principle of fairness tells us that Israel, Russia and Belarus should be treated the same way.*

*MOTION: IOI removes the sanctions on Belarus.*

*[Only to be voted on if the GA votes in favour of Option 1, or if the GA votes in favour of a different option that then does not meet the 2/3 majority needed in the subsequent vote.]*

*RATIONALE: The principle of fairness tells us that Israel, Russia and Belarus should be treated the same way.*

*MOTION: The GA requests that the IC present proposals for semi-official remote participation of countries that are unable to attend the IOI due to financial or logistical challenges.*

*RATIONALE: This should be explored because there has been sufficient positive feedback from the community to Ali's message.*

## **Disqualified and Penalized Students**

Ben informed IC of a query from the team with two penalized students and one disqualified student about how this will be recorded in online statistics with concern about leaving a permanent record for young contestants. The committee agreed to follow past precedent which respects this idea by not making any explicit note about misconduct. The alternative of completely removing the disqualified student from the statistics was briefly debated. In the end, there was a vote to continue with the status quo (no ranking, dashes in place of task submissions and zero as a total score). Six IC members voted in favour, one abstained and nobody voted against the motion.

## **New Country Applications**

Ben noted that time was limited and so proposed that for now, IC discuss and vote on only one application that has been in the queue for a long time. J.P. argued that the United Arab Emirates was now presenting a strong application after making adjustments and attending two IOIs as a paying guest. After a quick discussion, the United Arab Emirates was unanimously approved as a new member.

## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

Ben discussed the IOI Ally program mentioning two 2024 sore points: the allies are hard to contact, and contestants don't necessarily know they exist. For future years, Ben suggested the Code of Conduct list a description of the program and a link to contacts on our website. Eduard asked if sponsorship for additional training still exists and if Ben will continue to lead the IOI Ally program after his presidency ends. Ben said he will investigate the possibility of further funding, and he is happy to lead the program if he will still be involved in IOI. There were no questions or comments.

Ben followed with a question about what requests we make of future hosts recalling that in February there was some concern in IC that we are trying to explicitly ask hosts to make IOI inclusive for everyone. He reminded everyone about the associated text sent in official letters to future hosts.

Ben said he is motivated to include this text because every year he receives questions from participants asking if the IOI will be safe for them. He acknowledged that in February, there were complaints from IC that this might scare away future hosts, but feels it is important to send the message that the IOI cares. He said it is imperative that we ask future hosts about this one way or the other.

Fredrik wondered why the sentence needs to be included in the letter because it is lifted directly from the regulations which are already referenced. On the other hand, he asked what prevented the Code of Conduct from being printed and distributed physically this year. Ben said the inclusion of the word "sexual" was the concern.

Sun Teck spoke to say his objection is that we cannot say the host is responsible for bad behavior and we cannot prevent bad behavior from happening. He said he feels that responsibility for good conduct must sit with team leaders instead of the hosts.

Flora asked what it means for a country to be safe and asked if there is a history of some groups of people being targeted at IOI. Ben said there have been and cited incidents of using Wi-Fi network names to harass women and make transphobic comments. He also reminded everyone that this has been raised in the GA more than once by others. As an example, he noted concerns expressed about gay people traveling to Iran in 2017. He said in Iran, the hosts handled things perfectly and everyone felt part of the IOI.

Eduard said the point is not that hosts be responsible for everyone's actions but instead that they commit to doing everything in their control to be inclusive. On that note, Sun Teck asked about the specific wording and upon hearing it did not object. The wording is:

*The respective official body in <host-country> is kindly asked to send a letter to the Secretary of the IOI, confirming (1) its commitment to organize IOI'n in accordance with the regulations laid down by the IOI General Assembly, and (2) that IOI'n will be a welcoming and inclusive environment for people of all nationalities, cultures, ethnicities, religions, disabilities, gender identities, and sexual orientations, as outlined in the IOI Code of Conduct.*

Fredrik felt the wording did imply responsibility on the host.

Sandra said the importance of including arguably redundant information is to emphasize it.

Humoyun asked for clarification wondering if the IOI could have been held in Iran or Egypt if the letter contained this explicit note. Ben said he is unsure and for Uzbekistan, first asked the bidders (which did not include Humoyun at that time) if it would pose a problem to include it in the letter. Hearing that it wasn't, the text was included. Ben added that he understands that it must be omitted in some countries and thus questions what the right place for this emphasis is.

Humoyun followed up to ask what was done in the past and Ben responded to say the IOI stance was simply to ignore the issue. Humoyun then wondered if it would be best to just verbally ask future hosts about their commitment to inclusivity.

Fredrik said it is a good thing to do if we have a host that says, "yes, we will be welcoming and inclusive" and this should be the default, but the President should work with potential hosts as needed. Eduard supported this idea of having it as default text.

Ben said the main goal is to get to the point where IOI is convinced that hosts care about this, not that a government approves of it, so that we can answer questions about safety concerns.

Humoyun reiterated that adding these words to the letter is bad and that things worked well in Iran. In response Ben asked what should be done if the list of potentially targeted groups is not included in the letter. Humoyun said just saying "welcoming and inclusive" is sufficient.

Flora suggested setting up milestones once a country has a bid approved. She said some milestones could be related to inclusivity. Fredrik liked this idea saying that most of what we are talking about does not actually make much of a difference although he supports including the text. He confirmed that we need to give some leeway when needed.

Flora said her idea implies that the host has an obligation to tell IC if it has an issue.

Ben said he thinks this broader framework sounds like a good idea, but we cannot hammer it out details now and thanked everyone for the good discussion noting that he feels good about where things were left because he feels that IC and IOI do care about this.

Eduard wanted to clarify that his intention is not that if something happens with a leader, that it is the fault of the host but instead that the hosts themselves will not be the ones harassing a member of a delegation. Humoyun then pointed out that there could be misconduct by a volunteer. Flora agreed but said as with incidents in 2023 and 2024, the hosts acted immediately when this happened. Ben said this is

exactly what a welcoming and inclusive environment is. Sun Teck responded to say that is good and evidence that an explicit statement is not needed.

Humoyun said we cannot anticipate things.

Ben said that what matters is how we react.

Eduard agreed and said we want some guarantee that if something happens, the host doesn't just respond to say "oh, this is just the local culture".

Ben concluded by saying this is fabulous and in the end, everyone seems to be okay with sticking with the default text but removing it when necessary. He said he trusts and believes that the IOI will continue to care about this moving forward. He emphasized that it matters to people who are listening and there are people listening. Sandra said that as much as she can, she will continue to keep emphasizing inclusivity.