

Minutes of the Ju-Jitsu International Federation [JJIF]

7 th of September, 2025	05:00 PM – 07:15 PM (Abu Dhabi Time)	Online
Meeting called by	H.E. PANAGIOTIS THEODOROPOULOS, JJIF President	
Type of meeting	JJIF Board Member Meeting	
Notetaker	Kostiantyn Pavlenko	
1. Roll call		
Attendees with voting right	<p>Present at the beginning of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Panagiotis Theodoropoulos – JJIF President – online2. Robert Perc – JJIF Vice President, JJEU President – online3. Nuvin Proag – JJIF Vice-President, JJAfU President – online4. Elcirley Luz Silva – Board Member - Inclusive Sport & Para Ju-Jitsu – online5. Christian Horvath-Portele – JJIF Board Member, JJ4GOOD Commission – online6. Nyamdavaa Lkhagvanyam– Board member, Volunteer Commission – online7. Denise Krahn – Board member, Athletes Commission – online	
Attendees with NO voting right	<ul style="list-style-type: none">8. Joachim Thumfart – JJIF General Director9. Peter Schouten – JJIF Administration Director10. Kostiantyn Pavlenko – JJIF HQ Manager	
2. Quorum		
	Joachim Thumfart	
<p>At the commencement of the meeting, seven (7) out of ten (10) Board Members with voting rights were present meeting the quorum requirement.</p> <p>Mr. Silva left the meeting at 5:18pm due to a scheduled trip.</p>		
3. Welcome by the JJIF President		
	Panagiotis Theodoropoulos	
<p>JJIF President Panagiotis Theodoropoulos President Theodoropoulos welcomed the members and thanked them for attending. The meeting was declared open.</p>		
4. Honorary 6th Dan for Mr. Suresh Gopi		
	Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos	
Discussion	<p>President Theodoropoulos proposed granting an honorary 6th dan JJIF to Mr. Suresh Gopi for his achievements and dedication to Contact Ju-Jitsu. Director General Thumfart emphasized the importance of recognizing contributions of individuals departing to develop future projects. Vice-President Proag supported the proposal, noting the unanimous support expected from all voting members.</p>	
Decision	<p>The Board unanimously approved (with all 7 of 7 members present) the honorary 6th degree for Mr. Suresh Gopi. A diploma will be prepared and presented on an appropriate occasion.</p>	

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5. Review of the World Games 2025

Joachim Thumfart, Peter Schouten, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos, Robert Perc, Christian Horvath-Portele, Elcirley Luz Silva, Nyamdavaa Lkhagvanyam, Kostiantyn Pavlenko

Discussion

General Evaluation:

Mr. Schouten and several members praised the organization, athlete village, and transportation arrangements, with only minor issues (unclear rule application in fighting system, one disciplinary disqualification, and lack of livestream coverage for all tatamis). Certificates for participants have been received and will be distributed shortly.

Media Coverage: Concerns were raised about insufficient livestreaming. Director General Thumfart acknowledged the lack of a formal request to IWGA and suggested ensuring multiple tatamis are covered in Karlsruhe 2029, alongside enhancing JJIF's own production capacity. He commended staff efforts and underlined the need for more media ITOs at future events.

Experiences Shared:

Mr. Silva emphasized the importance of para-jujitsu inclusion, considering it a milestone for JJIF's recognition. Ms. Lkhagvanyam noted the need for greater focus on media and content creation. Mr. Horvath-Portele highlighted the strong impact of para events and recommended reviewing rules together with athletes and coaches for improvement. President Theodoropoulos reported positive feedback from IWGA officials but stressed the need to increase athlete quotas in future editions.

Referee Incidents and the Case of Mr. Tim Toplak:

General Director Thumfart provided a detailed account of rule incidents at the World Games, with particular reference to the disqualification of Mr. Tim Toplak (Slovenia). He reported consultations with multiple referees (including those directly involved) and confirmed that irregular and inconsistent rule application occurred. He underlined that referees must not introduce unapproved procedural innovations (such as retroactive changes after a challenge) during official competitions.

President Theodoropoulos stated that the athlete should not have been disqualified from the category, but rather only sanctioned within the match. He emphasized that the error stemmed both from the referees' misapplication of the rules and the coach's failure to pursue an appeal. He further noted that, while the athlete's public reaction was inappropriate, it was understandable under the circumstances and should not lead to disciplinary measures.

Vice-President Perc presented the position of the Slovenian Federation: The decision was deeply disappointing and damaging, particularly at an event of the magnitude of The World Games. Although the federation accepts the decision as final, it considers the case an example of inconsistency and miscommunication that must inform referee education and technical commission reviews. The federation will not seek further sanctions, but emphasized that experimental interpretations of rules must not occur in premier events. Director General Thumfart further proposed raising the matter at the forthcoming European Championship referee meeting, to reinforce uniformity and discipline in referee decision-making.

Safeguarding Considerations Following Athlete's Social Media Post:

Mr. Horvath-Portele reported that the safeguarding department received numerous notifications concerning the Slovenian athlete's emotional post following his disqualification. The department reviewed the matter immediately and determined that, although the post contained inappropriate expressions (e.g., gestures and derogatory language towards referees), it was primarily emotional in nature and not warranting an official investigation. The safeguarding conclusion was to avoid formal proceedings but to request that the athlete be counselled.

Vice-President Perc confirmed agreement with this approach.

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Discussion	Financial Matters Related to the World Games: Mr. Pavlenko reported that 5 of 37 participating countries have unsettled obligations. He is addressing the matter with each federation individually. Director General Thumfart proposed to raise the issue also at the European General Assembly, linking it to voting rights where applicable.
6. Agenda of JJIF Congress 2025 – Sustainability Proposal	
	Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos, Robert Perc
Discussion	<p>Director General Thumfart informed the Board that the Congress 2025 invitation had been sent out, with a standard agenda prepared and the deadline for additional proposals extended until 27 September. He noted that Dr. Tsegaye Degineh (President, Judo and Ju-Jitsu Association of Ethiopia) had proposed including sustainability as a point of agenda and volunteered to prepare calculations on carbon footprints and other data, based on his experience at a Judo Congress. Thumfart cautioned about additional costs associated with bringing him to Bangkok.</p> <p>President Theodoropoulos emphasized that JJIF should not imitate other sports, and that sustainability presentations should not be added as special agenda points. He stressed that commission activities are already included in the Director General's report to the General Assembly, and separate presentations by individual commissions would create inequality and unnecessary expenses. He suggested that Dr. Degineh could represent JJIF in sustainability matters externally (e.g. in media), but not as a dedicated presenter at the Congress.</p> <p>Vice-President Perc proposed that reports and experiences from other sports could still be useful as recommendations for future organizers at the local level. However, he agreed that JJIF has already implemented measures such as digitalization to reduce paper use and should focus on practical rather than symbolic actions.</p> <p>Mr. Schouten further noted that inviting a representative to travel to Thailand solely for a sustainability presentation would contradict the principle of reducing carbon footprints. Horvath-Portele highlighted that JJIF already applies sustainable practices by balancing the allocation of referees and ITOs geographically to reduce travel distances and costs.</p> <p>Overall, members agreed that the Congress 2025 agenda will not include a separate sustainability headliner or presentation - sustainability-related initiatives and achievements will be reflected in the Director General's standard report to the Congress.</p>
7. Election of the Athletes Commission	
	Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos, Denise Krahn
Discussion	<p>Director General Thumfart raised the urgent need to establish a clear roadmap for the election of the JJIF Athletes Commission and its representatives to the Board. He noted that a WhatsApp working group with athlete representatives had already been formed.</p> <p>President Theodoropoulos emphasized that the current statutes were impractical, as most continents had not held elections. He suggested simplifying the process by holding direct elections during the World Championships, provided there are sufficient candidates. He further underlined that the statutes of the Athletes Commission must first be amended by the current Commission to reflect this new election procedure.</p> <p>Director General Thumfart proposed an open call for candidates, requiring support from National Federations, with elections conducted either by paper vote at an event or electronically.</p>

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Discussion	<p>Ms. Krahn stressed the importance of promoting the Athletes Commission widely, including via social media, to ensure candidates from all continents are reached. She noted the lack of awareness of the Commission among many athletes.</p> <p>President Theodoropoulos insisted that the Athletes Commission remain independent, with members representing athletes directly rather than being appointed by federations or unions. He raised concerns that appointments through federations risk undermining independence.</p> <p>Discussion included eligibility: whether only active athletes or also retired athletes could serve. The Board acknowledged that retired athletes often have more availability, but criteria (e.g., time since retirement) would need to be defined.</p> <p>The Board noted the current incomplete status of continental Athletes Commissions, with only Europe having an active group (three members identified: Horak, Farne, Krahn). Other continents were less organized or inactive.</p> <p>Members highlighted JJIF's responsibility to involve athletes meaningfully in decision-making, while ensuring practical, transparent, and independent procedures.</p> <p>An open call for candidates will be launched, including through social media channels, to reach athletes directly and not solely via national federations.</p> <p>Eligibility will include both active and recently retired athletes, with precise criteria to be finalized.</p> <p>The Athletes Commission statutes must be updated by the existing Commission, with support from the JJIF office, to align the election procedure with the new approach.</p> <p>Elections are to be conducted in a transparent and practical manner (paper or electronic voting), ensuring representation from all continents where possible.</p>
Decision	<p>The election process will be prepared for confirmation by the Board, to allow elections to be held in time for the Congress.</p> <p>The new Athletes Commission is to be in place for the next three years, with the procedure linked to broader governance elections (e.g., President and Board).</p>

8. Participation Across Multiple Age Divisions and Event Categories

	Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos, Robert Perc, Peter Schouten, Denise Krahn, Nyamdavaa Lkhagvanyam
Discussion	<p>Director General Thumfart introduced the agenda point on the structure of events and participation across age categories. He noted that athletes and teams often request double participation (e.g., under 18 in under 21, under 21 in adults), which has led to inconsistencies and logistical burdens. The Technical Commission, supported by team leaders, expressed preference for organizing under 21 and adult competitions together, given training patterns and safeguarding considerations, while under 16 and under 18 should remain together.</p> <p>Concerns were raised regarding athletes registering for an excessive number of events (up to 12 participations in two days), creating organizational challenges, risks of injury, and safeguarding issues. President Theodoropoulos suggested limiting participation to a maximum of two medal events per day, arguing this would balance athlete welfare with organizational feasibility.</p> <p>Vice-President Perc highlighted the strain on event organization, rest times, and the impression left by athletes competing across multiple age categories within the same event. He recalled that historically exemptions had been made only in limited cases, and questioned the health and fairness implications of broader double participation.</p> <p>Athlete representative Denise Krahn proposed a stricter limitation of one medal event per day, while allowing participation in different age divisions if scheduled on separate days.</p>

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Discussion	<p>President Theodoropoulos agreed that age division overlap should be avoided on the same day.</p> <p>Mr. Schouten underlined the difficulty of planning within shorter regional events, while reiterating that safety and fairness must prevail, especially where minors are involved. He noted that separating events administratively (e.g., back-to-back competitions in the same venue) does not solve the core problem.</p> <p>Ms. Lkhagvanyam emphasized that excessive double participation may limit opportunities for other athletes and slow the development of disciplines in some countries. She supported reducing cross-participation in different disciplines and age categories for both safety and fairness reasons.</p> <p>Given the wide range of views, Director General Thumfart proposed postponing a final decision.</p> <p>The Board acknowledged the need for clearer rules on double participation across age divisions and disciplines, balancing athlete safety, organizational feasibility, and fairness. Proposals under consideration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of two medal events per athlete per day (President's proposal). • Maximum of one medal event per athlete per day (Athlete Commission proposal). • Allowing cross-age participation only if events are held on separate days. <p>The Board postponed the final decision to the next meeting, where a definitive framework must be adopted to enable timely announcement of the competition program for 2026.</p>
9. Application for Change of Nationality – Athlete from Italy to Switzerland	
	Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos
	<p>Director General Thumfart presented an application for an athlete's change of nationality from Italy to Switzerland. The request was accompanied by all required documentation and approvals from both national federations. He confirmed the application was fully compliant with JJIF rules. President Theodoropoulos reaffirmed that the request was consistent with established regulations.</p>
Decision	<p>The Board unanimously approved (with all 6 of 6 members present) the athlete's change of nationality from Italy to Switzerland. The athlete is eligible to represent Switzerland starting from the next event.</p>
10. Membership Application – Provisional Membership for Myanmar	
	Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos
Discussion	<p>Director General Thumfart presented an application from Myanmar for provisional membership in the JJIF, supported and verified by the Ju-Jitsu Asian Union. The application included the federation's founding documents (April), membership list, and confirmation from the Myanmar Olympic Committee.</p> <p>President Theodoropoulos emphasized that, since the application was supported by the continental union and met the statutory requirements, there was no basis to reject it. Vice-President Perc and Mr. Silva confirmed the application was straightforward and compliant. Mr. Schouten inquired whether Myanmar might participate in the upcoming World Championship, noting the need for timely registration and visa arrangements. It was agreed this matter would be reviewed at the next Board meeting once provisional membership had been processed.</p>
Decision	<p>The Board unanimously (7 of 7 members present) approved the application of Myanmar as a Provisional Member of JJIF. The Secretariat is authorized to issue an invoice for membership fees. Participation of Myanmar athletes in upcoming events will be reviewed at the next Board meeting, subject to registration and visa arrangements.</p>

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11. Ju-Jitsu European Union Elections & General Assembly

Robert Perc, Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos

Vice-President Perc informed the Board that the EJJU Electoral General Assembly will take place on 1 October 2025 in Belgium, just before the European Championship. The candidacy submission period closed on 1 September 2025, and the EJJU Board acknowledged all received candidatures. There is more than one candidate for each position, ensuring a competitive and engaging election process. All candidatures met statutory and regulatory requirements. Vice-President Perc emphasized the importance of finalizing travel confirmations from JJIF President and Director General due to hotel booking deadlines. President Theodoropoulos and Director General Thumfart confirmed their intention to attend, ensuring presence at both the General Assembly and the European Championship.

12. Financial Report & Expenses (First Half of 2025)

Joachim Thumfart

Director General Thumfart presented the general expenses report for the first half of 2025, as requested by the President, in line with the effort to improve financial transparency. The reporting period was shortened to six months to enable more frequent reviews and approvals. The expense documentation was circulated to Board Members in advance (the previous week). An external impartial audit is ongoing, although the auditors are delayed. JJIF aims to have the audit report finalized in time for the Congress; otherwise, it will be submitted at a later stage. Mr. Pavlenko has been actively following up with the auditors, with pressure applied to accelerate their work. The current arrangement involves twice-weekly follow-up on progress. Discussion: Director General Thumfart inquired if there were any questions or objections to the submitted expense list. None were raised.

Decision

The Board unanimously (6 of 6 members present) approved general expenses for the first half of the 2025 Financial Report for submission to the external audit and subsequent presentation to the JJIF Congress for final approval.

13. Event Format for Regional Championships (Open vs. Non-Open)

Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos, Robert Perc,

Director General Thumfart reported concerns raised at recent Southeast Asian and West Asian Regional Championships regarding the participation of athletes from outside the respective regions. Some stakeholders expressed fear that external entries could undermine the regional character of these events. He noted that while organizers often request more participants, in these cases federations preferred to limit participation strictly to regional athletes. A proposal was raised to distinguish between:

- Open Regional Championships (traditional practice, with broader participation).
- Non-Open Regional Championships (restricted to athletes from the defined region).

For non-open events, it was suggested that world ranking points awarded should be

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	<p>reduced (approximately half) compared to open events, reflecting the limited participation pool.</p> <p>Vice-President Perc emphasized the principle that official regional championships should be limited to the continent/region they represent, and that regions must be clearly defined with explicit event participation rules in the invitation.</p> <p>President Theodoropoulos concurred, noting that while “open” formats (e.g., Mediterranean Open) have historical precedent, closed championships should be permitted when agreed with the relevant Continental Union. He supported the proposal for reduced points allocation.</p> <p>It was agreed that clarity must be established in the invitations, explicitly stating whether an event is “open” or “closed.”</p> <p>The President suggested introducing the term “Multi-Continental Championship” for events involving multiple continents, to differentiate from strictly regional competitions.</p>
	<p>The Board agreed to introduce two distinct formats:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open Regional Championships – open participation, full ranking points. 2. Non-Open Regional Championships – participation restricted to the defined region, with approximately half world ranking points. <p>Event invitations must clearly state whether the championship is open or closed. Proposals regarding naming conventions, including “Multi-Continental Championship,” will be circulated by the President for further review at the next meeting.</p>
14. Request for Exceptional Participation – Minor Athlete in Para Jiu-Jitsu (Romania)	
	Joachim Thumfart, Robert Perc, Christian Horvath-Portele, Peter Schouten
	<p>Director General Thumfart presented a request from the Romanian Federation concerning a 17-year-old para jiu-jitsu athlete, whose 18th birthday falls six weeks after the scheduled European Championship. The request sought exceptional permission for the athlete to participate in the adult para category.</p> <p>Mr. Schouten recalled that no exceptions are normally made for underage athletes in adult competitions. Mr. Schouten emphasized the principle of developing dedicated para youth competitions rather than making exceptions for minors.</p> <p>Mr. Horvath-Portele reported having consulted the World Para Jiu-Jitsu Federation’s Classification Committee, which determined that the athlete’s classification is difficult to merge with others, that no suitable opponents are currently registered in his category, and that allowing participation under these conditions would pose serious safety risks.</p> <p>Mr. Horvath-Portele further proposed that the Classification Committee provide a list of mergeable classifications to streamline future decisions.</p> <p>Vice-President Perc and Vice-President Proag stressed that the general rule prohibiting minors from competing in adult categories must be upheld, and noted that referencing the absence of opponents may create the misleading impression that exceptions could be considered under different circumstances. President Theodoropoulos and the Board agreed that the decision should be based on the existing rule and expert advice, without creating precedents or case-by-case exceptions.</p>
Decision	<p>The Board confirmed that the general rule applies: minors are not permitted to compete in adult para jiu-jitsu categories. The request from Romania for exceptional participation was rejected. The official response shall state that the decision is based on compliance with JJIF regulations prohibiting minors in adult categories and on the expert opinion of the World Para Jiu-Jitsu Federation’s Classification Committee, which advised against participation due to safety and classification incompatibility. The Board reiterated its commitment to support the development of youth para competitions in future events.</p>

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15. University Sport and FISU Involvement

Joachim Thumfart, Robert Perc

Director General Thumfart reported on recent and upcoming developments regarding university-level events:
 JJIF received physical recognition from FISU in 2021, but the COVID-19 pandemic delayed practical progress.
 JJIF will now be part of the FISU World University Combat Championship in Brasilia, Brazil, in June 2026. The event will feature Jiu-Jitsu Ne-Waza under FISU regulations.
 Athlete qualification is managed by National University Sport Organizations, not national federations, with strict eligibility rules (ages 18–25).
 A technical handbook is under preparation. National organizations must follow strict timelines:
 6 months before: declaration of participation in Jiu-Jitsu
 3 months before: confirmation of number of athletes and fee payment
 1 month before: submission of names
 JJIF is working to develop a handbook for running university events that aligns with FISU requirements.
 Recent events include one in Thailand (limited to Thai athletes) and upcoming ones in Bogotá and Dublin. The Dublin project is particularly promising, with support from the Martial Arts Committee of Ireland.
 University competitions represent a strategic opportunity to reach the broader jiu-jitsu community, including athletes not yet connected to JJIF member federations. Markets of particular interest are Brazil, USA, and Canada.
 JJIF is in discussions with the European University Sports Association (EUSA) for an MoU on collaboration. EUSA's age limits differ (17–30 years).

 Vice-President Perc added:
 The recent meeting with EUSA was productive and JJIF was well received.
 A letter of intent will be initiated to formalize JJIF's cooperation with EUSA, followed by an MoU.
 The EUSA main office in Ljubljana facilitates coordination.
 The next EUSA Combat Games will be held in Tirana, Albania, in November 2026. JJIF may participate in the technical visit delegation.
 Cooperation with universities offers potential to attract new athletes not yet integrated into JJIF member federations but requires national-level engagement with university organizations.
 This presents both an opportunity and a challenge, but one that can significantly expand JJIF's reach.

16. University World Ranking System

Joachim Thumfart

Director General Thumfart informed the Board that, following the signed MoU with FISU, JJIF is expected to establish a University World Ranking system. This ranking would be implemented through the Smoothcomp platform and serve as a basis for athlete qualification to university-level championships, including the FISU World University Combat Championship in Brasilia.
 He explained that the system proposes higher point values for larger-scale events, thereby rewarding victories at continental and world-level competitions more significantly than at smaller tournaments. The ranking would integrate results from:

- JJIF-controlled World Series events
- National University Championships (with cooperation from National University Sport Organizations)
- FISU Continental Championships
- FISU World Championships
- Universiade

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University Event	FISU Universiade	FISU World Championship	"FISU" Continental Championship	JJIF World Series	NUSO Championship
1 st Place	500	400	200	200	50
2 nd Place	400	320	160	160	40
3 rd Place	300	240	120	120	30
4 th Place ^[5]	250	200	100	100	25
5 th Place ³⁰	200	160	80	80	20
7 th Place ³⁰	100	80	40	40	10
9 th -16 th Place ³⁰	50	40	20	20	5
17 th - 32 nd Place ³⁰	20	16	8	8	4
Points per Win ^[6]	25	25	25	25	25
Participation / no win	10	8	4	4	2

This structure is intended to strengthen cooperation with university sport organizations and to demonstrate JJIF's readiness for potential future inclusion in the Universiade.

Director General Thumfart emphasized that the proposal is currently an administrative act to launch the system. Adjustments to points or structure may be made later based on experience. The ranking system will also help countries qualify athletes for Brasilia, where eligibility criteria may otherwise present challenges. He further suggested that the Board may later consider establishing a separate University Ranking List within JJIF's general ranking framework. While this would not affect qualification rankings, it would ensure proper recognition and weight for university-level competitions.

Decision The Board approved (6 of 6 members present) the implementation of a University World Ranking system in cooperation with FISU.

17. IOC recognition

Joachim Thumfart, Panagiotis Theodoropoulos

Director General Thumfart provided an update on the status of JJIF's IOC recognition. He reported that since the last Board meeting, there has been limited movement, but notable developments occurred during the World Games. IOC Director Irina Gladys attended the event and asked detailed questions about JJIF's organizational structure, athlete participation, and medal distribution. She inquired about differences between jujitsu and judo, and observed aspects of the competitions firsthand, including a momentary scoring error, which was later corrected after appeal.

Mr. Thumfart highlighted JJIF's strength in diversity and global participation, noting the wide distribution of medal-winning countries. He emphasized the growing popularity of jiu-jitsu, including among celebrities, and the potential for media appeal. He also stressed the importance of enhanced sports presentation, professional commentators, and clear media communication to make the sport more understandable and attractive to a broader audience. The presence of TV commentator Neil Adams, a judo legend, contributed positively to media discussions.

President Theodoropoulos added that progress toward IOC recognition is ongoing. JJIF has received positive feedback from the IOC Department. Another meeting with IOC representatives is expected soon, potentially not before the IF Forum in October. The Board was assured that no requests have been made that JJIF cannot meet, and all developments are considered positive steps toward recognition.

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18. Reinstatement of Referee Patrick Tremel

Panagiotis Theodoropoulos

President Theodoropoulos reminded about the case of Mr. Patrick Tremel and regarding the Board's decision on lifting the ban on him as a referee and allowing him to register and participate in JJIF events starting in early 2026, The intention is to officially inform Mr. Tremel that he can resume referee duties at the start of 2026.

Next Board meeting is planned for 28th of September, 2025, 5:00PM Aby-Dhabi time.

The JJIF President thanked all members for their participation, noted the meeting had run long and confirmed that the next Board meeting will take place on 28th of September. The meeting was officially adjourned.

Hybrid Meeting, 7th of September 2025

Minutes by Kostiantyn Pavlenko

Approved by JJIF President Panagiotis Theodoropoulos

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